



# Mn/DOT POLICY GUIDELINE

**Date:** May 2, 1984

**Revised:** February 12, 2003

**Reference:** Highways (including  
Bikeways) 6.2.G-1  
Use of Herbicides: Practices  
and Responsibilities

## **Guideline:**

### **I. Integrated Approach.**

The State of Minnesota is required by Minnesota Statute Section 18B.063 (2002) to use integrated pest management techniques in managing public lands including roadside rights of way. Herbicides shall be considered only part of a more comprehensive and integrated roadside maintenance program. Goals of the roadside maintenance program are to provide the public a safe, aesthetic and natural appearing roadside and to maintain a vigorous turf which helps control noxious weeds. Components of this program include mowing, fertilizing, selective brushing, reseeding, landscaping, biological pest control, establishing native grasses and wildflowers and prescribed burning. Through the integrated approach, the roadside may also become suitable cover and habitat for nesting birds and other appropriate wildlife and the use of herbicides can be minimized.

### **II. To ensure appropriate herbicide use the following practices shall be employed:**

- A. The use of herbicides shall be based on target plants to be controlled, extent of the problem and site considerations. Herbicides will be used for roadside weed and brush control, but only to the extent necessary for effectiveness results.
- B. The spot spray application technique shall be used to selectively treat areas infested with weeds, brush, or other harmful pests.
- C. Herbicides shall be applied at the proper time when weeds and/or brush are susceptible so that the minimum concentration is required. Areas where brush is undesirable should be identified and the brush controlled at an early stage. Undesirable brush should be controlled at a height less than six feet. In the event that undesirable brush is more than six feet in height, it will be cut and the regrowth treated if necessary.

- D. Weeds should be sprayed during the seedling stage and prior to flowering. To ensure that herbicides are applied at the proper time, modified work schedules and overtime for crews may be authorized.
- E. Spraying should not be attempted when noxious weeds or brush become too mature or tall for satisfactory results. In the event that the noxious weeds are too mature, the infested area will be mowed as soon as possible and the regrowth treated with herbicide, if necessary.
- F. Herbicides will be applied by licensed applicators or trained non-licensed applicators as described below. Applicators shall be aware of integrated approaches to weed and brush control. Trained, non-licensed applicators may apply general use herbicides only in the following situations:
  - 1. Trained non-licensed Mn/DOT personnel may apply contact herbicides such as glyphosate (commonly sold under Roundup tradename), pre-emergent herbicide such as oryzalin (commonly sold under Surflan tradename) and plant growth regulators to kill or suppress unwanted vegetation in rest area/travel information centers, headquarter sites, truck stations, storage yards, communication towers and around guardrails.
  - 2. Trained, non-licensed Mn/DOT personnel may apply Ready To Use (RTU) stump treatments [(excluding picloram, commonly sold under the tradenames Tordon RTU or Pathway)] to freshly cut brush stumps.
  - 3. Trained, non-licensed applicators shall use only general use and/or approved Ready to Use (RTU) products.
- G. Records shall be kept of all herbicide applications. These records shall include, but not be limited to: the date of treatment, temperature, wind direction and velocity, units treated and dosage used, location, brand name of pesticide, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registration number, company name and license number of applicator, and signature of operator. Records should be retained in a location designated by the Maintenance Area for at least five years in accordance with Minnesota Statute Section 18B.37 (2002).
- H. Proper application techniques will be used to ensure that herbicides are not applied to non-target or sensitive areas.
- J. Herbicides shall be mixed, handled and applied strictly in accordance with the product labeling.
- K. Only herbicides properly labeled for use on right-of-way and registered by the EPA, and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture will be purchased and used. In the event of conflict between the various regulations, the more restrictive requirements will apply.

- L. Herbicides should not be stored for more than 18 months. When storage is necessary, they will be stored inside and in accordance with Minnesota Department of Agriculture guidelines.
- M. Each District or Maintenance area shall develop and maintain a plan that describes it's pesticide storage, handling, and disposal practices in accordance with Minnesota Statutes Section 18B.37 Subd. 4.
- N. Drums, cans, and containers shall be properly disposed of. When possible, drums and/or containers will be returned to the vendor or recycled.

**III. Responsibilities**

- A. Area Maintenance Engineer:
  - 1. To implement and ensure enforcement of the herbicide policy;
  - 2. To assure that when Mn/DOT contracts for roadside spraying, this policy is included in the contract.
- B. Agricultural Engineer:
  - 1. To provide technical assistance;
  - 2. To make recommendations as to the type of appropriate herbicides to be used.

**Position Statement Reference:**

Issued under Mn/DOT Policy Position Statement Reference #)

**Background:**

Refer to the above referenced policy position statement

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**Douglas H. Differt, Deputy Commissioner and Chief Engineer**

**Any questions regarding this guideline should be directed to:**

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