



10. WORKS AND SERVICES

10.1 ROADS AND DRAINS

10.1.6 Weed Spraying of Verges Adjacent to Organic Farms and Other “Chemical Free” Properties

Background & Issues

A number of property owners within the Shire undertake farming and other land management practices that does not include herbicide or other chemicals. Importantly, this includes those farms wishing to be recognised by an organic certifying organisation. In order to achieve certification, the property owner is required to demonstrate that no chemicals are used on the property, the land used does not have residual chemical in the soil, and that there are no chemicals on neighbouring properties, including the Shire road, that can affect the section of the land that is to be certified.

The predominate method of managing chemicals from adjacent land is through buffering. Using buffer zones that exclude chemical sprays on land results in a lower yield of the organic crop, reducing the viability of the venture. While Council cannot manage the chemical use on properties neighbouring an organic farm and other no or low chemical use properties, Council can manage its own chemical regime on road verges, such that buffering can be reduced.

Across the Shire there are differing practices adjacent to organic farms and other no or low chemical use properties, depending on the property owner/manager. Some property owners encourage weed spraying on their verge, while others manage their verge so that spraying is not required. Where a property owner does not want their verge sprayed, and they are willing to manage verge weeds and vegetation accordingly, it is appropriate that a method be employed to ensure the verge is not sprayed.

Objectives

To facilitate organic certification of rural properties through allowing property owners to opt to manage their verge area in lieu of chemical spraying by the Shire.

Area of Application

Whole of Shire.

Policy Measures

Where a property owner in rural and semi-rural areas does not want the Shire to manage vegetation on their verge through chemical spraying, the property owner will do the following.

- Provide written advice to the Shire that they will manage their verge to a standard agreed with the Director Works and Services, (see application form – Attachment A) such that the use of chemicals is not required. This standard will generally be free from weeds (e.g. blackberry), and free from tall grasses and Bracken Fern (and other similar understorey weeds and/or plants) within 3m of the road shoulder, and free of invasive grasses within any roadside drain.

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- The property owner will erect red posts at either end of the extent of the verge fronting their property (in accordance with attachment B), indicating the length of the verge that is under the property owner’s management. The posts will be in a prominent place, beyond the road shoulder and will be maintained by the property owner. Alternatively, the property owner may engage the Shire to supply and install the posts at the property owners cost.
- Should the verge not be managed in accordance to the agreed standard, the property owner will be given an opportunity to remedy the deficiency within an agreed time. If the property owner is unable or unwilling to make good the deficiency within an agreed or reasonable time, and should the deficiency remain when verge spraying operations are underway on the subject road, the Shire will undertake chemical spraying of the verge in accordance with normal practice.

Administration

Responsibility for implementing this policy shall rest with the Manager Works.

Adoption and Date Due for Revision

**ADOPTED 5 AUGUST 2010
REVIEWED 20 OCTOBER 2016
REVIEWED 15 OCTOBER 2020
NEXT DUE FOR REVIEW 15 OCTOBER 2024**

The Administration of this Policy is by Works and Services Directorate.

ATTACHMENT A



APPLICATION TO CEASE VERGE SPRAYING

Shire of Manjimup
 Works Department
 PO Box 1
 MANJIMUP WA 6258

Enquiries: 9771 7780 (Shire of Manjimup Depot)

Property Owner(s) Name _____
 Owner Postal Address _____
 Owner Email Address _____
 Mobile Phone Number _____

Address of Property to cease verge spraying on boundary		
RSN	Lot	Road Name

Please tick to confirm and abide by 10.1.6 Policy Measures

- I confirm I have read policy 10.1.6 Weed Spraying of Verges Adjacent to Organic Farms and other "chemical free" properties.
- I confirm I will manage my property road verge to a standard as agreed with the Director Works and Services such that the use of chemicals is not required. This standard will generally be free from weeds (eg blackberry), and free from tall grasses and bracken fern (and other similar understory weeds and/or plants) within 3m of the road shoulder, and free of invasive grasses within any roadside drain.
- I confirm I will erect red posts at either end of the extent of the verge fronting the property indicating the length of the verge that is under the property owner's management. The posts will be in a prominent place, beyond the road shoulder and will be maintained by the property owner. Alternatively, the property owner may engage the Shire to supply and install the posts at the property owner's costs.
- I acknowledge, should the road verge not be managed in accordance to the agreed standard, the property owner/manager will be given an opportunity to remedy the deficiency within an agreed time.
- I acknowledge, if the property owner/manager is unable or unwilling to make good the deficiency within an agreed or reasonable time, and should the deficiency remain when verge spraying operations are underway on the subject road, the Shire will undertake chemical spraying of the verge in accordance with normal practice.
- As the property owner/manager I accept that the Shire will carry out its "best endeavours" but will not be held responsible with the unlikely occurrence of an accidentally sprayed verge and will not be held liable for any possible financial losses.
- As the property owner/manager I acknowledge the Shire accepts no responsibility for spray drift entering the organic property as a result of standard Shire or other reasonably defined practices.

Property Owner Signature _____ Date _____

Property Owner Signature _____ Date _____

Please note - Written confirmation will be forwarded to the Property Owner giving Director Works and Services approval to commence installation of red posts and maintenance of property road verge.

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ATTACHMENT B

