

FARMING & WATER SCOTLAND



Pesticides

The use of pesticides is an essential part of agriculture and horticulture to produce the quality and quantity of food society needs. However, inappropriate storage, preparation, use and disposal of pesticides can pose a significant risk to the water environment.

Pesticides must be used in accordance with the terms and instructions of the relevant product approval.

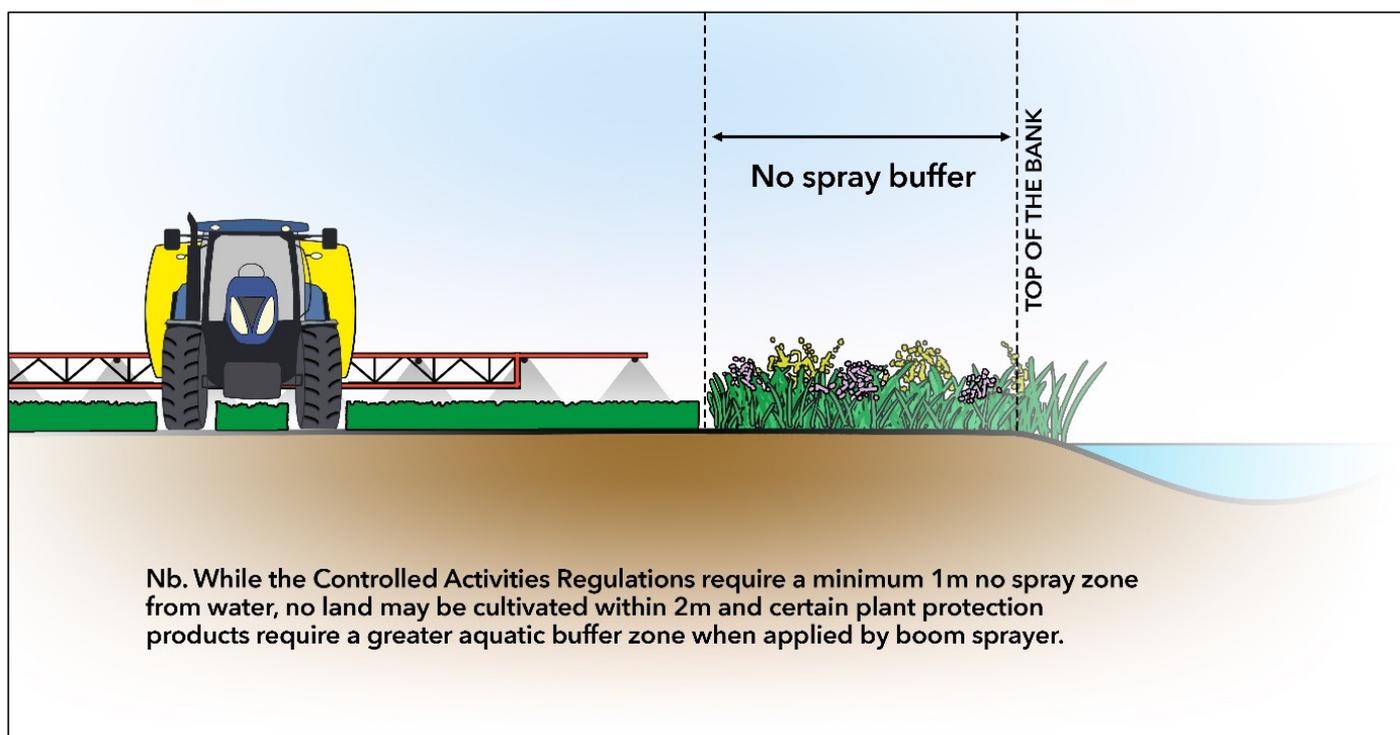


Figure 12.1. No spray buffer zone

Storage of pesticides

Pesticide, including any used packaging which has been in contact with the pesticide (particularly foil caps from the seals off pesticide containers) **must not** be stored:

- within 10 metres of the water environment
- within 50 metres of any spring that supplies water for human consumption, or any well or borehole (unless the well or borehole is capped to prevent the ingress of pesticide)
- on an impermeable surface which drains to a surface water drainage system

Unless the pesticide is stored in such a way that any leaks or spills or any exposed pesticide on used packaging cannot reach the water environment or any surface water drainage systems, including being transported by rainfall.

Preparation of pesticides

The preparation of pesticides for application, and the filling, cleaning or maintenance of pesticide sprayers or other devices used to apply pesticides:

- **must** be done in a manner which prevents spillages, run-off or washings entering the water environment or any surface water drainage system
- **must not** be done within 10 metres of the water environment (as measured from the top of the bank, or in coastal water from the shoreline) or any opening into a surface water drainage system
- pesticide sprayers **must** be maintained in a good state of repair, such that there is no leakage from any part of the equipment. The equipment must be calibrated to ensure the correct application rate
- sprayers and other pesticide application equipment **must not** be filled from the water environment unless:
 - a device preventing back syphoning is fitted to the system: or
 - the water is first placed in an intermediate container
- Pesticide treated plants **must not** be stored or soaked in the water environment.

