



Amenity Forum

Guidance Note

Education, Training, Skills and Compliance



Introduction – 10 Key Points

The Amenity sector will grow stronger through the people working within it and when they are trained, qualified and practising Continual Professional Development to improve their skills. These Key Points set out the requirements and guidelines for training, qualifications, CPD and other industry requirements in the Amenity sector and further guidance is available at www.amenityforum.co.uk

Giving Advice on and/or selling Amenity Professional Plant Protection Products (PPP)

Proper training and qualification is vital for taking the amenity industry forward with adoption of integrated approaches and ensuring optimum use of pesticides.

Amenity use is intertwined with the wider environment. It is therefore imperative that decisions on weed, pest and disease control are fully assessed and planned. This is especially true related to PPP use. This places big responsibility on those making decisions on product choice, and where and when to use it. Those selling and/or advising should be professionally trained and qualified. The recognised qualification is the **BASIS CERTIFICATE IN CROP PROTECTION (AMENITY HORTICULTURE)** <https://basis-reg.co.uk/training?area=amenity-courses&course=basis-certificate-in-crop-protection-amenity-horticulture> (new link to BASIS Amenity section) which requires them to comply with legal and codes of practice requirements. There is a choice of six qualifications within the certificate. They are hard surfaces, sports turf and amenity grass, Invasive weeds and pests, shrubs and borders, aquatic weed control and forestry/arboriculture.

Operating Spray Equipment

It is a legal requirement for those applying Amenity Professional Pesticides to have received training and to be qualified.

The recognised qualifications in this area are run by [City & Guilds](#) and [Lantra](#) who offer a suite of courses and qualifications, geared to match the type of spraying/application equipment that the operator is using or intends to use. The so called “Grandfather rights” no longer exist so all users must have suitable qualification to be able to spray professional products. The old Grandfather rights to spray on your own land/area, without PA certification expired on 25 November 2015.

Storing Pesticides Properly

The Sustainable Use Regulations give clear direction that all persons with responsibility for controlling a professional pesticide store should have the training and attain the appropriate qualification.

Professional Pesticides are usually in concentrated formulations, which mean that a small quantity covers a large area. They must be used and stored in ways that ensure safety for people, water and the environment. The recognised and approved route here is the [BASIS Nominated Storekeeper](#) qualification. The code of practice states any site storing over 200 litre or Kg of professional PPP should have a suitably qualified person responsible for the store.

Foundation Award

In many sectors people who supervise pest, weed and disease control practices, or have responsibility in any way for specifying work or awarding contract should have appropriate knowledge and understanding. The recommended qualification is the BASIS Foundation Award (Kate can you add link to this course), as either a steppingstone towards the full BASIS Certificate or a qualification in its own right.

The person purchasing professional PPP's or the manager who has instructed this person to purchase PPPs has a legal duty to ensure operators applying them have the correct professional qualifications.

Continued Professional Development (CPD)

Whilst initial training is important, keeping updated, and being able to demonstrate this, is vital and a key element in the national action plan for implementing the Sustainable Use Directive.

Use of professional pesticides within the amenity sector is dynamic with increased focus:

- On integrated approaches
- Emphasis on water issues
- Use of correct product
- Timing

It is essential that those giving advice and/or selling professional pesticides in amenity, are up to date, have relevant knowledge, and are capable of giving the “industry steer” that is necessary, to achieve the desired outcomes. The recognised scheme is the BASIS Professional Register or [BASIS Amenity Training Register](#) (BAR). Points are awarded for relevant training, knowledge, and development activities and there is a minimum number of CPD points required to be attained annually.

The BAR scheme is designed for spray operators, following initial qualification, to keep them fully up to date with such things as product label changes, nozzle types, equipment requirements and so on.

The Amenity Standard

Three assurance schemes operate to the Amenity Standard they all demonstrate their commitment to best practice and compliance with requirements, minimising risk and ensuring optimum use of PPP’s and the correct approaches to weed, pest and disease control.

