



PESTICIDE USE NOTIFICATION PLAN

July 2022



Acknowledgement of Country

Hunter Water operates across the traditional country of the Awabakal, Birpai, Darkinjung, Wonaruah and Worimi peoples. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land, and acknowledge and pay respect to Elders past, present and future.

Mariin Kaling - All for Water

Saretta Fielding

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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It is a legislative requirement for this plan to be renewed every five years. Hunter Water will undertake its review prior to ensure that this document remains current, can be circulated for public comment and be renewed in a timely fashion.

Revision control

Rev	Date	Description	Prepared by	Approved by
1.0	2007	Approved document	J Peel	D Taylor
2.0	June 2016	Revised for approval of draft	J Peel	J Stanmore
3.0	September 2016	Remake of Plan 2016 - Final	R Bow	A Seberry
4.0	February 2022	Revision for public exhibition and remake of plan	R Bow	A Seberry
5.0	May 2022	Reformatted into template	B Tisdell	A Seberry
6.0	July 2022	Updated after consultation – new section 3.2.7 created to allow management of Biosecurity matters	R Bow	A Seberry

1 INTRODUCTION

This pesticide use notification plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Pesticides Regulation 2017* (the Regulation). The plan sets out how Hunter Water Corporation will notify members of the community of pesticide applications it makes or allows to be made to public places that it owns or controls.

The main aim of this plan is to 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 plan allows members of the community to take action to avoid contact with pesticides, and warnings about the subsequent use or entry onto land. Hunter Water will ensure that pesticides are applied to public places in a safe, responsible manner, to avoid harm to the community or the environment. The plan sets out how Hunter Water will notify members of the community of pesticide applications made by Hunter Water to public places.

The plan describes:

- What public places are covered by the plan.
- Who regularly uses these public places and an estimate of the level of use.
- How and when Hunter Water will provide the community with information about its pesticide applications in public places (i.e. what notification arrangements will be used).
- How the community can access this plan and get more information about Hunter Water's notification arrangements.
- How future reviews of the plan will be conducted.
- Contact details for anyone wishing to discuss this plan with Hunter Water.

The majority of pesticide use consists of applying herbicides for weed control and applying insecticides to manage certain insect pests – primarily ants and termites. Frequency of programmed applications range from 6–8 times per year for utility infrastructure such as reservoirs and sewage pumping stations, 2–5 times per year for picnic areas and 3-4 times per year for utility easements such as stormwater channels and above-ground pipelines, however this frequency can vary depending on the degree of infestation of target species. Bait insecticides are used for termite and ant control to protect structures and public safety wherever this is considered an effective solution.

Other pesticides that may be used from time to time may include rodenticides, bird baits and large vertebrate baits (for example to control mice, rats, rabbits or wild dogs). If baiting is required, it will always be undertaken in accordance with the specific NSW EPA control orders for these products and in consultation with or as directed by all other relevant government agencies. Further information on Hunter Water's pesticide use can be obtained by calling customer service on 1300 657 657 or by visiting the website www.hunterwater.com.au.

2 PUBLIC PLACES COVERED BY THIS PLAN

Hunter Water Corporation proposes to use or allow the use of pesticides in the following categories of outdoor public places that it owns or controls in the Local Government Areas of Newcastle, Maitland, Port Stephens, Dungog, Cessnock and Lake Macquarie. Appendix A contains a map, which shows Hunter Water's operation boundary.

- Picnic grounds
- Public toilets
- Water pump stations and surrounds
- Water reservoirs and surrounds
- Wastewater pump stations and surrounds
- Public land owned or controlled by the Hunter Water Corporation, including:
 - Water reserves

- Dam walls
- Laneways and pathways
- Pipeline utility or other easements accessible to the public
- Storm water channels or drains

Hunter Water’s estimate of the level of community use, and regular user groups for each of these public place categories is summarised in the following table.