Application of pesticide

Unless being used to control invasive non-native species, pesticide **must not** be applied into, onto or over ground, or allowed to drift onto or over ground that is:

- frozen, snow covered or waterlogged (unless controlling fungal disease and in which case all precautions are taken to minimise the risk of pesticide entering the water environment)
- within 1 metre of the water environment (Figure 12.1)

- sloping unless there is a sufficient buffer to prevent pesticide run-off entering the water environment
- within 50 metres of any spring that supplies water for human consumption, or any well or borehole (unless the well or borehole is capped to prevent the ingress of pesticide)
- impermeable draining to a surface water drainage system, or along roads, railway lines, permeable surfaces or other infrastructure unless measures are taken to minimise the risk of pesticides entering the water environment.

Application of pesticide **must** be carried out in such a way that minimises the risk of pollution of the water environment, and in particular pesticides **must not** be applied during:

- rainfall
- conditions when there is a risk that spray can drift or be blown outwith the target area.

Pesticide may be applied within 1 metre of the water environment where the pesticide is being used to control invasive non-native species (eg Giant Hogweed); and

- the pesticide product used is approved for aquatic use and no pesticide enters the water environment
- the correct equipment is used to minimise damage to non-target species
- the rules regarding application of pesticide (above) regarding weather conditions, slope and distances from water supplies are followed
- care is taken to ensure that the application does not result in excessive erosion to the banks of the water environment
- no application is made within 250 metres of an abstraction from the water environment used for providing water for human consumption.
- Contact SEPA prior to applying pesticide near water to control plants which are not classed as invasive non-native species or where pesticide is to be applied to plants in water.

Disposal of pesticide washings

Where waste pesticide washings are disposed of to land, you must hold a licence under the Controlled Activities Regulations (issued by SEPA) and you must adhere to the conditions contained within the licence.

Other options include:

- using the services of a licensed waste disposal contractor
- disposal to a biobed or biofilter (Figure 12.2) – a waste exemption must be registered with SEPA
- application to the treated or untreated crop within the terms of the product approval (ensure you do not go over the maximum dose).

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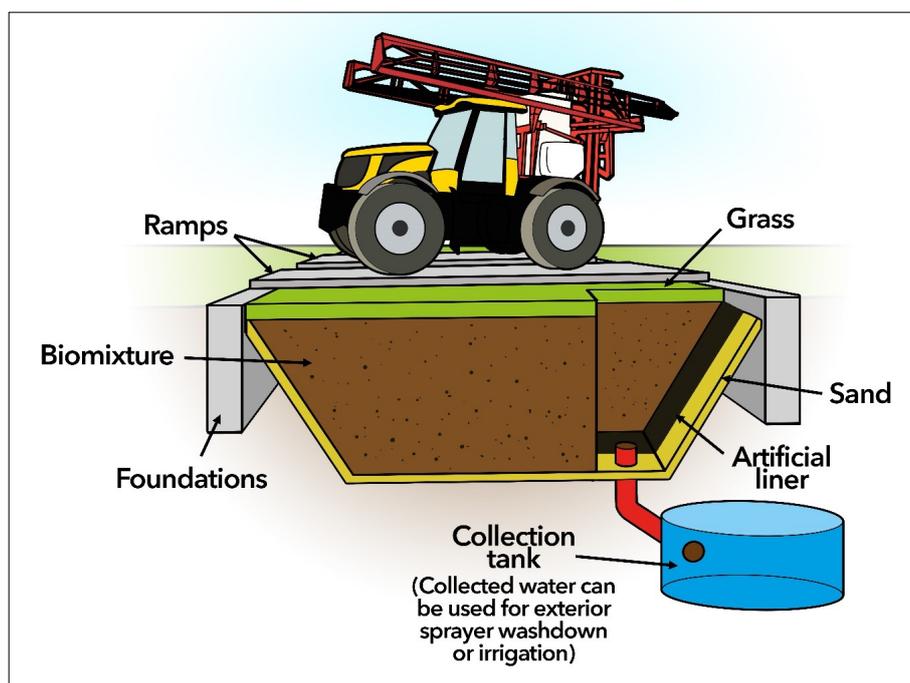


Figure 12.2. Example of a biobed.

Further guidance on obtaining an authorisation to dispose of pesticide washings to land can be found on the **SEPA website**.

Definitions:

Crop – any plant grown for a commercial purpose and includes cereals, root crops, grass and trees.

Groundwater – water below the surface of the ground in the saturation zone and in direct contact with the ground or subsoil.

Pesticides – Plant protection products (PPPs) are ‘pesticides’ that control pests, weeds and diseases. Common types of PPPs used on farms include insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, molluscicides and plant growth regulators.

Water Environment – all surface water, groundwater and wetlands.