The [Amenity Assured Standard](#) is one of the qualifying schemes under the Amenity Standard. Those who hold the amenity Assured standard can fully demonstrate their professionalism and understanding. The scheme, operated by BASIS, sets standards and independently audits and assesses companies’/organisations’ work performance. There is an annual audit covering staff, qualifications, storage, transport, application equipment, spraying practices, and contract satisfaction. If compliant, the organisation receives an annually renewable certificate. It is important that everyone in the sector operates to the same level as the Amenity Assured standards.

The Property Care Association’s (PCA) Invasive Weed section of membership provides consumers with a means of identifying specialist contractors and consultants who can undertake invasive weed control services to help with the management of Japanese knotweed and other invasive plant species. With a strict criterion for PCA membership, members listed as experts in the control and management of invasive species are capable of offering the highest levels of technical knowledge and practical skill.

For more information on the PCA and to find a specialist invasive weed member, visit the [PCA Website](#)

The Lawn Assured Scheme was launched to provide operators in the professional lawncare sector to demonstrate they work to extremely high standards and comply with all the latest best practice and legislation. This Scheme is operated by BASIS to find out more information on this scheme please [click here](#). There is an annual audit covering staff, qualifications, storage, transport, application equipment, spraying practices, and contract satisfaction. If compliant, the organisation receives an annually renewable certificate

National Sprayer Testing Scheme - NSTS

All sprayers which require the operator to be mounted on a vehicle or carriage are required to be independently tested. Regular in-house testing of all other equipment including knapsacks whilst not a legal requirement is highly recommended and regarded as good practice

The Sustainable Use Regulations (SUR) requirement is for all sprayers 5 years old or over, and as defined above, to be tested. Having all spray equipment properly adjusted in any case makes sense for effective and cost-efficient operation. [The National Sprayer Testing Scheme \(NSTS\)](#) is operated by the AEA – Agricultural Engineers Association and is the recognised independent testing organisation. The regulations set out a cycle for repeat testing of older machines, depending on type and use. Each test is comprehensive and is geared to ensure spraying equipment is calibrated, operating well, correct nozzles, no leaks, etc. A certificate of worthiness is issued when the machine is compliant. To locate your nearest testing station, visit [The NSTS website and enter your post code](#).

Risk Assessment

A large amount of amenity PPP use has close proximity to the public, proper and thorough risk assessment is essential.

The good safety record of the industry is partly due to contractors/operators conducting individual area Risk Assessments prior to spraying work being undertaken. Such risks and issues as weather, public places, control measures required, choice of treatment, etc., should all be assessed, evaluated, recorded and acted upon with the primary aim of safety for the public, operators and the environment.

COSHH – Control of Substances Hazardous to Health

The Health & Safety at Work Act (and amendments) requires that managers and operatives should fully assess the risks of products intended to be used.

Sometimes, this relates to PPP concentrates prior to use, safety risks for the operator and the public must be assessed. All options must be considered such as non-pesticide methods of control, operator protection (PPE), method of application and training, etc., to ensure risk is removed or minimised. Once the COSHH assessment has been made, it must be recorded and acted upon to ensure that operatives are fully aware of what is required.

Integrated Approaches

The Health & Safety at Work Act (and amendments) requires that managers and operatives should fully assess the risks of products intended to be used.

Sometimes, this relates to PPP concentrates prior to use, safety risks for the operator and the public must be assessed. All options must be considered such as non-pesticide methods of control, operator protection (PPE), method of application and training, etc., to ensure risk is removed or minimised. Once the COSHH assessment has been made, it must be recorded and acted upon to ensure that operatives are fully aware of what is required.

Amenity Forum

If you are an organisation involved in the amenity sector, consider becoming a member of the Amenity Forum, and help us to drive up standards. For further information, contact the Forum Secretary, admin@amenityforum.net