



Department of Health
Government of Western Australia

Code of Practice

Disposal of

Pesticide Residues

From Pesticide Spray Applications

**Effective from 1st July 1994
(Amended 2001)**

Foreword

A major source of environmental contamination which can impact on public health comes from inappropriate, and possibly illegal, disposal of excess pesticide mixture following spray applications.

This Code provides options to the pest control industry on how to minimise production of excess pesticide mixture and how to dispose of that generated.

The code has been developed in consultation with the pest control industry and relevant government agencies.

The Pesticides Advisory Committee, established under the Health Act, supports the development of this Code and its use as a condition of licence for all licensed pesticide operators and a condition of registration of commercial pesticide firms. Government agencies and their employees are also required to comply with the Code.

The Code has been endorsed by the delegate of the Executive Director, Public Health, as an approved method of pesticide disposal for the purposes of regulation 21F of the Health (Pesticides) Regulations and for use as a condition of licence for licensed pesticide operators and a condition of registration of commercial pesticide firms.

This Foreword does not form part of the Code.

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1. Introduction

The use of synthetic organic pesticides commenced about fifty years ago in Australia. Their range, number and extent of use have steadily increased.

Scientists and the community have become more aware of the problems associated with incorrect use and disposal of pesticides. Inappropriate disposal of excess pesticide mixtures into the environment is no longer acceptable to either the government or the community.

Environmental contamination from excess pesticide mixture has resulted from:

- diluted spray from spray equipment;
- rinsates from pesticide containers;
- rinsates from cleaning pest control vehicles;
- materials used to decontaminate pesticide spillage or leakage;

Diluted pesticide rinsates and materials contaminated with pesticides have been discharged into unlined sumps, storm water drains, sewerage systems and vehicle yards, which has placed public health at risk.

Pesticide residues from excess undiluted pesticide and rinsates or materials contaminated with pesticides shall always be disposed of in accordance with the Health (Pesticides) Regulations and other relevant Acts and Regulations.

This Code provides options for the minimization of excess pesticide material resulting from their application. The Code encourages the reuse of excess pesticide mixture as a means to minimising disposal problems.

The Code also encourages the development and adoption of new technology to reduce the production of excess pesticide mixture.

The Code encourages meeting standards or criteria rather than specified requirements. This should enable the pest control industry and others to develop new technology and systems to meet, and often exceed the standards of the Code.

2. Objective

The objective of this Code of Practice is to lower the public health risk from pesticides by minimising the disposal of excess pesticide mixture from spray application of pesticides. Excess may originate from spray tanks, and as rinsate from pesticide containers or from pest control vehicles.

3. Scope

This Code applies to:

- All registered pest control firms
- Government agencies
- All licensed pest control operators
- Government employees

who use registered pesticides including herbicides, insecticides and fungicides by spray application.

4. Date of Commencement

All the requirements of this Code apply from **1 July 1994**.

5. Relevant Legislation

Nothing in this Code supersedes or invalidates any legislation (including regulations) relating to the use or disposal of pesticides. If there is a conflict between the Code and legislation, then the legislation takes precedence.

The major pieces of relevant legislation are:

- Health Act and in particular the Health (Pesticides) Regulations;
- Environmental Protection Act;
- Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act;
- Country Areas Water Supply Act;
- Land Drainage Act;

- Waterways Conservation Act;
- Agricultural and Related Protection Act;
- Aerial Spraying Control Act;
- Explosives and Dangerous Goods Act;
- Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act.

6. Definitions

Contaminated

When the concentration of pesticide remaining in spray equipment or empty pesticide containers is greater than 0.01% of the concentration of the original pesticide concentrate.

Decontamination

The removal of pesticide contamination from spray equipment or used pesticide containers so as to reduce the concentration of any remaining pesticide to less than 0.01% of its **original concentration**.

Empty Pesticide container

When the pesticide container has been drained of **the pesticide** concentrate for at least 30 seconds after the flow has reduced to drops.

Person

Includes corporate bodies and government agencies.

Pest Control Vehicle

Is a motor vehicle, trailer, boomspray, other mobile spray equipment or any other mobile apparatus from which spraying operations are carried out and which may become contaminated during those operations.

