



Code of Best Practice

Concerning the control of moles (Talpa europaea)

Version 1: April 2023.

British Pest Control Association Code of Best Practice Concerning the control of moles

A BPCA Code of Best Practice is a set of written rules which explains how people working in our industry should behave in a particular situation. It encompasses relevant legislation but is not the law in itself.

However, were a member to act outside of the norms outlined in the COBP, they may be subject to disciplinary action or be in breach of legislation. Members must abide by Codes of Best Practice

in their day-to-day work. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Association.

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British Pest Control Association

Code of Best Practice Concerning the control of moles

The management of moles is a specialist work area requiring skill, experience, time and patience to identify activity and implement an eradication plan.

Whether using mole traps or aluminium phosphide gassing products, the technician must be aware of environmental controls and the safety of people who may be around the area of concern.

This code applies to England, Scotland and Wales. Northern Ireland does not have a native mole population.

Legislation

Note: no legislation specifies exactly how often you should check traps for small ground vermin (such as moles) placed within a tunnel.

Animal Welfare Act 2006

This legislation requires a "person in control of an animal" to ensure any interaction is humane. This means we must ensure moles are controlled in a way that will cause the least amount of suffering possible. Causing unnecessary suffering would break the law.

Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

This Act makes it an offence for any person to mutilate, kick, beat, nail or otherwise impale, stab, burn, stone, crush, drown, drag or asphyxiate any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering.

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASWA) and Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992

HASWA puts responsibilities on a technician to ensure work does not impact the welfare, health or safety of anyone that might be around a treatment area.

"This Code of Best Practice aims to touch on the important points a professional must be aware of and consider, to ensure both professional and legal control of moles."



Photo: Bounty Pest Control
An exposed mole burrow.

Mole work can cause trip hazards. Improper treatment with gas can cause leakage. These risks must be mitigated to comply with the legislation.

The Poisons Act 1972

This legislation applies to products containing Aluminium Phosphide 56% w/w (weight in weight). It details specific control measures that must be in place to prevent serious harm.

The Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986

These regulations require products containing aluminium phosphide to be authorised. This means it is a legal requirement to adhere to the product label conditions.

UK Biocidal Products Regulations (BPR)

COSHH applies to any chemicals we use in pest management, including aluminium phosphide. Employers must ensure the products are adequately assessed, users are appropriately trained, and that proper measures are taken to ensure the safety of anyone involved.

The Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992

Risk assessments must be completed where necessary per the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992. The examples of hazards that should be considered include:

- Use of mole traps in public areas
- Use of mole traps in private gardens
- Use of Aluminium Phosphide for moles.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Professional fundamentals

General

1

Before starting work, ensure a thorough survey is completed to determine the areas of activity and the most appropriate locations for treatment, based on the behaviour of the target species.

2

The most effective time to control mole numbers is between October to April, when they are most active and digging new tunnels before their breeding season.

3

Ensure work records are completed and shared with the customer (in-person or electronically).

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Traps

4

Only use quality, proven mechanical devices that are in good working order.

5

Ensure you regularly check and maintain your traps to ensure continued quality.

6

Always record the number of devices used at each location and mark them to prevent injuries to passers-by. For example, avoid protruding markers that could cause trip hazards in areas where people are likely to be walking.



Photo: Bounty Pest Control
Buried mole trap with yellow identification flag.

7

Ensure all traps are retrieved at the end of the treatment.



Photo: Bounty Pest Control
Mole trap being placed into a mole burrow by a technician.

8

Active traps must be inspected at regular intervals. The technician in charge should determine the interval of checks based on on-site risk assessment and animal welfare impact. Active traps should not be left unchecked for longer than one week.

Gassing

9

Always adhere to label conditions and instructions for gassing products. The label is the law.

10

Always adhere to the Register of Accredited Metallic Phosphides Standards (RAMPS) Code of Good Practice.
ramps-uk.org

11

All users of aluminium phosphide must obtain a government-specified and accredited certificate of competence. Recognised qualifications are issued by City and Guilds, Lantra and RSPH. See the RAMPS website for more details **ramps-uk.org/training**



The British Pest Control Association requires that its members meet a range of criteria including strict abidance to all of our Codes of Best Practice. You can search for our members on the BPCA website **bPCA.org.uk/find**

BPCA makes strenuous efforts to ensure the accuracy and current relevance of its publications, which are intended for use by technically competent persons. However, this does not remove the need for technical and managerial judgement in practical situations. Nor do they confer any immunity or exemption from relevant legal requirements, including by-laws.

If you suspect something in this document is incorrect or out of date, please report it to **technical@bPCA.org.uk** so we can review it.

Essential further reading

Pest professionals that carry out mole work with aluminium phosphide should also adhere to the Register of Accredited Metallic Phosphide Standards (Ramps) UK "Ramps Code of Good Practice".

ramps-uk.org

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