

Frequently Asked Questions

Does Local Government use the herbicide glyphosate as part of its chemical weed control program?

Glyphosate is a Schedule 5 herbicide that is widely used by land managers, including Local Government, to control weeds. Local Governments use of herbicides is governed by industry regulators such as the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) and the WA Department of Health (DoH). Both the APVMA and DoH advise that glyphosate is of low risk when used in accordance with the product label instructions. The APVMA have produced an [information sheet](#) on glyphosate.

Why doesn't Local Government use only non-chemical weed control?

Local Government understands that some members of the community desire the minimum use of chemicals. Non-chemical weed control methods form an important part of Local Government's weed control approach. However, non-chemical methods such as physical weed control and steam are more time consuming, labour intensive and costly, as well as generally being less effective than herbicide. They are therefore generally not used as the sole method of weed control by Local Government.

What chemicals other than glyphosate can be used?

Other chemical herbicides are used by Local Government; however, they may be selective for particular types of weeds (e.g. grasses or bulbs), or have higher toxicity (Schedule 6 classification), both of which makes them unsuitable for widespread use and broad spectrum weed control. Organic herbicides are an alternative product but require more frequent applications to achieve the desired weed control outcomes and can have adverse side effects (e.g. strong odours, slippery residues). Local Governments continue to trial and evaluate effective, cost-efficient and lower toxicity chemical control options. Some Local Governments are also investigating whether lower herbicide application rates can be used whilst maintaining effective weed control.

What about herbicide resistance?

Herbicide resistance can develop when a weed species evolves to survive exposure to herbicides that would typically be effective in killing the weed. The widespread use of herbicides can

accelerate the development of resistance, leading to challenges in weed control. To combat the development of herbicide resistance, Local Governments adopt Integrated Weed Management practices, which involves the use of a variety of control methods, and seeks to achieve the judicious use of herbicides.

Can I register to be notified before my Local Government conducts chemical weed spraying near my home?

Some Local Governments have an option where community members can apply to be notified of upcoming herbicide applications that are at a location within a certain distance of their property. Applications are generally open for a certain period each year, with residents needing to re-apply annually.

Can I exclude my own verge from chemical weed spraying by Local Government?

Some Local Governments have an option where residents can apply to be added to a 'No-Spray Register' or 'Pesticide Exclusion Registers'. The register applies to property frontages of road reserves and may include rear access laneways. Applications are generally open for a certain period each year, with residents needing to re-apply annually. Residents on the register are required to maintain the verge in accordance with the Local Government's Street Verge Guidelines.

Where do I refer complaints about unsafe use of herbicides?

All concerns about the unsafe use of herbicides on Local Government managed land should be reported to the Local Government for investigation. Concerns about the unsafe use of herbicides on non-Local Government managed land should be referred to the relevant land manager.

Complaints about the unsafe use of herbicides should be reported to the Chemical Hazards unit at the Department of Health, call 9222 2000 or email DOH.ChemicalHazards@health.wa.gov.au.

What can I do to help?

Residents can help combat the effects of weeds in our urban and natural environment by controlling weeds on their property before they set seed and spread. Friends groups make an invaluable contribution towards weed control in natural areas. Find your local Friends group on the [Urban Bushland Council map](#) or contact your Local Government for a list of groups in your area.