

## Commonly Asked Questions

*“I am a brigade member and I am going to use herbicide for fire prevention for the first time, what do I have to do?”*

*Or, “I am a brigade member and I have been spraying the roadside outside my paddocks for years. Do I have to change what I am doing?”*

All herbicide use by CFA members should be in accordance with the Herbicide Policy and the Herbicide Use (fire prevention) Guideline and the relevant works plan. This brochure summarises the main requirements of the policy and guideline as they relate to CFA members.

Sometimes, CFA members apply herbicide for others as individuals rather than as part of a CFA activity. This is not the responsibility of CFA and is a matter between the individual and the responsible authority or owner of the land being treated.

*“Do I have to notify my neighbours or anyone else when I am about to use herbicide for the CFA?”*

As most herbicide use by CFA members for fire prevention is for municipal councils, people will usually be notified by municipalities through the normal public notice procedures (such as a notice in the local paper), unless there is a special requirement in the works plan.

*“Under what part of the CFA Act do members undertake fire prevention work like herbicide use?”*

Section 42 of the CFA Act (1958) provides authority for brigade members (except an industry brigade) to carry out activities such as herbicide use for fire prevention on private or public land.

## BENEFITS

**Safety for CFA and the public**



**Protect agriculture and the environment**



**Meet legal requirements**



*Sometimes herbicide use benefits both fire safety and the environment. For example, the ‘weed bug machine’ pictured above is used to wipe tall Phalaris, leaving the shorter native grasses which have a lower fuel load.*

## Further Information

### CFA publications

- ◆ CFA (2004) Herbicide Policy
- ◆ CFA (2004) Herbicide Use (fire prevention) Guideline
- ◆ CFA (2001) Roadside Fire Management Guidelines

### Websites

[www.cfa.vic.gov.au/business/roadsidemngmnt.htm](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/business/roadsidemngmnt.htm)  
[www.cfa.vic.gov.au/business/herbicide\\_policy.htm](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/business/herbicide_policy.htm)

### Telephone

CFA Community Safety 03 9262 8444

### Acknowledgements

AUTHORISED BY Victorian Government  
8 Lakeside Drive  
East Burwood 3151

PRINTED BY Euroa Printers Pty Ltd  
45-47 Railway Street  
Euroa 3666

PRINTED ON Recycled Paper  
December 2004



# Herbicide Use for Fire Prevention

## Herbicide Use (fire prevention) Guideline Summary



Advice to CFA members applying herbicide for fire prevention



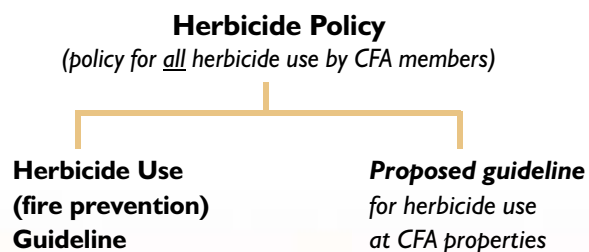
## Herbicide Use Guideline

CFA is in partnership with the community to minimise the impact of wildfire. As part of this partnership, CFA and municipalities work together to undertake fire prevention works. Sometimes these works require the use of herbicide.

CFA has developed the Herbicide Policy to ensure that herbicide use by CFA members is effective and safe for people, the environment and agriculture.

CFA has also developed the Herbicide Use (fire prevention) Guideline to provide detailed guidance regarding herbicide use by CFA members for fire prevention. This brochure is a summary of this guideline for CFA members.

It is proposed that a separate guideline be developed for weed control and small-scale herbicide use at CFA properties such as stations and fire sheds.



## Protect People Protect the Environment

### Remember if you are using herbicide:

1. Spray in accordance with the works plan.
2. Non broad scale spraying such as spot spraying is preferred where possible.
3. 'Frog friendly' glyphosate is preferred.
4. Use of selective and /or residual herbicides is supported where it is safe and there are clear reasons requiring their use.
5. Minimise the amount of herbicide stored.

## Municipal Fire Prevention Plans

As CFA herbicide use for fire prevention is usually on roadsides managed by municipal councils, the requirements of the Herbicide Use (fire prevention) Guideline will usually be a part of the normal municipal fire prevention planning process.

Herbicide use by CFA members for fire prevention should be:

1. At the request of, or with the approval of, the responsible authority, land owner or occupier.
2. Referred to or documented in the relevant Municipal Fire Prevention Plan, appendices to this plan or associated documents.
3. Based on clear vegetation and fire management objectives (goals).
4. The best option available based on a risk assessment process that considers risks, benefits and alternatives.

## Works Plans

Using a works plan is an important way for issues such as safety to be considered.

Owners or managers of the land being treated should develop works plans for all proposed CFA herbicide use for fire prevention on their land. This is usually done with the assistance of CFA, according to local arrangements.

CFA members are not responsible for developing these works plans, but members must use a relevant plan when applying herbicide for fire prevention.

A works plan should:

- ◆ Describe the herbicide works, identify risks and identify how these risks are to be managed.
- ◆ Be developed in consultation with relevant agricultural or environmental authorities to ensure that issues such as organic farms or environmentally sensitive sites are considered.
- ◆ Identify anyone that needs special notification that the works are going to occur.
- ◆ Have the necessary approvals.



*Herbicide is often used to reduce fuel loads for safe fuel reduction burning.*

## CFA Members' Responsibilities

CFA members have a responsibility to ensure that they apply herbicide safely. To achieve this, herbicide is only to be used by CFA members for fire prevention:

1. If the herbicide use is in a relevant works plan.
2. By members with an Ag/Vet Chemical Users Course certificate (formerly the Farm Chemical Users Course certificate) or an equivalent qualification, or supervision by someone with this training.
3. In accordance with the:
  - ◆ Relevant works plan,
  - ◆ Manufacturers' instructions,
  - ◆ Code of Practice for Farm Chemical Spray Application (DNRE 1999),
  - ◆ Any relevant traffic safety requirements.
4. Using correct personal protective equipment.
5. With relevant Material Safety Data Sheets available.
6. Where necessary, cleaning equipment and vehicles to minimise weed spread.

## CFA records

CFA members are required to provide a record of when they have applied herbicide for CFA. This simple record will be kept by CFA for planning and insurance purposes to protect members.

Details about local arrangements for the collection of this information will be available with the works plans.