



Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS)

SWMS Ref No:	5	Version	9.2	Issue date	July 2020	Review Date	July 2023
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Section: Corporate Services		Location: Council facilities, parks, reserves and natural areas		Date: July 2021	
Job / Task Description: • VOLUNTEERS – HERBICIDE USE					
Training Required to Complete the Activity:			This SWMS has been produced to comply with the following Codes of Practice, Legislation, Australian Standards and Guides:		
1. List training accreditation required eg traffic Control, Confined Space, First Aid, • SWAT induction • At least one volunteer on site must have first aid training • PSC Safe Chemical Use Training		2. Training details are located in: <input type="checkbox"/> Training Register in Authority <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): Safe Chemical Use (for weed control) Training delivered to Council Volunteers by PSC Weed Staff.		WHS Legislation 2017, WHS Act 2011, EPA (Operations) Act, Pesticides Act 1997, Pesticides Regulation 2009, Environmentally Hazardous Chemicals Act 1995, Road and Rail Transport (Dangerous Goods) Act 1995, Manual Handling Procedure, WHS Policy, Sun Protection Procedure, Training and Development Policy, Safety Data Sheets (SDS), PPE Procedure, Lone Worker Procedure. PSC Code of Conduct	
List Plant/Equipment/Tools required for the Activity:		List Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the Activity:		List Equipment Maintenance Checks required for this Activity: e.g. daily inspection checklists, lifting slings, SWL, etc	
Hand spraying equipment. Spraying signs.		Following PPE is required when Mixing and Spraying of herbicide: • Elbow length impermeable gloves • Impervious footwear • Long pants/shirt or overalls • Washable broad brim hat • Sun protection • Insect repellent • Effective communication • Sharps container and tongs • First Aid kit Additional PPE required - Mixing: • Face shield		Inspection of spray pack prior to use required. <	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chemically resistant apron Additional PPE required - Spraying: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety goggles Hi Vis vest 		Use and submission of "Record of Herbicide Application" required within 48hrs of treatment.
Person Involved in the production and completing the Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS):			
Volunteers Coordinator	Parks Supervisors	WHS Officer	Natural Resources Team Leader
Person(s) Responsible for Supervising/ Inspecting Work:			
Person(s) responsible for supervising the work, inspecting and approving work areas, safe work method statements, SWAT's, protective measures, plant/ equipment & power tools:			
Name:	Position:	Signature:	
Name:	Position:	Signature:	

		RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES (Check for the following)								
Activity	Hazard/Risk	Initial Risk			Control Measures & Actions Required (Implementation of risk control measures MUST be in accordance with the Hierarchy of Control)	Risk After Actions			Person Responsible	
		L	C	Risk		L	C	Risk		
Fertiliser selection and quantities	Incorrect fertiliser or quantities used due to untrained or inexperienced volunteers. Leaching of fertiliser residue into water tables.	L3	C2	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Approval from Council Responsible Officer required prior to commencement of fertilising.Site induction required (SWAT).Refer to label description and application rates.Ensure Safety Data Sheet (SDS) available and understood by volunteer.Assess fertiliser type i.e soluble or coated slow release.	L2	C2	Low	Council RO Site Supervisor Volunteers	

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		L	C	Risk		L	C	Risk	
Chemical selection and quantities needed	Incorrect chemical or quantities used due to untrained or inexperienced volunteers	L3	C2	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe Chemical Use Training required to be undertaken by volunteer. Approval from Council Responsible Officer required prior to commencement of spraying. Site induction required (SWAT). Refer to label description and application rates. Ensure Safety Data Sheet available and understood by volunteer. Ensure volunteer understands chemicals approved to be used by volunteers. 	L2	C2	Low	Council RO Site Supervisor Volunteers
Assessment of sensitive areas	Environmental contamination	L3	C2	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify environmentally sensitive areas and appropriate buffer zones, such as waterways, flora and fauna. Refer to Safety Data Sheet. Consider soil filtration characteristics. Use of Pest Triangle/integrated pest control to substitute herbicide control for another option. Carry spill kit at all times. 	L2	C1	Low	Council RO Site Supervisor Volunteers
	Neighbouring sensitive places	L3	C2	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbouring sensitive places (eg schools, childcare centres, health centres, nursing homes) to be notified at least 5 days prior to chemical spraying 	L2	C2	Low	Council RO

