

6 August 2021

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**Request for Official Information responded to under the Local Government and Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) – reference: 2021-029**

I refer to your information request we received on 9 July 2020 and your subsequent email of 3 August 2020. I note that you have been advised that your emails were sent to an email address of a staff member who was unexpectedly away on sick leave.

On 9 July you requested the following, please find my response below:

**1. Are there any requirements for people using glyphosate to wear PPE or any level of protective gear?**

All council employees handling or applying pesticides, herbicides or any other horticultural spray or paste product are required to wear the appropriate PPE as defined on the material safety data sheet (MSDS) for that product. The employee must be familiar with the product being handled, it's MSDS, and hold a relevant and current qualification if required.

**2. Have you read the links that I sent through regarding the Manufacturer paying out to cover cancer related law suits?**

As you were advised Monique Engelen who this was addressed to originally has been away on leave. Appropriate staff have read the information you provided.

**3. You say that some members of the community are concerned – but is Council concerned ?**

Council takes Health and Safety matters very seriously and takes action when required.

**4. Irrespective of whether NZ regulatory body's have allowed the continued use of this product (they have not said it is safe) – does the council have any concerns about the use of this product – especially in relation to the latest developments with the manufacturer themselves agreeing to pay \$10b USD in law suits and the risk to people using the product or being in close proximity when it is used ?**

All pesticides, herbicides or other horticultural spray or paste product used is done so by licenced approved handlers and in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations. Preventative measures may include warning signage, consideration of weather conditions and wind drift, chemical withholding periods and selection of alternative chemicals if a suitable alternative exists.

5. **Has this risk been clearly articulated and agreed by senior levels of the organisation? Is there a chance the Council could be sued by people that have been using the product when you are aware of the potential risks – or are you saying that the EPA take the risk on this? I am concerned about this is a rate payer.**

All council employees handling or applying pesticides, herbicides or any other horticultural spray or paste product are required to wear the appropriate PPE as defined on the material safety data sheet (MSDS) for that product. The employee must be familiar with the product being handled, it's MSDS, and hold a relevant and current qualification if required. This also applies to understanding the hazards associated with the application of these products.

6. **I hear that Glyphosate is much cheaper than alternatives and that seems to be the driver for continued use. Can you please share some information with me so I understand this further. What alternatives have been looked at ? I see Glyphosate being used a lot – do we need to look at whether we are using too much of it ? If we cut back on the use that would reduce the costs.**

Council is continually trialling alternatives as they become available on the market and is currently using an organic spray made from palm tree oil in our playgrounds and sports fields. This spray kills the top foliage, however not the root system.

The use of glyphosate spray in general parks is limited to times when it is unlikely that people will be in the vicinity and is undertaken in a way we consider to be of minimal risk.

On 3 August 2020 you also asked:

**Have your staff and contractors been informed of these recent developments so they are aware of their personal Health & Safety risk?:**

Staff are made aware of health and safety concerns where required.

Yours sincerely



**Sean Mallon**  
Group Manager Infrastructure Services  
Te Kaihautū Ratonga Pakiaka