Code of Best Practice

Insecticide Usage

Version 2. August 2020.

British Pest Control Association Code of Best Practice for Insecticide Usage

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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Driving excellence in pest management

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British Pest Control Association
Code of Best Practice for Insecticide Usage

This Code of Best Practice is intended to outline the legal requirements of insecticide use, as well as the best professional practice for which the BPCA expects its members to observe.

This Code of Best Practice does not cover professional use products with with a registration under the Plant Protection Products Regulation.

Fogging with insecticide.
Photo: Dealey Environmental.

Ten point plan for responsible insecticide use

1

Is treatment with an insecticide required?
Before an insecticide is applied, the pest management professional must be confident that a pest species is present. The use of insecticide without just cause is illegal. For more information see BPCA COBP for Precautionary Invertebrates Treatments.

2

Appropriate assessment
Before any insecticide application occurs, the pest control technician must be happy that the appropriate COSHH, risk and environmental assessments have been completed.

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For each treatment provide, where appropriate, suitable:

- COSHH Risk Assessment
- H&S Risk Assessment
- Environmental Risk Assessment
- Justification for treatment, for example the technician has seen the pest or a monitoring programme delivered evidence of the insects being present.

3

Use the appropriate insecticide
It is the responsibility of the pest management operator to consult the label of their chosen insecticide, to determine if it is appropriate for the pest and the location of the treatment. Consider:

- Formulation type
- Active ingredient
- Potential pest resistance status (which may require rotation of insecticide active ingredients).

Always adhere to the label and use the insecticide with the manufacturer's recommended applicator. Keep concentrated insecticide in its original container (unless mixing for use).

4

Mixing for application

- Select a safe and appropriate area for mixing
- Do not contaminate surfaces
- Wear correct PPE as stated on the product label and MSDS
- Only mix what you need.

5

Dilution and application rates
Use the correct dilution and application rates as described on the product label. Make sure your application equipment is calibrated and that you know the size of the area to be treated.

6

Application equipment
Ensure all application equipment is in good working order. Record any application equipment maintenance or checks.

7

Storage
See BPCA Codes of Best Practice: Fixed Storage of Pesticides and Vehicle Storage .

8

Treatment process
Pest management professionals should ensure that non-target species and members of the public are excluded from the treatment area if a liquid insecticide is being applied. The exclusion should remain in place until the insecticide is completely dry.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should be worn as per the product label or as per risk assessment. Application equipment should be suitable and sufficient, with maintenance records available to support this.

9

Treatment records
Reputable companies leave records of the treatments that have been carried out.
This includes information such

as the treatment location, the active ingredient and trade name, quantities of pesticide used, and any exclusion recommendations.

Competent contractors will also offer advice on when they will return if required, and on pest prevention measures to help control further infestation issues. Records should be kept for a minimum of two years.

10

Waste
Ensure insecticide waste is stored and disposed of in line with the BPCA Code of Best Practice for Pesticide Waste.

Competency

Although the current situation is that users of insecticide do not have to have a particular or legally specified qualification to use public health insecticides, it is a legal requirement to be competent in their use. Statements on labels of products form part of this legal requirement.

Example statements include "This product can only be used by people who are required to use pesticides as part of their work and who have received appropriate information, instruction and training."

With this in mind, any user of an insecticide must be able to demonstrate competence before being allowed to purchase a professional use pesticide. This could be achieved through in-house training that has been submitted for review, external formal training and then continuing professional development.

Health & Safety Site Specific/Generic Risk Assessments

Ensure appropriate assessments are done in consultation with employees:

- A treatment report for every job must be completed with relevant details ie insecticide name, quantity used, where applied, emergency contact details
- Ensure application equipment being used (sprayer, duster, etc) is safe and working properly, to ensure safe application and sound technical application. You'd expect to see records of checks being carried out - every 6 months is a good guide
- It's good practice to ensure technicians are fully up-to-date with legal use of insecticides by doing tool box talks on, for example, product labels and their importance.

Environmental Risk Assessments (ERA)

- Look for and consider the potential for risk to primary non-targets, such as pets, children and non-target wild animals
- Look for potential secondary non-target pathways, such as water courses or drains
- Consider the ways in which it might be able to contaminate these, for example breeze/ draft, rain, physical contact.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health

The COSHH hierarchy must apply to the use of all chemicals: if you do not need to use a pesticide, don't. If you do need to use one, make sure it is the most appropriate for the situation and applied "at a rate which is of lowest risk to the operator whilst still ensuring sufficient efficacy".

A written COSHH assessment for each product will inform the user of all of the hazards and properties of the product. This helps inform decisions on appropriate product selection.

Consider the active ingredients, formulation and make sure it is right for the job. Assessment should not just consider the application of the pesticide, but also the transportation and mixing of the product whilst on the customer's site.

It is a good idea to record any COSHH training with staff and ensure they are familiar with what COSHH means.

If the technician does not agree with the assessment, or does not feel competent to carry out the relevant assessment, then guidance will be required from another company representative.

ALWAYS read the label - it's the law! Image: E Lander.

Formulations

Choosing the right formulation base will form a key part of your ERA and COSHH assessments.

All formulations will have pro's and con's specific to each situation they are employed in. For example, a dust formulation may be better than a liquid for use in a void.

With all formulations the risks involved with application need to be balanced against the need for and the efficacy of the treatment.

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PPE requirements will be predicated by formulation type and the variations in pre and post-treatment safety (both to the client and operator) will have to be considered in all cases.

Waste

Insecticide waste, including associated contaminated packaging, needs to be stored and disposed of in line with UK regulations.

The BPCA COBP for Pesticide Waste should be referred to, to ensure compliance.

There is also a guidance document produced by the BPCA, with the support of the Environment Agency, for a more detailed description of your responsibilities and how to put this into practice.

Legislation

Food & Environment Protection Act (FEPA) 1985 of which the following resides under:

Control of Pesticide Regulations (COPR) 1986:

- All insecticides must gain approval under COPR (or the BPR - see below) before they can be sold or used in the UK. Products approved under COPR can be identified by a 'HSE' number on the label, e.g. 'HSE 4321'
- COPR is a piece of legislation that makes the labels of our pesticide products a legal requirement to follow
- The product label reflects the legal requirements of use. Pest controllers must consult the product label prior to every treatment to ensure safe use with regard to human health and the environment.

Biocidal Products Regulation (BPR) 2012:

- The BPR was introduced in order to harmonise regulatory standards across the EU. Products authorised under the BPR can be identified by an 'Authorisation number' on label e.g. Authorisation number UK-2019-4321
- The product label reflects the legal requirements of use. Pest controllers must consult the product label prior to every treatment to ensure safe use with regard to human health and the environment.

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 of which the following resides under:

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) and **Management of H&S at Work Regulations 1999:**

- It is a legal and professional requirement for all companies using pesticides to produce COSHH assessments for each product used. COSHH assessments are produced by consulting the product label and the manufacturer safety data sheet (MSDS).

Further reading and related legislation

- Control of Pesticide Regulations 1986
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002
- EU Biocidal Product Regulations (528/2012)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002
- The Carriage of Dangerous Goods and Use of Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations 2009
- BPCA COBP – Precautionary Treatment of Invertebrates, Pesticide Waste, Vehicle Storage, Storage of Pesticides
- EH40/2005 Workplace exposure limits.

BPCA British Pest Control Association MEMBER

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.**

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