Public Places	Regular user groups	Level of Use of Public place	Type of pesticide use
Picnic grounds	General public (Open to all public for passive recreation)	High use (particularly on weekends, public holidays and school holidays)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot herbicides • Broad-scale selective herbicides • Spray ant control
Public toilets	General public (These toilets are located within Hunter Water picnic grounds)	High use (particularly on weekends, public holidays and school holidays)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot herbicides • Spray insecticides • Bait ant control
Laneways and pathways	General public	Medium use (these locations are mostly passageways to access Hunter Water infrastructure eg. Reservoirs and pump stations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot herbicides
Unfenced pipeline utility or other easements accessible to the public	Hunter Water employees and contractors.	Low use (These are usually places requiring authorization to enter but are accessible to the public.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot herbicides • Large vertebrate baiting
Dam walls	Hunter Water employees and contractors.	Low use (These are usually places requiring authorization to enter but are accessible to the public.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot herbicides
Water pump stations and surrounds	Hunter Water employees and contractors.	Low use (These are places requiring authorization to enter but are accessible to the public.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot herbicides • Spot insecticides • Spray termiticides • Bait termiticides • Bait rodenticides
Water reservoirs and surrounds	Hunter Water employees and contractors.	Low use (These are places requiring authorization to enter but are accessible to the public.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot herbicides • Spot insecticides
Waste water pump stations and surrounds	Hunter Water employees and contractors.	Low use (These are places requiring authorization to enter but are accessible to the public.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot herbicides • Spot insecticides • Spray termiticides • Bait termiticides • Bait rodenticides

Water reserves where fencing and signage does not restrict access	Hunter Water employees and contractors.	Low use (These are places requiring authorization to enter but are accessible to the public.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot herbicides • Large vertebrate baiting
Storm water channels or drains	Hunter Water employees and contractors.	Low use (These are places requiring authorization to enter but are accessible to the public.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot herbicides

3 NOTIFICATION ARRANGEMENTS

This section of the plan describes how and when Hunter Water will provide notice of pesticide use in public places. These notification arrangements are based on Hunter Water’s assessment of:

- The level of usage of public places where pesticides may be used.
- The extent to which activities generally undertaken in these areas could lead to some direct contact with pesticides (such as picnic areas where food is consumed; and other recreational activities that result in contact with the ground).
- The type of pesticide used.

This plan also specifies the prescribed public places for which Hunter Water does not propose to provide notification, or as the case may be, limited notification, pursuant to Clause 41 (l) of the *Pesticide Regulation 2017*

3.1 How and When Notification Will be Provided

Notice of pesticide use will be provided by one or a combination of:

- On-site signage.
- Information on Hunter Water’s website (which will describe programmed, reactive and emergency pesticide use in public places).
- Letters.
- Fax and email.
- Letterbox drops.
- Door knocking.
- Phone contact.

Hunter Water will also allow persons and organisations to nominate to have their details placed on a central register which would allow them to be notified of certain types of pesticide uses in particular places, as described in this section of the plan.

Hunter Water will not give notice of pesticide use by lessees of Hunter Water owned land that remain a public place.

3.2 Categories of Public Places

3.2.1 Outdoor recreation areas

The notification arrangements described below will apply to the following public place categories owned or controlled by Hunter Water within Hunter Water's operation boundary (see Appendix-A):

- Picnic areas
- Playgrounds
- Public toilets

In these public places, signs will be provided to the general community near the application area or main entrance at least 48 hours prior to application and remain for at least 48 hours afterwards for the following pesticide uses:

- Broad-scale selective herbicides.
- Spray insecticides over a large area such as a large proportion of a picnic area.
- Bait ant control over a large area such as a large proportion of a picnic area.

Where any of the above pesticide uses occur in outdoor recreation areas, which are also *adjacent to sensitive places* (see definition of 'sensitive places', under Section 0 of this plan) the occupiers will be provided with five days prior notice by phone, mail or letterbox drop (whichever is most practicable). Outdoor public thoroughfares and certain easements accessible to the Public

3.2.2 Other outdoor areas – low use

The notification arrangements described below will apply to the following categories of public place owned or controlled by Hunter Water:

- Laneways and pathways
- Stormwater channels / drains
- Sewer and water easements accessible to the public

On the day of works, signage will be put in place for the duration of spraying works.

