



Promoting Environmental Stewardship
in Amenity Horticulture, Landscaping
and Sports Turf

AMENITY FORUM: BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE NOTES

Specification for Weed Control Contracts

The objective of BEST PRACTICE for weed control contract operations in the amenity sector is to provide the client with **best value** whilst at the same time ensuring safety to operators and the public, and protecting the environment (particularly by preventing contamination of water courses) . To ensure that this is achieved, the highest standard of stewardship must be followed at every step from the preparation of the specification to the completion of the contract.

The specification detail prepared by the client lays down the foundation for the contract service provider to accurately assess the job, prepare a tender that will take account of all relevant costs to **comply with the law**, meet stewardship standards and ultimately **provide the best value weed control for the client**.

To comply with regulations Senior Managers with responsibility for contracts should hold the necessary qualification(s) and ensure that all the points in this guidance note are covered in the specification, for work on behalf of their organisation.

The **appropriate qualification** for managers who have total responsibility and provide the necessary advice is the BASIS Certificate in Amenity Horticulture. If no individual in the organisation has this qualification it is then essential to obtain the services of an independent BASIS qualified advisor and preferably a member of the BASIS Professional Register. In the event that an independent advisor has to be employed it would be beneficial for the manager to hold the BASIS POWER certificate.

This guidance note contains the information that a Senior Manager with responsibility for a weed control contract should ensure is prepared and used by the department. This will describe the **JOB**, the details of the **PRODUCT to be used**, the standard expected of the **APPOINTED CONTRACTOR**, the standard for an **APPOINTED EXTERNAL ADVISOR** and their **IN-HOUSE CONTRACT MANAGER**.

Remember to achieve 'BEST PRACTICE-BEST VALUE' it is critical to monitor the contractor, external advisor, review complaints and assess the final result.



THE JOB

Specify weed control required. *Non-chemical methods should always be considered as an alternative to herbicide use.*

Identify clearly where work is required:

- Location
- Type (e.g. footpaths, housing estate, sports ground)
- Area involved

The method of control will be subject to the approval of the manager.

Weeds shall include all non-cultivated vegetation growth in the areas specified.

Special Points:

- Run-off should be avoided at all times **but** identify areas where special care is required.
- Define specific environmental areas
- Identify sensitive areas.
- Make maps available wherever possible.

Time scales of the contract:

- Years/months/weeks
- Start and completion date
- Make provision for annual revision where the contract exceeds one year

Define how the standard required will be assessed and agree this with the appointed contractor. Specify the monitoring and audit procedure for health and safety, operators, products and follow up to complaints.

Standard Setting:

Examples of performance Indicators

- Weed survey
- Complaints
- External audit and internal faults
- Amount and type of chemical used
- Percentage of defects from highway inspection
- Number of accidents/incidents
- Hour clock readings from machines
- Kilometres travelled per machine
- Staff health
- Costs and budgets
- Training days per year
- Surface profiles



Specify the monitoring and audit procedures for:

1. BACCS/Amenity Assured
2. Amenity CPD
3. Sprayer testing
4. ISO 900/2000 Standard
5. Health and Safety Policy
6. Risk Assessment
7. COSHH Assessment
8. Work Method Statement
9. Environment Management Compliance and Auditing

Inspection Process

Monthly inspection

A monthly inspection would be ideal, taking account of the following:

- All streets inspected
- Defects and faults recorded
- The inspection to be undertaken by competent qualified and experienced staff
- Corrective plan recorded and timescale agreed.

Note: Audit services are available from BASIS, ADAS and other independent consultants. The 'Amenity Assured' scheme has been introduced by BACCS, NAAC and NPTC – this scheme gives a quality assurance for amenity weed control contractors.

PRODUCT DETAILS

All products used in the contract must be:

- Approved
- Designated by a qualified named advisor i.e.:
 - Internal; or
 - Appointed external advisor; and
 - Agreed with qualified Appointed Contractor.

Contractor must provide Amenity MAPP Registration Number in contract records.

Specified mixing of products must adhere to label recommendations and relevant legislation.



APPOINTED CONTRACTOR

The standard for the contractor would be:

- Member of a professional trade association (eg NAAC), and/or
- Member of an assured contractor scheme (e.g. BACCS), and/or
- Hold the Amenity Assured Scheme Certificate

Clarify the allowed use or prohibition of sub-contractors.

Identity and qualification of the contractor staff:

Manager	BASIS and/or NPTC registration number
Supervisor	NPTC registration
Operatives	NPTC registration
Trainees	Supervisor responsible

Note: There are Continuous Professional Development registrations for both BASIS (BASIS Professional Register) and NPTC (National Register of Spray Operators). It is recommended that personnel with these qualifications are used whenever possible.

The specification should direct contractors to have tractor mounted and trailed sprayers tested under the National Sprayer Testing Scheme [reference or link needed?]. Hand held equipment should follow the Guidelines in 'Check your sprayer' [reference or link needed]

The following are important points to check when appointing a contractor:

- There are satisfactory references to experience in operating public works contracts;
- There is a documented waste disposal procedure in place;
- The arrangements for transport and storage of pesticides; and
- The Emergency Procedure to be followed with the in-house contract manager, advisor and appointed contractor.

APPOINTED EXTERNAL ADVISOR

Appointed advisor must hold the BASIS Certificate Amenity Horticulture and preferably be a member of the Professional Register.

Note: Some contractors have a qualified BASIS advisor

The advisor should sign off the specification including their registration number. The advisor contract should include assessment of the weed control, contractor audit and



complaint investigation. It is preferable that a joint inspection of the work is carried out with the contractor.

CLIENT IN-HOUSE CONTRACT MANAGER

The in-house manager with day to day responsibility for the contract should as a minimum hold the BASIS POWER Certificate.

This will ensure that the manager is aware of the Code of Practice and other regulations. In addition the operation is compliant with the organisation's own policies.

USEFUL REFERENCES

Amenity Forum website: www.amenityforum.co.uk

Chemicals Regulation Directorate website: www.pesticides.co.uk

NAAC website: www.naac.co.uk

BASIS website: www.basis-reg.co.uk

NPTC website: www.nptc.org.uk

NSTS website: www.nsts.org.uk

Pesticide Legislation

FEPA Food and Environmental Protection Act 1985

COPR Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986

PPPR Plant Protection Product Regulations 2005

HASAW Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

WACA Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

RTA Road Traffic Act 1991



WMR	Waste Management Regulations 2006
MHR	Manual Handling Regulations 1994
COSHH	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 1999
EPA	Environment Protection Act 1990
RCA	Ragwort Control Act 2003
IWA	Invasive Weeds Act 1959
TCPA	Town and Country Planning Act 1990



The Amenity Forum has been established and is supported by a wide range of organisations in the amenity sector to encourage the adoption of 'Best Practice' thereby ensuring high standards of stewardship for activities to control weeds, plant pests and diseases.