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Activity	Hazard/Risk	Initial Risk			Control Measures & Actions Required (Implementation of risk control measures MUST be in accordance with the Hierarchy of Control)	Risk After Actions			Person Responsible
		L	C	Risk		L	C	Risk	
Storage and handling of chemicals	Chemical vapours/spills and contaminations, and access by inappropriate persons	L3	C3	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always read SDS and follow label directions. Store in locked storage area with appropriate warning signage. Ensure cross flow ventilation. Continuous water flow available nearby. Wear appropriate PPE when accessing chemical. Do not store PPE items where contamination with chemicals could occur. Store chemicals in undamaged, original containers. Store chemicals out of direct sunlight and away from potential fires 	L2	C2	Low	Site Supervisor Volunteers
Transporting chemical	Chemical spill/contamination	L3	C2	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport chemicals in 20L pail with secure lid & kitty litter. Secure pail in vehicle. Segregate containers from food and people. Clean chemical spills as soon as possible to reduce risk of contamination Report chemical spills to Council within 24hrs. 	L2	C1	Low	Site Supervisor Volunteers
Preparation of spray equipment	Faulty spray equipment Operator contamination Environmental contamination	L3	C2	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect and repair minor faults. If major or safety hazard, postpone use and arrange for new equipment. Periodic calibration of hand sprayers. Appropriate PPE to be worn. 	L2	C1	Low	Site Supervisor Volunteers
Site preparation	Public access to spray area Ground/weather conditions not suitable	L3	C2	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify major entry and exit points and set out appropriate signage/barriers. Ensure notifications to appropriate groups and maintain warning signs in appropriate areas. Assess weather conditions before and during operations. 	L2	C1	Low	Site Supervisor Volunteers

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Activity	Hazard/Risk	Initial Risk			Control Measures & Actions Required (Implementation of risk control measures MUST be in accordance with the Hierarchy of Control)	Risk After Actions			Person Responsible
		L	C	Risk		L	C	Risk	
Mixing of chemicals	Operator exposure to chemical from chemical concentrate, spillage and fumes	L3	C2	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always read SDS and follow label directions. Wear appropriate PPE (see pg1 – List of PPE for the Activity). Mix in well ventilated area. Appropriate training undertaken by volunteer. Select safest chemical. Ensure appropriate spill containment equipment is accessible 	L2	C2	Low	Site Supervisor Volunteers
Hand spraying of herbicide	Spray drift/runoff Windy conditions Impact on adjoining properties Operator exposure Public access Excessive chemical residue	L3	C2	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always read Safety Data Sheet and label. Wear appropriate PPE as per label (see pg1 – List of minimum PPE for the Activity). Only spray in appropriate weather conditions, monitor conditions throughout operation. Spraying only to be undertaken when wind is 'None' or 'Slight' as per the Beaufort scale – see 'Record of Herbicide Application' from for guidance. Ensure operator is not caught in spray drifts while spraying. Prevent dermal and inhalation exposure through correct risk assessment for chemical type. Monitor public access and spray calibration rates throughout operations. 	L2	C2	Low	Site Supervisor Volunteers
	Third party poisoning	L3	C2	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not spray within 20m of other people Appropriate weather conditions. PSC notification Plan followed. Display appropriate signage. Select safest chemical. 	L2	C2	Low	Site Supervisor Volunteers

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Activity	Hazard/Risk	Initial Risk			Control Measures & Actions Required (Implementation of risk control measures MUST be in accordance with the Hierarchy of Control)	Risk After Actions			Person Responsible
		L	C	Risk		L	C	Risk	
Wash up and cleaning of equipment	Fumes/vapours inhalation Dermal exposure Environmental contamination	L3	C2	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read label and Safety Data Sheet for specific cleaning instructions. Wear appropriate PPE when cleaning equipment. Unused chemical to be diluted and applied to target area or if appropriate. Clean sprayer after application. Never dispose of remaining chemical in drains, toilets, sinks or into bodies of water. Laundry clothes used for application separately from other washing. 	L2	C2	Low	Site Supervisor Volunteers
Disposal of excess chemicals and containers	Environmental contamination Dermal/inhalation exposure	L3	C2	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Store in appropriate chemical storage facility until disposed of. Dispose of in an environmentally responsible manner, eg Chemical Clean Out days or Salamander Bay Waste Transfer Station. Wear appropriate PPE. 	L2	C2	Low	Site Supervisor Volunteers
Monitoring and record keeping	Reduced effectiveness Environmental contamination Individual and Organisation files	L3	C2	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor runoff and soil infiltration characteristics. Monitor specific control effectiveness. "Record of Herbicide Application" must be completed and returned to Council within 24 hours weeds@portstephens.nsw.gov.au Records kept in accordance with Pesticide Regulation 2009, and PSC Environmental Pollution Licence. 	L2	C2	Low	Council RO Site Supervisor Volunteers

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Step 1: Analyse risks in terms of **consequence/impact** (outcome of an event) using the **Consequence/Impact Table**. The analysis must consider the range of potential consequences and how these are likely to occur.

