



**Adelaide Hills**  
COUNCIL

## Agricultural Sprays

*The Adelaide Hills supports a thriving agricultural industry at the meeting of rural living and peri-urban areas. The use of agricultural sprays is an important part of local agricultural practice, with benefits to production and biosecurity.*



### Fast Facts:

- Agricultural sprays can include chemicals, but can also be foliar, or fertilising, sprays, or be used for sun protection.
- Industry groups have set standards for chemical use and all chemical users must undertake training and receive certification.
- It is the responsibility of the landholder to maintain agricultural buffers to protect adjacent vegetation and watercourses.

In recent decades the Adelaide Hills agricultural region has seen significant changes in farmland use.

Each change in land use brings with it a change in chemical pesticide and fertiliser application and, increasingly, older horticultural technology is being replaced by newer, 'cleaner and greener' techniques such as the direct action, low potency, low concentration technology seen in viticultural industries.

However, concerns can develop in the community in regards to the effects of agricultural sprays.

### Living with agricultural industry

Adelaide Hills towns and settlements have developed to their limits and are often in close vicinity to farmland. Additionally, there has been increased demand for rural living, hobby farming, and other quasi-residential development.

As a result, industry-level winemakers and horticulturalists are increasingly concerned about the potential for legal action from new residents against spray drift, noise pollution, nutrient leakage, chemical trespass, and other farming matters that have existed for many years without complaint.



Housing and service developments within residential and rural/country living zones of the district may also create tension amongst landholders, as the existing farming activities and new housing or commercial land uses may appear to be in conflict.

A good way to ease this tension is to ensure appropriate agricultural buffers.

### The importance of buffers

Buffers are an important part of living in neighbourhoods with agricultural production areas and protect both production and livelihoods in the Adelaide Hills.

A buffer is a separation between different land uses that protects the effects of one land use from another. They might take the form of open ground, vegetation, or a constructed design.

Buffers are encouraged between different land uses and rural activities that generate airborne sprays, noise, dust, and/or odour.

The primary responsibility for the provision of a buffer falls upon the new land use.

## Accreditation

Landholders who actively manage their properties with the application of herbicides, pesticides, fertilisers, and other products to improve productivity and crop yield must operate within a regulatory framework based on industry standards and guidelines, state legislation, and council policies.

ChemCert is a nationally recognised accreditation training program that landholders can complete. This then enables them to purchase and safely use agricultural chemicals within industry and government guidelines.



People seeking to become a licensed Pest Controller under the *Controlled Substances Act 1984* should seek advice from the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (SA), Rural Chemicals branch.



## Things of note

If you are noticing producers and landholders using sprays and other applications, here are some things to remember.

- You are responsible for a chemical buffer on your property if it neighbours an agricultural producer.
- To maintain a chemical buffer, specifically, consider a barrier of vegetation to minimise chemical movement.
- Sprays and applications aren't always chemical; organic compounds, sunscreens, and fertilisers are also applied.
- Always seek guidance from a licensed operator before commencing a spray program for pests, weeds, or diseases.
- Complete your training and accreditation to ensure consistent safe and effective use of agricultural sprays in the Adelaide Hills.

## Legislation

The APVMA (Agricultural Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority) is the governing body for agricultural chemicals in Australia.

The Agricultural and Veterinary Products (Control of Use) Regulations 2004 define label directions that must be followed, restrictions on certain chemicals, and fertiliser standards.

The Controlled Substances (Pesticides) Regulations 2003 covers licensing for pest controllers.

The Adelaide Hills Council has a Buffers Policy (2017) which acknowledges that its district comprises major areas of watershed and strongly diverse rural and urban land uses, and details a policy on buffers for rural land uses.

## Contact

### PIRSA Rural Chemicals Branch

[pir.sa.gov.au](http://pir.sa.gov.au)

8429 0861

[PIRSA.RuralChemicals@sa.gov.au](mailto:PIRSA.RuralChemicals@sa.gov.au)

### Adelaide Hills Council

[ahc.sa.gov.au](http://ahc.sa.gov.au)

8408 0400

[mail@ahc.sa.gov.au](mailto:mail@ahc.sa.gov.au)