Where any of the above pesticide uses occur in these low use outdoor areas, *adjacent to sensitive places* (see definition of 'sensitive places', under Section 0 of this plan) the occupiers will be provided with five days prior notice by phone, mail or letterbox drop (whichever is most practicable). Outdoor public thoroughfares and certain easements accessible to the Public

3.2.3 Utility Infrastructure – Water reserves, Dams, Reservoirs, Water & Sewage Pump Station (below-ground), Pipelines.

The notification arrangements described below will apply to the following categories of public place owned or controlled by Hunter Water:

- Broad-scale selective herbicides
- Broad-scale insecticides

Signage will be put in place for the duration of spraying works.

There are no known sensitive places near any of these areas, however if circumstances change, where any of the above pesticide uses occur in these infrastructure areas, *adjacent to sensitive places* (see definition of 'sensitive places', under Section 0 of this plan) the occupiers will be

provided with five days prior notice by phone, mail or letterbox drop (whichever is most practicable). Outdoor public thoroughfares and certain easements accessible to the Public

For spraying in Balickera Canal, Seaham Weir Pool, Grahamstown Dam or any other location to which an environmental protection licence applies. The notification arrangements specified in the licence will be implemented. Typically, signage is put in place 7 days before works occur, advertised in the local newspaper and signage remains until testing is completed showing no residual herbicides are present.

Notification on large vertebrate baiting using 1080 or Pindone baits, or other vertebrate control methods, shall consist of a combination of signage, newspaper advertisements and / or direct contact with neighbours using the following criteria at least three (3) days before laying any baits. There If there is a specific NSW EPA control order for notification, such as applies to 1080 baiting, that will be followed. Typically, notification requirements in the 1080 control order includes:

- Direct contact by telephone, personal contact or if this fails then by letter to any property whose boundary is within 1000 metres of any bait station.
- In addition to direct contact, a notice will be placed in at least one newspaper with broad distribution in the local area where baits are planned to be laid.

As currently required by the NSW EPA's control order, signs will be placed at least three (3) days before baits are laid in clearly visible locations. The signs will be placed:

- At every entry to the property where baits are to be laid.
- At the entrance to the actual baiting location.
- At the extremities of and at one (1) kilometre intervals along the property boundaries where the property fronts a public thoroughfare.

The above notification will be followed or in the case of regulatory revisions, the most recent notification procedures detailed in the NSW EPA control order, the permit for use of 1080 baits or as directed by the Authorised Control Officer if the officer is from the NSW EPA or NSW Local Lands Service or Authority.

3.2.4 Certain Hunter Water buildings

For pesticide use in Hunter Water Offices, Pump buildings, that are owned or controlled by Hunter Water and are accessible to the public, signs will be provided near the application area or main entrance immediately prior to application and remain for the duration of the application, for the following pesticide uses:

- Bait rodenticides
- Spray termiticides
- Spray ant control.
- Bait bird control.

3.2.5 Special measures for sensitive places

Section 39 (Definitions) of the *Pesticides Regulation 2017* defines a sensitive place to be any:

- School or pre-school
- Kindergarten
- Childcare centre
- Hospital
- Community health centre
- Nursing home
- Place declared to be a sensitive place by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

A pesticide use notice will be provided by Hunter Water to all affected persons in a sensitive area 5 working days prior to application of a pesticide. This includes all works that are undertaken within 20 metres of a sensitive place. For non-emergency reactive pesticide use in outdoor public places next to sensitive places, Hunter Water will also provide concurrent notice shortly before use to the occupier by phone, door-knock or letterbox drop, depending upon what is practicable. If a pesticide must be used to deal with an emergency in an outdoor public place that is adjacent to a sensitive place, Hunter Water will organise a door-knock in that sensitive place, preferably at least 30 minutes before, so people are aware that a pesticide is about to be used to deal with a dangerous pest infestation.