RISK CATEGORY	Insignificant (C1)	Minor (C2)	Moderate (C3)	Major (C4)	Extreme (C5)
	Consequences are not important	Consequences are somewhat important	Consequences are important	Consequences are very significant or extremely serious	Consequences are catastrophic
Operations / Service Delivery (Business Continuity)	Insignificant disruption to service activities. Negligible impact on service provision. Short term inconvenience	Minor to moderate disruption to service activities. Minor to moderate % of customers inconvenienced and may receive some complaints	Moderate disruption to services (1-5 days). Medium to large % of customers inconvenienced and will receive complaints	Continuing difficulties in servicing customers over prolonged period (5-10 days) across majority of service locations that will result in a large amount of complaints	Severe long term disruption or permanent loss of capability to provide critical services to customers for 10+ days
Financial (whichever is higher)	1% of budget for service unit/s or >\$100k for the organisation as a whole	2.5% of budget for service unit/s or >\$1M for the organisation as a whole	5% of budget for service unit/s or >\$5M for the organisation as a whole	10% of budget for service unit/s or >10M for organisation as a whole	25% of budget for service unit/s or >\$20M for the organisation as a whole
Environment	Negligible impact with no remediation required	Minor impact, reversible with short-term remediation required	Moderate impact, reversible with medium term remediation required	Significant impact contained to site / project, irreversible or long term remediation required	Significant ongoing impact, irreversible and not contained to site / project life
Safety & People	Local first aid may be required	Minor injury that may require medical attention with no ongoing treatment	Injury requiring ongoing medical treatment and/or lost time	Extensive injuries that are life threatening; or multiple serious injuries and hospitalisation	Any fatality or multiple permanent disability or ill health
Reputation	No impact on reputation/ staff morale & no public/media interest	Minimal customer/morale sensitivity or minimal damage to Council name	Moderate customer/morale sensitivity and damage to Council name with minor local media interest	Major customer/morale sensitivity; damage to Council name attracting national media & social interest and some impact on business activities	Significant customer/morale sensitivity and damage to Council name; significant international media & social media attention and impacting noticeably on business activities
Governance / Compliance	No regulatory consequence, no litigation, prosecution or penalty	Minor regulatory consequence with formal warning / instruction with unlikely litigation, prosecution or penalty	Moderate regulatory consequence which may result in fines. Contractual non-compliance or breach of legislation with threat of litigation, prosecution and/or penalty	Major regulatory consequence resulting in material fines or restrictions on Council operations. Probably litigation or prosecution and/or penalty	Extreme regulatory consequence which could result in dismissal of Council. Non-compliance or breach of legislation with litigation, prosecution and/or penalty with fines
Project Consequences	Time: Insignificant impact on project milestones	Time: Minimal impact on project milestones	Time: Moderate to high impact on project milestones	Time: Major impact on project milestones	Time: Project failure
	Quality: Some non-key requirements are not met	Quality: A key requirement may not be met	Quality: Some key requirements may not be met	Quality: A majority of key requirements may not be met	Quality: Major deficiencies with all project deliverables. No requirements met
	Cost: Justifiable additional costs that can be absorbed in the project's budget	Cost: Additional costs requiring reprioritisation and/or reallocation of project funds	Cost: Additional costs requiring submission for supplementary funding	Cost: Significant additional costs delaying project	Cost: Budget expanded without achieving any key deliverables

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Step 2: Analyse risks in terms of **likelihood** (probability or frequency) using the **Likelihood Table**.

Level	Descriptor	Description	Frequency	Probability	Project/Program
L5	Almost certain	Clear indication that the risk will materialise. Would be very surprised if it didn't	Annual	>90%	Likely to occur in more than 1 in 2 projects of this kind
L4	Likely	Risk is expected to occur. Would be quite surprised if it didn't	1 in 2 year event	50-90%	Likely to occur in 1 in 2 projects of this kind
L3	Possible	Risk is not expected to occur, but would also not be surprised if it did	1 in 4 year event	20-50%	Likely to occur in between 1 in 4 projects of this kind
L2	Unlikely	Risk is not expected to occur, would be quite surprised if it did	1 in 8 year event	5-20%	Likely to occur in less than 1 in 10 projects of this kind
L1	Rare	Would be very surprised if the risk occurred	1 in 20 year event or less	<5%	Unlikely to happen

Step 3: Once the risk has been analysed, the existing methods to control the risk also need to be determined.

