



Keeping chemical use records (Give me one good reason!)

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Introduction

There are a number of good reasons why keeping records of chemical use can help chemical users with their business, and it's not only that keeping records is sometimes required by law.

Restricted chemical records

It is a fact that for restricted chemicals used in Victoria, that specified records of use must be made and kept for a period of two years.

The restricted chemicals that require specified records to be kept in Victoria are the Schedule 7 poisons (such as 1080 products, SpraySeed, endosulfan, Supracide etc); the ester herbicides of 2,4-D, MCPA and triclopyr, formulations of atrazine and metham sodium; and pindone concentrate products (>2.5% pindone).

These chemicals also can only be used by a person who is the holder of an Agricultural Chemical User Permit (ACUP), or who is a DPI licensed spray contractor, or who holds another appropriate authorisation for the use.

The records that are required to be made and kept for the restricted chemicals are:

1. name and address of chemical supplier;
2. name and quantity of the chemical product used;
3. batch number and where applicable, the expiry date of the product;
4. any specific written precautions received with the product in addition to the label;
5. withholding period;
6. address or location of the treated area;
7. type of vegetation in the treated area;
8. name of the pest or disease to be controlled;
9. weather conditions at application, including wind speed and direction, and temperature;
10. date and time of application;

11. rate of application;
12. method of application;
13. name and address of the person applying the chemical, or if applicable the person supervising the application;
14. any DPI or APVMA¹ permit issued (this is different to an ACUP).

Diagram 1. Example of completed spray record required for restricted chemicals. The record must be kept for two years.

1. Name and address of chemical supplier	Better Farm Supplies, Woop Woop, 3000
2. Name and quantity of chemical used	Better Farm Estericide 800 10L
3. Batch number Expiry date	68842
4. Specific written precautions in addition to the label	~
5. Withhold period	7 days
6. Address or location of treated area	Paddock 5 see map
7. Type of vegetation in the treated area	wheat
8. Pest to be controlled	capeweed
9. Temperature Wind direction Wind speed	14 C NW 10km/hour
10. Date and time of application	5 th June 2004 3.00-5.00pm
11. Rate of application	700 mL/ha
12. Application method	boom
13. Name & address of applicator	Bill Bloggs, South Rd Woop Woop, 3000
14. DPI or APVMA permit	~
Comments	~

¹ APVMA = Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Record format

DPI does not specify the format in which these records must be kept. This is in order to provide a degree of flexibility to users who may wish to keep records on computer, or in hard copy, or a combination of both. An important feature of any record is that it is readily available to a DPI authorised officer upon request.

Chemical record books that comply with the Regulations are available commercially, and a record keeping sheet that complies with the Regulations is available for free download from the DPI Chemical Standards website.

Spray contractor records

DPI licensed spraying contractors, both aerial and ground based, are required to keep the records listed above for all chemical applications, not just for the restricted chemicals.

In addition, spray contractors must “certify” each spray record with the statement “I certify that this is a true and accurate record of agricultural spraying”, and sign and date the record. Contractor’s records must also be kept for two years.

Diagram 2. Certification of all records required by DPI licensed spray contractors, in addition to the records listed above.

Name and address of person for whom the spraying was carried out	Bill Bloggs, Bloggs Road, Woop Woop, 3000
Registration number of vehicle and/or Sprayer ID	VSS 351
Name and address of the person in the business of chemical application	David Jones Pastoral Co., North Road, Woop Woop, 3000
"I certify that this is a true and accurate record of agricultural spraying"	
Signed: <i>David Jones</i>	David Jones
Dated: 5 June 2004	

Chemical users who keep their spray records in a system provided by their Quality Assurance system, or from their winery or chemical supplier, or from any other organisation need to check that it complies with the record keeping requirements for DPI restricted chemicals.

If the record keeping system supplied does not comply with the DPI restricted chemical requirements, chemical users must still record the additional information, and the most logical place for that is on the record sheet on whatever space is available.

Keeping records though is not just a matter of complying with the law. There are many circumstances where the information in a chemical user’s spray records has provided information to refute spurious allegations made by another person.

An accurate record of the spraying, made at the time of the spraying or soon after is highly regarded as evidence of how the spraying occurred.

Record benefits

Records can also provide valuable information in other cases too. There are a number of examples where a particular chemical has not performed the way it was expected to and the user suspects a problem with the product. In these cases, the Batch Number or Date of Manufacture is vital to being able to identify the sample of the batch retained by the manufacturer, because it may be important to analyse that sample.

Records of chemical use can also track chemical use patterns to aid in resistance management, and if follow up inspections are made, comments can provide local information on the effectiveness of particular chemicals against particular pests.

Making an accurate record of chemical use takes only a minute or so, which is good insurance if things go wrong later on. For all these reasons and more, there is logic in keeping chemical use records not only for the restricted chemicals as required by law, but for all chemicals used.

Further information

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