3.2.6 Emergency pesticide applications

In cases where emergency pesticide applications in public places are required to deal with biting or dangerous pests such as wasps, bees, venomous spiders, fleas, bird mites or rodents (or any other pests that pose an immediate health hazard), Hunter Water will, where possible, provide notice by posting signs nearby at the time of the application. If this is not possible, Hunter Water will provide information via its Customer Service Centre on 1300 657-657, or by request to the person applying the pesticide.

3.2.7 Emergency pesticide applications - Biosecurity directions

Where an action to treat a new weed or pest is urgently required, particularly in cases where emergency pesticide applications in public places are required to comply with a biosecurity direction, issued under S123 of the *Biosecurity Act 2015* or more broadly to meet the requirements of another order, dealing or duty as may be required under that Act, Hunter Water will, where possible, provide notice by posting signs nearby at the time of the application. If this is not possible, Hunter Water will provide information via its Customer Service Centre on 1300 657-657, or by request to the person applying the pesticide.

3.2.8 Pesticide contractors and lessees of public places

Where Hunter Water uses contractors to apply pesticides on its behalf, Hunter Water will ensure that notification is made in accordance with the notification requirements of this plan. Where persons or organisations hold an existing lease on Hunter Water land that remains a public place and if they use pesticides in this area, Hunter Water will request the lessee to make notification in accordance with the requirements of this plan.

4 WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE PROVIDED

In accordance with clause 41(1)(h) of the *Pesticides Regulation 2017*, notices of pesticide use will include **all** the following information:

- the full product name of the pesticide to be used,
- the purpose for which the pesticide is to be used,
- the dates on which, or the range of dates during which, the pesticide is to be used,
- the places where the pesticide is to be used,
- any warnings about limitations on the subsequent use of or entry onto the land if such warnings are specified on the approved label for the pesticide or in the permit for use of the pesticide,

- a contact telephone number or email address for the officer of the public authority whom the affected persons can contact to discuss the notice.

• It is noted that any warnings regarding re-entry to or use of the place of application is normally specified on the product label or the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) permit.

- **Note:** *The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), the national government body responsible for assessing and registering (or otherwise approving) all pesticide products in Australia and for their regulation up to and including the point of retail sale.*

Signs will be of a standardized design that will be easily recognizable to the public and workers.

As already noted, Hunter Water's website will have a dedicated area that describes its programmed, reactive and, if practicable, emergency pesticide use in public places with a link to this notification plan. The relevant website address will be publicized in water rate notices.

5 HOW THE COMMUNITY WILL BE INFORMED OF THIS PLAN

Hunter Water will advise residents of the contents of the plan and its contents by:

- Placing a copy of the plan on the Hunter Water website at www.hunterwater.com.au
- Making a copy of the plan available for public viewing free of charge at Hunter Water's Head office, 36 Honeysuckle Drive Newcastle (People are encouraged to access the plan from the website to be Covid Safe);
- Placing a notice in 'Newcastle Herald' newspaper.
- Placing a notice in the NSW Government Gazette.

6 FUTURE REVIEWS OF THE PLAN

The notification plan will be current for a maximum period of 5 years with an earlier review and public consultation process commencing every 4 years. If circumstances change, the review period may be brought forward, if deemed prudent.

The review will include:

- A report on progress of implementing the plan.
- Placing the revised plan on public exhibition, and calling for public submissions.
- After review and consideration of public submissions, making recommendations for alterations (if applicable) to the plan.
- Finalizing the plan.

7 CONTACT DETAILS

Anyone wishing to contact Hunter Water to discuss the notification plan should contact:

Senior Environmental Planner –
 Hunter Water Corporation
 PO Box 5171
 HRMC NSW 2310
 Phone 02 4979-9566

Or;

Manager Contracts and Minor Works
Hunter Water Corporation
PO Box 5171
HRMC NSW 2310

General Enquiries can be made at;

Email enquiries@hunterwater.com.au

Or access the website: www.hunterwater.com.au

Appendix A

