



Farming Fact Sheets

Chemical Spraying

Chemicals are widely used to control weeds and pests - on farms and in forestry operations throughout Tasmania. Concerns are increasing about adverse health effects and environmental consequences of chemical spraying.

What is “chemical trespass”?

“Chemical trespass” describes situations where chemicals are used or disposed of in a manner that results in contamination of land, water, stock or plants outside the target area or causes harm to human health or the environment. This can occur unintentionally or through negligence.

How is chemical spraying regulated?

All spraying activities must occur in accordance with the *Code of Practice for Ground Spraying* or the *Code of Practice for Aerial Spraying*. These Codes provide:

- For aerial spraying, agricultural chemicals must not be discharged within 100 metres of a dwelling or over a watercourse.
- For ground spraying, agricultural chemicals must not be allowed to move off target to the extent that it may adversely affect people, their land, water, plants or stock.
- Farmers / forestry operators **must** advise all occupiers of properties within 100 metres of the target area of aerial spraying activities and **should** advise of ground spraying activities.
- Neighbours should be advised of the chemicals being used and steps being taken to avoid spray drift.
- Spraying must not adversely affect any people, plants, stock, produce, water bodies, groundwater or soil outside the target area.
- Chemicals must be applied in accordance with label directions.
- Chemicals must not be sprayed into waterways or water-logged areas unless the product is approved for such application.

The Forest Practices Code also imposes obligations on forest owners and contractors regarding chemical use. In particular, the Code provides that aerial spraying should not be conducted when there is a risk of drift into streamside reserves.

What to do if you are affected by spray drift

1. Contact the *Spray Information & Referral Unit (1800 005 244)*

Ask that the incident be investigated and action taken against the offender. You will need to provide the Spray Coordinator with the following information:

- Incident date and location
- How chemical was applied
- Weather conditions
- Name of the chemical user
- Chemical involved
- Health / environmental impacts

2. Notify the person responsible for the spraying. If possible, follow this with a written complaint

Make notes of these conversations, including dates, times and the name of any person that you speak with. Wherever possible, ask the person to provide written confirmation of advice that they give you.

3. Collect evidence regarding the incident

- Take samples of water and soil affected by the spraying. The Spray Information & Referral Unit can advise you regarding testing.
- Take photographs of the incident and / or the contamination. Label the photo with the date and time it was taken, the location and the name of the person who took the photo.

4. If you are concerned about your health, seek medical advice

Ask your doctor for a written report identifying any health concerns and whether he or she is satisfied that your condition is a consequence of the aerial spraying.

5. For forestry activities, make a formal complaint to the Chief Forest Practices Officer

Include any test results regarding health or environmental impacts of the spraying.

