



## Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020

**To:** All Chief Executives, Senior Policy Officers, Main Contacts and APSE Contacts in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

### Key issues

- Plant protection products (PPP's) play a vital role in supporting plant health and crop production. When used safely, they protect crops and natural landscapes from native and invasive non-native species.
- Businesses and other organisations that use professional plant protection products (PPPs) and any adjuvants (substances that enhance a PPPs effectiveness), in Great Britain, are **now legally required to register** basic details of their activities with Defra by **22 June 2022**.
- This requirement **will affect local authorities** that **use** PPPs on amenity facilities/activities such as:
  - Gardening, grounds maintenance and landscaping
  - School grounds
  - Parks
  - Sports grounds, including golf courses
  - Infrastructure (including roads, pavements, pathways, waterways etc)
- Defra is trying to gain information on the volume of PPPs which are being sold/used by an organisation in a typical year, as an indication of risk.
- Compliance, risk-based visits will be undertaken after the 22 June. The purpose of the visit is to check how well organisations are complying with the duties under the plant protection product law.

## 1. Introduction

**The Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020** implement the retained **EU Official Controls Regulation** (OCR) for PPPs in Great Britain.

The OCR puts in place a framework for official controls throughout the agri-food supply chain, so it also covers areas other than PPPs.

The 2020 Regulations implement this specifically for PPPs in Great Britain.

Plant protection products play a vital role in supporting plant health and crop production. When used safely, they protect crops and natural landscapes from native and invasive non-native species. This supports domestic food production and the **maintenance of recreational, transport and amenity areas**. Official controls enable us to ensure pesticides legislation is complied with i.e. that they are used sustainably and in accordance with conditions of use.

Plant protection products (PPPs) are used to control pests, weeds and diseases, examples include:

- Insecticides
- Fungicides
- Herbicides
- Molluscicides
- Plant growth regulators.

Biocides do not fall within the scope of the 2020 Regulations.

In July 2021, Defra published a policy statement on the official controls regulations and plant protection products. Please see Defra's updated policy statement here ([click here for link](#)).

## 2. Legal Requirement to register the use of PPP's

Businesses and other organisations that use professional plant protection products (PPPs) and any adjuvants (substances that enhance or influence a PPP's effectiveness), in Great Britain are **now legally required to register** basic details of their activities with authorities by **22 June 2022** under [The Official Controls \(Plant Protection Products\) Regulations 2020](#).

This requirement **will affect local authorities** that **use** PPPs on amenity facilities/activities such as:

- Gardening, grounds maintenance and landscaping
- School grounds
- Parks
- Sports grounds, including golf courses
- Infrastructure (including roads, pavements, pathways, waterways etc).

To register **as a user**, organisations should complete the simple form available on GOV.UK ([click here for link](#)). There is detailed guidance on who should register and how they can do this. Please remember that the **deadline for notification, is 22 June 2022**.

Although this is an added requirement of organisations such as local authorities the Regulations are not looking for the address of every site where PPPs are applied but rather the main address of the user. In particular, they are trying to gain information on the volume of PPP's which are being used either by the council or by a third part on behalf of the council in a typical year, as an indication of risk. Usage is either by kgs or litres and if the council uses both liquids and granules, then they should work on the basis that one litre is equal to one kg. The basis for this approach is that volume is a proxy for risk.

In addition, businesses or organisations that import, manufacture, process, distribute or sell professional plant protection products in Great Britain must also register using a separate form found on GOV.UK ([click here for link](#)).

Retailers of amateur PPPs are also required to register basic details about their activities but they should not use either of the forms linked above. Defra will share information on how they can register soon. **This may have an impact upon any local authorities which operate nurseries/garden centres at which PPPs are sold to the public**

Defra is collecting information from businesses and organisations in Scotland and Wales on behalf of Scottish and Welsh Governments. Organisations in Northern Ireland should not register with Defra as Northern Ireland has created its own [regulations](#).

It is intended that to ensure compliance, risk-based visits will be undertaken after the 22 June. The purpose of a visit is to check how well organisations are complying with the duties under the plant protection product law.

### **3. APSE Comment**

When the issue of chemical usage in the environment is a daily news feature, quoting the loss of wildlife and pollinators as a consequence of over use of pesticides and herbicides, it is welcoming to see that Government is actively looking to monitor not only the amounts being used but also that they are being sold and used responsibly.

Although the regulations can be seen as an added burden it is important that chemical use is understood. However, Government needs to use this data not just, as a recording tool, but also as a way of setting targets to reduce the use of such products.

Many local authorities have ceased the use of certain herbicides such as glyphosate due to worries about their potential health effects and there is a growing demand from the wider public to reduce the amount of chemicals in our food chains and wider environments. With this data there is an opportunity to address some of these concerns by setting targets to reduce the amount of PPP's we use and look at more integrated approaches to managing crop productivity and managing our forests and amenity landscapes.

This issue will be discussed at the next Refuse Recycling and Street Scene Advisory Group. To ensure you receive details about this group please register for this group, if you are not already registered on the APSE Refuse Recycling and Street Scene [using this link](#).

**Wayne Priestley**

**APSE Principal Advisor**