

Guidance for the establishment of No-Spray-Registers

INTRODUCTION

The aim of a No-Spray Register (NSR) is to assist Local Government meet the community's general right-to-know about pesticide applications made to outdoor public places that are owned or controlled by public authorities.

The NSR provides a mechanism for members of the community to take action to (as far as practicable) avoid inadvertent exposure to pesticides. The NSR also builds on Local Government's ability to ensure that pesticides are applied to public places in a safe, responsible manner that minimises impacts to the community and environment. Pesticide application by local council contractors should be in accordance with the PIRSA Guidelines for Local Government on Reducing Pesticide Exposures (appended).

The NSR will identify:

- what council areas will be covered.
- how and when Local Government will provide pesticide application details.
- how the community can access the NSR and get more information regarding it.
- how and when future reviews of the NSR will be conducted

This document complements the best practice guidelines for weed management (e.g. the PIRSA Guidelines for Local Government on Reducing Pesticide Exposure).

It is recognised that some Councils already have in place an NSR. They are encouraged to work through this template and to adopt any portions that will enhance the operation of their NSR.

Underlying principles

It is the right of individuals to live undisturbed and to have some say in the manner in which weeds are controlled in their environs.

It is recognised that Local Government has a responsibility to manage unwanted vegetation for the purposes of public safety and amenity and should be supported to do this in a manner that contributes to, rather than impacts adversely on, community wellbeing.

Expected Outcomes

By putting in place an NSR and weed management plan, Local Government can significantly reduce the amount of pesticide that residents are exposed to, creating a healthier environment in which to live and work, reducing costs and unintended environmental impacts.

What is MCS?

MCS can be described as a chronic condition involving multiple organ systems with reproducible symptoms which has been attributed to low-level exposure to multiple unrelated chemicals. There is currently no consensus on the mechanism of causation.

Frequently reported symptoms include headache, fatigue, confusion, depression, nausea, dizziness and respiratory symptoms.

There are various triggers linked with the above symptoms that are diverse and quite extensive. In a written submission to the South Australian Parliamentary Inquiry into MCS, the Australian Chemical Trauma Alliance (ACTA) listed the following as common triggers:

- Pesticides, in particular Glyphosate
- Virtually all organic compounds, including paint, carpeting synthetic fabrics
- Chlorinated and fluoridated water
- Pharmaceutical drugs and anaesthetics
- EMR emitted from computers, TVs, mobile and landline phones and other microwave transmitters and high tension power lines.
- Traffic exhaust
- Perfumes, hairspray, scented deodorants
- “Fresh” newspapers

From telephone surveys conducted in 2002 and 2004, about 1 percent of the population indicated that they had been diagnosed with MCS. This suggests a significant number of people with the condition. In addition, about 15% of the adult population reported a degree of sensitivity to some chemicals.

After the 2005 Parliamentary Inquiry into MCS, several recommendations were made. One of these was the development of best practice guidelines to enable Local Government to establish a No-Spray-Register that identifies MCS sufferers and those with chemical sensitivities.

These guidelines have been developed to aid implementation of the No-Spray-Register (NSR) in your local council. They are for people with MCS but also for those who for aesthetic reasons do not wish herbicide to be applied in front of their property.

Objectives of a no-spray-register (NSR)

- To reduce the potential for unintended adverse impacts of pesticide use on the community in particular those that suffer from MCS.
- To support the considered use of pesticides to reduce the volume of pesticide used in Local Government.
- To increase the well-being of the general public.
- To increase the quality of the environment we live in.
- To achieve an effective mechanism to reduce overall exposure to pesticides.
- To inform the community of pesticide application.

Enabling Strategies

- Provide adequate knowledge and skills of contractors applying herbicide to ensure effective weed management programs
- Establish and maintain effective and constructive communication pathways between MCS sufferers and the managers of weeds to ensure non-exposure of MCS sufferers to sensitising agents.

Outline of Procedure

1. Develop a weed management strategy that reduces herbicide use

Refer to PIRSA's "Guidelines for Local Government on reducing pesticide exposure"

2. Develop a policy for the use of the no-spray register

- If contractors are used for weed control, ensure tenders include agreement to operate within the confines of an NSR.
- Ensure weed controllers are adequately informed as to the policy and procedure to reduce pesticide exposure.

3. Establish a no-spray register.

I. Inform residents:

- In a local paper, Council newsletters and websites and relevant MCS organisations, advertise the intention to establish an NSR.

II. Collate names and addresses:

- All names and addresses should be collated into one electronic database.

