



# Using Herbicides and Herbicide Best Management Practices for Dane County Parks Volunteers

Natural Areas Volunteer Handbook Revised: February 2019

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## Using Herbicides

Herbicides are one of many tools for managing undesired and invasive plants in natural areas. Typically, a combination of cutting, prescribed fire, herbicide, and seeding provides the most successful and longest lasting benefits. When used with caution and precision, herbicides do far more good than harm for natural areas. Below is a list of policies and procedures that help volunteers work with herbicides in a safe and responsible manner.

### *The following are State and Federal Laws that County volunteers must observe:*

- No one under the age of 18 will apply pesticides or assist in any way with the process.
- At a minimum, long sleeves, long pants, shoes plus socks, gloves, and eye protection must be worn for mixing, pouring, or applying herbicide.
- Applicator must read the herbicide label prior to use and follow all requirements.
- Applicator must have the herbicide label on site and accessible in case of emergency.
- Clean-up supplies, including soap and water, must be available on site.
- Restricted entry intervals (REI) listed on the label must be observed.
- Aquatic applications (below the ordinary high water mark) must be made by an applicator certified in the Aquatic category.

### *The following are additional rules set by Dane County Parks:*

- Volunteers conducting herbicide applications independently or supervising the application of herbicides by other volunteers must attend the Certified Land Steward Orientation, which includes an Herbicide Safety component (see Certified Land Steward section for more information).
- No restricted use pesticides (RUP) may be applied to county lands.
- In the event of an accident or spill, an Incident Report (Appendix 2) should be completed and forwarded to the Volunteer Coordinator.
- Volunteers treating stumps during volunteer events work under the supervision of a Certified Land Steward or staff member and do not need to receive separate herbicide training.
- Volunteers must keep track of chemical usage including: applicator name(s), date, site name, method, pesticide brand, amount used, application rate, and species targeted. The preferred way of reporting applications is online using ISMTrack; alternatively you can record your applications using the paper form in Appendix 3. Records must be submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator by December 31 of each year or made available upon request.

### *Additional recommendations:*

- Obtain Wisconsin Pesticide Applicator certification category six, Right-of-Way & Natural Areas. The county will reimburse volunteers who complete the certification.
- Applicators should let someone know where they are going to be working.
- Applicators should carry a cell phone in case of an emergency and program these numbers into their phone:
  - Human Poisonings (800) 222-1222

- Animal Poisonings (800) 224-4500
- Pesticide Spills (800) 943-0003

## Herbicide Best Management Practices

***\*\*Read and understand the herbicide label and keep it accessible at all times\*\****

Dane County Parks provides appropriate herbicide labels for all herbicide containers supplied to volunteers. Labels are attached directly to two and a half and five gallon Garlon 4 Ultra and Roundup jugs used for stump applications. Labels for eight and 32 ounce herbicides, stored in the green chemical cabinet, are in the file system on top of the cabinet. Be sure to take the matching label with you when taking herbicide from the green cabinet.

The following BMPs were adapted from the Wisconsin Pesticide Applicators Training Manual: Right-of-way and Natural Areas 7<sup>th</sup> edition.

### *Storage*

- Store in a secure location away from children and possible theft.
- Store in a dry location off the ground and in an area that is not prone to flooding and away from wells or surface water.
- Store above an impervious surface and/or in a tray to contain leaks or spills.
- Ensure containers are properly labeled and sealed.
- Do not store chemicals in old food or drink containers.
- Use mixed chemicals the same day or soon thereafter. Do not store mixed chemicals as they become unstable and lose strength over time.

### *Transportation*

- Secure chemicals in your vehicle to prevent shifting or puncturing by sharp objects.
- Transport in a ventilated rear compartment or truck bed separate from people, pets, fertilizers, food, or drinking water.
- Sturdy plastic storage bins are highly encouraged and work well to contain leaks, tip-overs, or residues.
- Always wear chemical resistant gloves when handling containers or equipment.

### *Mixing*

- Always wear personal protective equipment (PPE) including eye protection, long sleeves, gloves, and closed-toe shoes.
- Mix away from surface water, wells, or water drains where spills can result in contamination.

### *Spills*

- The 3 C's of spill management:
  - control the spill—prevent the release of further material as soon as possible.
  - contain the spill—contain material by constructing a dam with soil or kitty litter then isolate the area to keep people away.

- clean-up the spill—refer to chemical label or Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for recommendations on how to clean up the spill. You should also contact natural areas staff for guidance and to report the spill.

### *Applications*

- Wear PPE and bring fresh water, soap, and towels for washing hands and cleaning contaminated surfaces.
- Keep equipment clean and properly maintained. Periodically rinse sprayers, clean nozzles, and inspect gaskets.
- Keep the herbicide label accessible when spraying.
- A list of herbicide recommendations and application rates is in Appendix 4.

### *Posting*

Signs must be posted to notify park visitors when pesticide has been applied. Signs are available at herbicide pick up locations including the Parks Operations building and the Libby Rd. shed. Signs must remain in place until sunset of the day following application and this date must be noted on the signs.

If a park visitor questions or challenges the use of herbicides in natural areas, feel free to direct them to natural area staff. Alternatively, here are a few talking points for discussing the use of herbicides in parks:

- Volunteers receive training on the safe and appropriate use of herbicides.
- Volunteers work off a plan developed in consultation with natural areas staff, who have provided professional guidance on invasive species control and management techniques.
- Invasive species are the second most significant reason for the loss of global biological diversity behind habitat loss.
- Controlling invasive species will ultimately lead to an increase in biological diversity.
- Herbicides are only one of a handful of techniques used to control invasive species and restore natural areas. Dane County uses an integrated approach to combat invasive species.
- Certain invasive species can only be controlled when herbicides are a component of the approach.

