



Spray Drift

WHY IS THE APVMA INTERESTED IN SPRAY DRIFT?

The APVMA sets criteria to ensure that off target pesticide spray drift does not harm human health, the environment or Australia's international trade while the states and territories are responsible for user compliance with this criteria.

WHY THE NEW POLICY?

In 2008, the APVMA implemented the Operating Principles in Relation to Spray Drift Risk. This policy has been updated after consultations with industry and stakeholders and is designed to be more flexible and easily adapt to new technologies. The new approach provides a set of tools for calculating spray drift and setting of buffers for the APVMA and registrants.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN CHANGES IN THE NEW POLICY?

Key changes of the new policy includes:

- clearer guidelines on how regulatory acceptable levels and buffer distances are calculated in spray drift risk assessment manuals
- clearer and more consistent labelling instructions
- new buffer guidelines for bystander areas, pollinators, natural aquatic areas, vegetation areas and livestock areas
- use of the AgDISP model to determine standard downwind deposition curves for boom sprayers and aircraft
- use of European drift data for downwind deposition curves for vertical sprayers
- the development of a set of tools to generate buffer and label instructions.

WHAT SENSITIVE AREAS ARE CONSIDERED WHEN ESTABLISHING BUFFER ZONES?

Five different type of sensitive areas are considered in establishing relevant downwind buffer zones.

- bystander areas are locations where it is reasonably likely that 'bystanders' will be exposed to residues deposited on the ground from spray drift on a regular basis and for an extended period of time
- natural aquatic areas are where a watercourse is present. It does not include artificial watercourses, or areas that are dry or only 'puddles' at the time of pesticide application
- pollinator areas applies when the manager of bee hives has provided notification regarding their location to the chemical user
- vegetation areas are where 'native vegetation', 'agricultural crops' or 'landscaped gardens' are present
- livestock areas are those where livestock are grazing.

WHAT PRODUCTS DO THE NEW POLICY APPLY TO?

The new spray drift approach will initially be applied to new substances and substances under chemical review. It will also be used for all new applications where spray drift assessment will be required. The policy may be extended to legacy products on a priority and risk basis and registrants may proactively elect to use the new policy.

WHAT ABOUT STAGE TWO?

In stage two the tools could be available online and spray applicators could use them to refine buffers based on their specific situation. Ability to implement this is currently limited by state control of use legislation. The APVMA will continue to work with states and industry on stage two of this proposal once the legislative framework allows its use.



MORE INFORMATION

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