Pesticide Concentrate

The original pesticide formulation as supplied by the pesticide manufacturer in its original container.

Excess Pesticide Mixture

Any pesticide contamination or residue remaining in "empty" pesticide containers or spray equipment.

Pesticide Rinsate

Pesticide contained in liquid used to decontaminate by rinsing or washing containers and spray equipment.

Spray Equipment

Every article associated with the spray application of pesticides including a pest control vehicle.

Soil Residual Herbicides

Any pesticide formulations that contain Bromacil, Ethidimuron, Hexazonone, Karbutilate, Picloram, Sulphonylureas or Triazines excluding these herbicides, when used selectively at low rates in agricultural crop production.

7. Requirements to minimise Pesticide Residues

Persons within the scope of this Code shall ensure that excess pesticide mixtures resulting from pesticide spray applications are minimised. This shall be done as follows:

a) Pesticide Containers

“Empty” pesticide containers which are to be disposed of shall be decontaminated immediately after use, in accordance with the requirements of this Code. This requirement does not apply to containers that are being returned to the manufacturer for refilling.

Decontamination shall be achieved by either of the following methods:

- i. pressure rinsing with a proven system (including a flushing and suction probe). The manufacturer’s instructions should be followed to ensure effective rinsing.
- ii. Containers of 5L or less may be triple rinsed.

Any liquid collected from the above decontamination process is deemed to be pesticide rinsate. Options for the use of the pesticide rinsate are set out in Section 8.

b) Spraying Equipment

All spraying equipment including tanks, pumps, hoses, filters and lances shall be decontaminated before a different class of pesticide is used or the equipment is stored.

Decontamination shall be achieved as instructed by the label and/or manufacturer. Any diluent from rinsing and/or flushing shall be deemed pesticide rinsate.

c) Pest Control Vehicles

Decontamination or washing of pest control vehicles or shall be performed on a commercial needs basis, or when significant spillage, leakage or spraydrift onto the vehicle has occurred.

Pest control vehicle decontamination shall be performed only at the registered premises, approved site or government depot by either;

- i) Using a damp cloth to hand wipe the vehicle clean. Any liquid used for cleaning the vehicle shall be deemed pesticide rinsate. A running hose shall **not** be used for cleaning the vehicle except as set out in (ii).
- ii) Washing down a vehicle on an impervious surface that is bunded, has an impervious lined sump that is maintained and is protected from rain. Any wash down water shall be deemed pesticide rinsate.

Decontamination of broadhectare pest control vehicles shall be performed by either (ii) above, or washing down at the site of spraying but at least 100 metres from any water body or occupied dwelling, and in any case, not in an area draining directly towards a waterbody, water course or dwelling.

Any solid cleaning materials used, such as cloths, shall be deemed pesticide contaminated and be disposed of at a gazetted landfill site.

d) Spillages and Leakages

Any pesticide spillage or leakage which contaminates vehicles and spraying equipment shall be decontaminated.

Hoses dragged through or over a pesticide treated area shall be deemed pesticide contaminated and require decontamination.

All pesticide vehicles shall carry equipment and sufficient absorbent material to decontaminate a 10 litre spillage or leakage.

Any solid materials contaminated with pesticide shall be disposed of in an approved manner at a gazetted landfill site.

8. Pesticide Rinsates

Pesticide rinsates shall be used (recycled) whenever possible and in accordance with the registered label.

The contents of the pesticide rinsate containers shall be clearly labelled.

With the exception of organochlorines and soil residual herbicides, rinsates shall be disposed of according to the following hierarchy of options:

- a) Sprayed at the application site.
- b) Used as the diluent/solvent for the same active ingredient pesticide at a different application site. In this case the pesticide rinsate shall be added to the diluent at a rate not exceeding 10% of the total volume.
- c) Applied at a different site provided it is used in accordance with the registered label.
- d) Disposed of at a liquid waste treatment plant subject to consent of the plant operator or a local authority.

Organochlorines and soil residual herbicide pesticide rinsates shall only be disposed of according to option a) and b) above.