III. Map and List No-Spray residents

- A list of all residents on the NSR should be created together with a comprehensive map of all no-spray locations.

IV. Communicate to contractors

- Contractors should at all times possess an up-to-date list and map of all no-spray locations prior to spraying.
- Contractors should at all times possess the PIRSA guidelines for pesticide application for local council.
- Contractors must provide a pesticide report. Details such as weather conditions, pesticide used, volume and rate of chemical application, name of contractor, date and location of job should be recorded. This is anyway a requirement for all licensed pest control operators under the *Controlled Substances (Pesticide) Regulations 2003*.

4. Implement and manage the no-spray register

- Develop a policy statement that ensures all tenders reference the NSR.

- In the local paper and/or Council website or newsletter, advertise the times and locations of impending pesticide applications; 1 week notice.
- Prior phone notification to NSR-MCS registrants (48hrs) of time and date of work in their area, and extent of work to be conducted. This could be done by the contractor.
- Confirm the weed control strategy for the NSR registrant no-spray zone (road verge in front of property), relying as far as possible on the registrant to carry this out.
- For a confirmatory MCS diagnosis letter from the MCS sufferer's doctor, a buffer zone is enforced for the Council verge area including houses 1-5 (see diagram) or equivalent distance. Council needs to engage these neighbours in deciding an alternative weed management strategy (refer PIRSA Guidelines for Local Government on Reducing Chemical Exposures; consider mechanical weed control).
- Buffer distances greater than shown on the diagram should be negotiated with the MCS patient's doctor.
- Council to consider using kerb painting of colour code indicator to identify properties where no spraying is conducted.

5. Auditing and assessment of the no-spray register

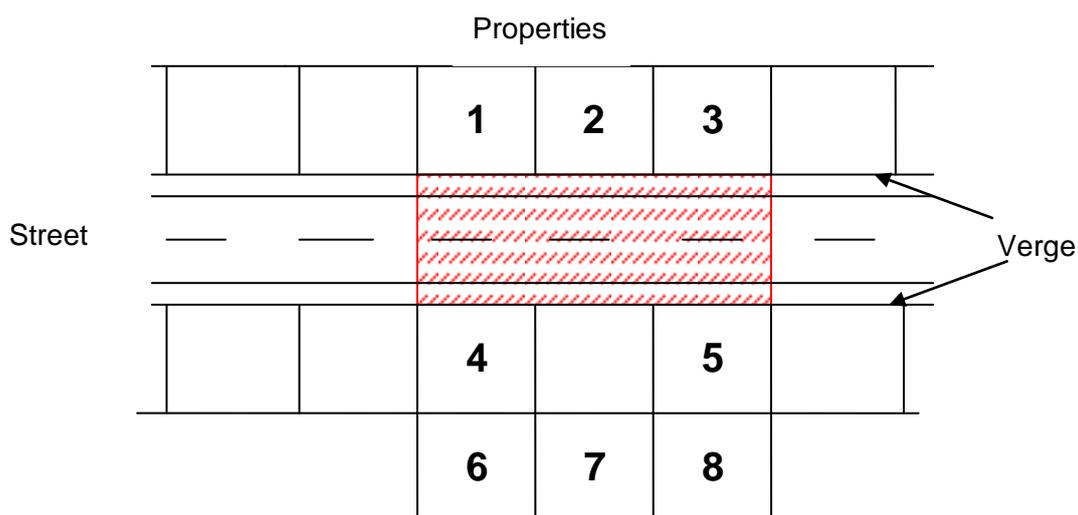
- NSR registrants are encouraged to call Council if there are any problems.
- An annual assessment of the NSR policy and repeat advertisement of NSR.

6. Ongoing maintenance of procedure

It is recommended that NSR lists and maps are updated annually or as required.

Further information

Dept of Health	tel. 822 67100
PIRSA	tel. 822 60549



Prepared by the MCS Reference Group in accordance to the recommendations of the Report of the [Social Development Committee 17/8/2005: 22nd Report Multiple Chemical Sensitivity](#). (Last accessed March 2010), Recommendation 5 *Chemical Use and Local Government - Local Government and MCS* :

That the MCS Reference Group convened by the DoH work to develop best practice guidelines to enable local Councils to establish No-Spray Registers that identify MCS sufferers, and those with chemical sensitivities generally in local communities. To assist in informing these guidelines, best practice models of No-Spray Registers currently used by Councils should be identified.

The Reference Group is hosted by the Department of Health, Public Health
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