

# RESPONSIBLE PESTICIDE USE IN GUERNSEY

Guernsey's douits, streams, reservoirs and groundwater are at risk of pollution by small residues of pesticides some of which are not easily removed by water treatment processes. Safe drinking water limits are set extremely low at 100 nanograms per litre, (0.1 parts per billion).

In order to reduce chemical residues in the environment, Guernsey Water advises that pesticides (herbicides / insecticides etc) should not be applied to vulnerable areas such as stream banks, ponds, wet meadows, marshy areas, douits, drainage ditches, underground culverts or paved areas. These guidelines apply even if the areas are dry at the time of the proposed application and even if the product labelling indicates suitability for use in or near watercourses.

Pesticides should not be applied in wet or windy conditions, or if immediate rain is forecast as this will lead to run-off and contamination.



## Alternative methods "Going Green"

Where possible weed by hand, utilise mulching or weed barriers for weed control in borders, use a flame gun or hot water to scorch weeds, use "Ferric phosphate" or beer traps for slugs and snails. Vinegar acid sprays are also now available if used carefully. *Or simply learn to love your weeds and the diversity of wildlife they can bring to your garden.*

## Direct application

"Weed wipe" or gel application systems, may be carefully used up to one metre from the edge of the vulnerable areas identified above.

## Application by spraying

Spraying should not be carried out within three metres of the vulnerable areas identified above. Spraying on paved areas should be avoided if at all possible, hand weeding or direct application methods are best under these circumstances.

## Commercial application of Pesticides

The commercial application of pesticides to domestic, agricultural and horticultural premises, must only be undertaken by trained personnel holding a certificate of competence. For further advice, please contact the Health & Safety Executive on telephone number 220010. Washings from containers must not be allowed to enter surface water gullies or drains. For further advice or in the event of a spillage, Guernsey Water should be contacted on 229500.

# DON'T SPRAY THERE'S A BETTER WAY

**EVEN SMALL AMOUNTS OF PESTICIDES, INCLUDING WEEDKILLER, CAN AFFECT OUR WATER SUPPLY AND DAMAGE ECOSYSTEMS**

## **TOXIC TO WILDLIFE**

Pesticides don't just kill the weeds and insects you don't want, but impact on the wider ecosystem too, killing beneficial insects and disrupting food chains.

## **CAUSES WATER SHORTAGES**

On average we're unable to collect 250 million litres of water annually as a result of contamination from pesticides. As temperatures rise due to climate change, this adds extra pressure to our water resources and could result in water restrictions.

## **SPRAY TODAY, PAY TOMORROW**

Continued use of pesticides, inc. weedkillers, may result in the need for additional and expensive water treatment systems which will have an impact on customer bills.

## **WHAT CAN YOU DO INSTEAD?**

### **PREVENTION**

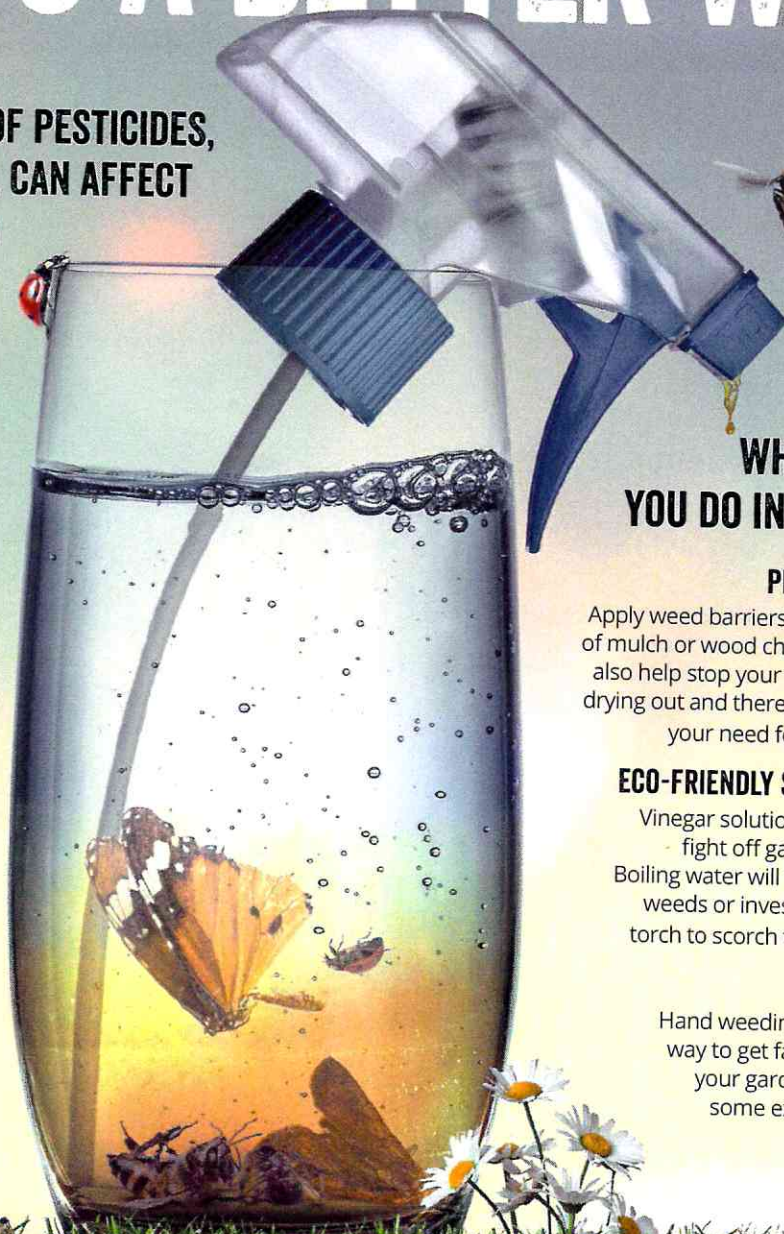
Apply weed barriers in the form of mulch or wood chips. This will also help stop your plants from drying out and therefore reduce your need for watering.

