

Record Keeping

Pesticide Safety Technical Note

Number 3

OFFICIAL

Record keeping

Pest Control Operators (PCOs) are licensed and regulated by the Department of Health under the **Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008** and the **Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019**. Licensing of the pest control industry is designed to protect PCOs, consumers, members of the public, and the environment from the potentially harmful effects of pesticides.

Under Regulation 89, pest control operators are required to make and keep certain records for **each** pesticide used at a job. **It is an offence to fail to keep the prescribed records for the prescribed period or create false records.**

The purpose of this technical note is to inform PCOs of the records that should be kept for **every** application of pesticide.

Records to be kept

The following details must be recorded by the pest control operator carrying out the pest control activity for every pesticide application:

- Trade name of pesticide
- Batch number of pesticide
- Specific precautions to be observed including the re-entry period
- Date of application
- Start and finish times of application
- Location of the pesticide application (including street address of property, if applicable)
- Specific location of the pesticide application within the property (i.e. areas within a property where the product was applied)
- Pests treated
- Method of application (spray or bait)
- Quantity of pesticide applied
- Rate of application or sufficient information to allow the rate of pesticide application to be determined (as expressed on the product label)

- If applied outdoors, the ambient temperature, wind direction and speed at the time of application (and any other relevant weather conditions)
- Name and licence number of the person applying the pesticide
- Name and licence number of the person supervising the application (if applicable – e.g. where the pesticide is applied by a trainee licence holder)
- Trading name, address and phone number of the business employing, engaging, or owned by the person applying the pesticide
- Name, phone number and address of the person for whom the application was carried out
- Signature of the person completing the record

All records must be kept at the business address for a minimum of three years. They should be accurate, up to date, clear, consistent, and in English. If records are completed on a smartphone or other electronic device, the PCO must ensure that these records are kept securely and available for inspection when required.

Pesticide application record template

The department has developed a pesticide application record sheet, which PCOs may use or adapt. The PCOs that already use external record sheets, must make sure they contain all the sections that are covered by the template, for each pesticide used. There is an example of a completed pesticide application record sheet available on the Pesticide Safety Website.

Weather Conditions

The Pesticide Safety team receives a considerable number of complaints from the public with regard to spray drift. Spray drift raises issues with occupational and public health. These issues include specific physical health problems, drinking water contamination, smell and air pollution concerns, general uncertainty and anxiety caused by the drift, and concern over the health of pets. Environmental issues include contamination of water sources, land, plants, and animal feed.

Spray and particulate drift include drift of chemical pesticides in granular, powder, dust or spray form. Chemicals should also be used with caution if they emit vapour drift.

The atomiser and spray settings (such as pressure, flow rate, nozzle spray angle) influence the droplet size of the chemical being sprayed. Producing pesticide droplets smaller than 50 µm -100 µm is not recommended, as these droplets are most likely to evaporate or drift.

Prior to commencing every job, a job site analysis must be completed. When applying pesticides outdoors, monitoring **wind speed**, **wind direction** and **temperature** should form part of this procedure.

In place of a wind-measuring instrument, PCOs can use the **Beaufort Wind Scale (BWS)** as a guide to assess the suitability of the weather conditions for spraying.

Remember to assess all aspects of the weather (for example: temperature, humidity, and wind direction) when deciding if it is safe to spray pesticides.

If estimating the wind force using the BWS scale, PCOs should note this on the record.

An example of how to present the data is as follows:

BWS: Force 2 'light breeze from North East (NE)'

Remember:

If the environmental conditions change significantly during application, note the time and nature of the changes.

Pesticides should not be applied if you notice drift occurring due to wind. If you notice wind blowing toward sensitive areas, postpone pesticide application until the wind stabilises and changes direction.

High temperature and low humidity lead to faster evaporation of the spray droplet, increasing chances for drift. Loss of pesticide through evaporation and drift can reduce the effectiveness from that originally calculated.

Those at greatest risk of health problems associated with spray drift are pest control operators themselves.

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