

What practical steps should I take?

- Check the sprayer regularly for drips or leaks, and consider getting your sprayer tested (eg through the National Sprayer Testing Scheme).
- Complete a crop protection management plan for your farm.
- Carry out a risk assessment of where pesticides are mixed and try to use a dedicated area where any run-off or spillages can be collected.
- If you take water from the local environment to make up the pesticide solution, ensure a device to prevent back-siphoning or an intermediate container is used.
- If you mix pesticides in the field, ensure this is carried out away from any watercourses or field drains.
- Spray headlands last and try to avoid travelling over land that has just been sprayed.
- Wherever possible, wash sprayers out in the field where the pesticide has been applied.
- Carry out a risk assessment of how left over pesticide and washings are handled. Where possible apply any left over solution on the treated crop, providing this is in line with the product approval and the maximum dose is not exceeded. Alternatively consider a waste pesticide disposal licence.
- The Scotland Rural Development Programme provides funding for the construction of a biobed, which will provide an area to fill and maintain pesticide sprayers, as well as contain and treat any accidental spillages.

What is SEARS?

SEARS is a partnership delivering rural and environmental services on behalf of the Scottish Government. SEARS provides:

- a streamlined service
- easy access to information and advice
- a consistent and responsive service
- a customer focused service.

Further information

Controlled Activities Regulations: A practical guide

Specific regulatory advice about the activities you carry out.
www.sepa.org.uk/water/water_publications.aspx

Diffuse Pollution GBRs

More detailed information on the DP GBRs.

www.sepa.org.uk/wfd
www.sears.scotland.gov.uk

Guidance on best management practices

Practical advice for farmers on reducing the risk of pollution from agricultural activities.
www.sepa.org.uk/bmp

NetRegs

Up-to-date advice on environmental regulations for small and medium size businesses.
www.netregs.gov.uk

Prevention of environmental pollution from agricultural activity (PEPFAA) code guides

www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/37428/0014235.pdf
www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/46729/0024251.pdf

Pesticides: Code of practice using plant protection products in Scotland

Practical advice on how to use pesticides safely.
www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/12/19110050/0

Tibre

A Scottish Natural Heritage initiative showing how technology in farming can benefit the environment.
www.snh.org.uk/tibre

For further information on the Diffuse Pollution GBRs please get in touch with your local office or contact SEARS:

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Reducing the risk of water pollution

Diffuse Pollution General Binding Rule (DP GBR) 23: pesticide application



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What is diffuse water pollution?

Often driven by rainfall, water pollution from diffuse sources arises from the loss of potential pollutants such as nutrients, chemicals, bacteria and soil, into the local water environment. Individually, losses from land use may be of little risk to water quality, but when combined across a river catchment they can impact on ecology, drinking and bathing water quality.

Managing diffuse pollution

Both what you do on the land and how you manage run-off are key to controlling diffuse pollution. Farmers already following widely accepted standards of good practice, such as the PEPFAA Code, may already comply with the Diffuse Pollution GBRs. In force since April 2008, the DP GBRs require you to ensure that:

- pesticides are prepared/mixed and pesticide sprayers are cleaned and maintained in such a way that prevents any spillages, run-off or washings from entering the water environment;
- pesticide spraying equipment is kept in a good state of repair;
- pesticide sprayers are not filled with water taken from the water environment, unless a device preventing back-siphoning is fitted to the system, or the water is first placed in an intermediate container;
- pesticide-treated plants are not soaked in any part of the water environment.

Why are these requirements necessary?

Even small quantities of pesticide solution such as those arising from sprayer washings, faulty nozzles or leaky hoses, can have significant impacts on water quality and aquatic ecology if allowed to enter the water environment.

These DP GBRs focus primarily on the preparation and handling of pesticides and the maintenance of pesticide spraying equipment. This is because any splashes or spillages that enter drains or surrounding waters will pose a significant risk to the environment.

Benefits for the business	Benefits for the environment
Local water supplies will be protected from accidental spillages.	Water quality for wildlife and livestock will be protected.
The DP GBRs help you adhere to cross compliance requirements.	Aquatic habitats and ecosystems will be protected.
Keeping the sprayer in good order reduces wastage and helps to ensure an even and accurate application of pesticide over the crop.	