### **ECO-FRIENDLY SOLUTIONS**

Vinegar solutions can help fight off garden pests. Boiling water will tackle most weeds or invest in a weed torch to scorch them away.

### **DIY**

Hand weeding is a great way to get familiar with your garden and get some exercise too.



**DO YOUR BIT TO PROTECT GUERNSEY'S PRECIOUS  
WATER RESOURCE & ENVIRONMENT VISIT WATER.GG**

 **GuernseyWater**

#PESTICIDESNEVERGUERNSEY

## **Guidance on the Chemical Control of Japanese Knotweed in Guernsey** ***(Professional Products - NPTC Qualified Spray Operators Only\*)***

**For up to date information on pesticide approvals always check the Plant Protection Product Databases at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pesticides/databases/index.htm> as approvals may have changed since this information was written.**

Chemical control is currently one of the most successful treatments for controlling Japanese Knotweed (JKW) as it can, over time, kill its extensive rhizome system. However, complete control will seldom be achieved in one season and may take several years. It is also important to select the appropriate product, method of application and timing of applications for the individual situation.

### **Choice of herbicide & Timing of Application**

Some products that are approved for the control of JKW in the UK & elsewhere may not be approved in Guernsey. If in doubt please check with Guernsey Health & Safety Executive (HSE) before deciding on a particular treatment e.g. Picloram, & Aminopyralid based herbicides are banned in Guernsey as they pose an unacceptable risk to the environment and our water catchment networks.

Some formulations of glyphosate have UK approval for use on or near water – this is not always the case in Guernsey so please check with Guernsey Water or the HSE if in doubt.

Recent research has indicated that not only the type of herbicide but also the growth stage at which it is applied has the most influence on the control achieved (Jones et al. 2018).

JKW produces a robust rhizome system within the soil which is best controlled by a translocated herbicide that is drawn down into the roots / rhizomes to kill them. The time of year at which this is most effective is between June – October when the JKW is actively producing more rhizomes and will direct the herbicide downwards into the plant better than in the spring when transport systems within the plant favour new top growth away from the roots.

A foliar spray application of Glyphosate in late May / early June when the leaves are fully expanded followed by another at flowering time in autumn have produced the best results for the minimum use of herbicide in recent UK trials.

Other broad leaf weed killers containing the likes of **2,4D, Dicamba, Mecoprop-P, MCPA, Clopyralid, Triclopyr** etc. act in a slightly different way and did not prove as effective as glyphosate in recent trials. However, as glyphosate-based products are not selective it may be that these still have a place where surrounding plants need to be kept.

Before spraying a stand of JKW any dead stems from the previous season should be removed by cutting and safely disposed of. Where stands are too tall to treat, and it would be unsafe to do so, the JKW can be cut back and the regrowth treated when at a manageable size e.g. 1-1.5m. Again, this will be most effective once the leaves are fully expanded.

Collect the cut stems and dry them on a polythene sheet, or similar, to prevent rooting until they are dark brown before burning in situ if practical and will not cause a nuisance.

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wear the appropriate protective equipment. Also follow the local legislation when you are treating knotweed near water. Guernsey Water provides guidance on its website [www.water.gg](http://www.water.gg) on the application of herbicides within the water catchment area – see “Catchment protection”

## **2. Weed-wiper**

This method of application is restricted to certain glyphosate formulations. It may be useful in vulnerable areas because there is less risk of drift onto plants or water, less wastage of chemical onto soil and lower risk of operator contamination. Details of rates are given on the individual product label. Again, follow the local legislation when you are treating knotweed near water.

## **3. Stem treatments**

There are two basic stem treatments, one involves cutting the stems and pouring the chemical into the stem cavity and the other involves injecting the chemicals into uncut stems. The optimum timing for this is from mid-August to late September. Details of how to do this can be found on the relevant product label.

### **Useful Contacts:**

**Guernsey Water** Tel: 239500 or [www.water.gg](http://www.water.gg)

**The States Analytical Laboratory** Tel: 227612 or [statesanalytical@gov.gg](mailto:statesanalytical@gov.gg)

**Health & Safety Executive** Tel: 220010 or [hse@gov.gg](mailto:hse@gov.gg)

### **References**

Jones, D., Bruce, G., Fowler, M.S. et al. Biol Invasions (2018) ‘Optimising physiochemical control of invasive Japanese knotweed’:

Cornwall Knotweed Forum (2008). ‘Japanese Knotweed Guidance for Identification & Control’

Guernsey Water (last viewed 23/02/2021), ‘Catchment Protection’ available at <http://www.water.gg/catchment-protection>

### ***\*Use of Professional Pesticide Products***

*A certificate of competence is required to buy and use professional herbicides and to apply such treatments e.g. amenity, commercial, agricultural and horticultural premises.*

*The Guernsey College of Further Education provides a range of suitable City & Guilds NPTC courses that cover the legislation and codes of practice that must be adhered to, as well as offering qualifications for different types of application such as tractor mounted or knapsack sprayers. They can be contacted on 227500.*