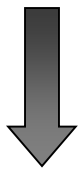
Step 4: Move on **Evaluate Risk** which will look at the risk rating against a **Matrix**

Once risks are assessed against the likelihood and consequence/impact, the rating/level of risk is determined against the Risk Rating Table/Matrix below:

<div>LIKELIHOOD →</div> <div>CONSEQUENCE ↓</div>		L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
		Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain
C5	Extreme	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	EXTREME	EXTREME
C4	Major	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	EXTREME
C3	Moderate	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
C2	Minor	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH
C1	Insignificant	LOW	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM

Note: ALARP = As Low As Reasonably Practicable

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HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS		
Elimination	Remove the risk from the process by eliminating the step in the process – i.e. do not do it.	MOST PREFERABLE  LEAST PREFERABLE
Substitution	Reduce risk by changing processes, materials or equipment to something that does the job more safely	
Isolation	Put in place physical preventative mechanisms – i.e. locks, alarms, lights, ventilation, guards & barriers	
Engineering Control	Minimise the risk by engineering means – i.e. use a mechanical lifting device rather than manual handling techniques	
Administrative Control	Develop and implement work procedures – i.e. Safe Operating Procedures, training, direction, supervision, job rotation, consultation	
Personal Protective Equipment	Accept the initial hazards and protect personnel by using personal protective equipment to reduce the risk – i.e. safety glasses, ear muffs	

Note: The cost associated with controlling the risk must also be considered, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK RATING	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTION
EXTREME	DO NOT PROCEED The proposed task or process MUST NOT proceed at this time due to the potential risk of a fatality and an alternative safer method of work is required before work can commence. A Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) must be documented and referred to the Section Manager. The Section Manager must review the effectiveness of the implemented risk controls and discuss with the Group Manager before work can proceed.	Section Manager/Group Manager
HIGH	DO NOT PROCEED The proposed task or process MUST NOT proceed unless additional controls have been included to reduce the risk. A Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) must be documented and reviewed by the Section Manager to ensure the risk is reduced to medium level.	Section Manager
MEDIUM	The proposed task or process can proceed as the work is considered safe but the risk control measures need monitoring to ensure the risk level does not increase during the task or process.	Team Leader/Coordinator
LOW	The work is safe to proceed as per the identified control measures and no further action is required unless additional hazards arise during the work.	Team Leader

VALUE FOR MONEY, SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS, REPUTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK RATING	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTION
EXTREME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring to the attention of the Group Manager for immediate management action All possible treatments must be put in place to reduce the risk to an acceptable level Report regularly to the Enterprise Risk Management Committee 	Group Manager
HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring to the attention of the Section Manager for immediate management action Allocate actions and budget to minimise risk Report monthly through the Group Risk Management Committee 	Section Manager
MEDIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify management responsibility, monitor and review response action as necessary Allocate resources where existing controls are deemed inadequate Report to Group Risk Management Committee within the quarter 	Coordinator
LOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accept and monitor Manage through existing processes and procedures Report via routine internal reporting mechanisms 	Coordinator

COMPILATION OF SWMS	
STEP	Number each discrete step in the task in sequence – e.g., 1, 2, etc.
ACTIVITY	Briefly describe the activity to be carried out in each step.
HAZARDS	Identify what in each activity could cause harm to a person, the job, materials, or the environment.
RISK (1)	The degree of risk posed by the hazard. (Use Risk Matrix to determine risk ranking before controls implemented).
CONTROL MEASURES AND ACTIONS REQUIRED	What precautions or control measures must be taken to control the risk?
RISK (2)	The degree of risk following implementation of risk controls (Use Risk Matrix to determine ranking of residual risk).
PERSON RESPONSIBLE	The name or the position of the person responsible for the implementation of the risk controls.

Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Details
1.0	10/11/2010	WHS Manager	First Release - New document
2.0	9/3/2012	WHS Manager	Document reviewed March 2012 due to the new WHS Legislation. All reference to OHS was changed to WHS and <i>The cost associated with controlling the risk must also be considered, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk</i> was inserted on page 4
3.0	25/06/2012	WHS Manager	Risk matrix replaced with 5 x 5 matrix and changes were made to document following a review based on WorkCover's recommendations.
4.0	13/02/2014	WHS Manager	Put into new format
5.0	10/02/2015	WHS Manager	Updated Risk Matrix Inserted
6.0	6/03/2015	WHS Manager	Added Compilation of SWMS
7.0	3/06/2015	WHS Manager	Updated to incorporate Brand Identity Style Guide v1.0
8.0	08/07/2016	WHS Manager	Inserted updated Risk Matrix
9.0	01/03/2018	Corporate Risk	Updated following a review of the Integrated Risk Management Framework