

THE AMENITY ASSURED[®] STANDARD

AIMING TO DELIVER COMPLIANT
AND EFFECTIVE PESTICIDE
APPLICATIONS IN
THE AMENITY INDUSTRY



BASIS (Registration) Ltd



AMENITY ASSURED

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1. Introduction

*Who is responsible for work undertaken
by a contractor?
Answer - the client who appointed them.*

This booklet has been designed to help specifiers, managers, contractors and all involved in using pesticides for weed, disease, pest control and related activities in hard and permeable surfaces, grass and other amenity areas to achieve effective results.

This new Amenity Assured standard has been developed by key UK organisations (BASIS, NAAC, NPTC and CPA) which have the responsibility to address the concerns of government, local authorities and many other amenity organisations with regard to amenity weed control.

The aim of the Standard is to:

- Set standards
- Examine operators
- Audit contractor performance
- Certify staff and businesses
- Award on merit the associated qualifications
- Establish codes of good practice

2. Why is Amenity Assured Needed?

The Control of weeds, diseases and plant related pests is an important part of site hygiene, hazard prevention, aesthetics and avoidance of risk.

The safe and legally approved application of pesticides and biocides is a key part of integrated, effective and efficient control of these problems.

The application of professional products must be carried out by a qualified operator (or by one who is supervised by a qualified person).

In every facet of life there is variability in the quality of performance. To remove that variation in pesticide operation between different operators, and to ensure a consistent standard of performance, with reliability of results, value for money and minimisation of risk, it is important that work is carried out by suitably qualified, audited and approved operators (e.g. Amenity Assured).

The AMENITY ASSURED standard is also endorsed by the Chemicals Regulation Directorate, the Environment Agency, the Amenity Forum and the Crop Protection Association. Also by the Local Government Association where pesticide application is deemed the most appropriate course of action, for local authority situations.

3. What does Amenity Assured mean?

It means that organisations achieving the Amenity Assured Standard will offer the following assurances:

- High quality operational standards
- Legal compliance
- Endorsed by BASIS (Registration) Ltd
- Contractors are independently audited on-site, in office and with client each year to ensure ongoing compliance
- Code of practice compliance is an essential part of ensuring high quality performance
- Legal requirement for all operator staff to hold the relevant certificate(s) of competence in the safe use of pesticides
- Standards of operation set and examined to a high level and certificates awarded when level achieved
- National Register of Sprayer Operators membership advised

BASIS Registration listed

- Storage of pesticides to meet legal and code of practice requirements
- Managed by a nominated and certificated storekeeper
- CRD-listed pesticide products backed by BASIS qualified sales and advisory staff

4. Amenity Assured Standards

Contractors which apply pesticides to be compliant:

- Code of Practice Standards adhered to
- Audits completed to high competence level
- Best Practice Standards achieved
- Operator and store certificate current and up-to-date

Advice and recommendations

- BASIS (FSTS) qualified
- Statutory (legal) requirement

Spray Operators

- NPTC – (statutory) certification required
- National Register of Sprayer Operators recommended

Storage of pesticides

- BASIS registered storage facilities
- Nominated Storekeeper (statutory certificate required)

Transport of pesticides

- Code of Practice Standards adhered to

Machinery used

- Sprayers calibrated regularly
- National Sprayer Testing Scheme recommended

5. What does Amenity Assured mean to me as a Specifier?

As a Company, Local Authority or Utility user of pesticide application services it means that

AMENITY ASSURED CONTRACTORS

- Will adopt 'Best Practice' by following the – Code of Practice for using Plant Protection Products
- Give a reliable high standard of work
- Meet all legal requirements and standards
- Comply with high standards of environmental safety
 - Safety to the Public
 - Safety to Employees
 - Safety to Property and Business Equipment
- Meet all relevant codes of practice
- Apply only pesticides/biocides legally approved by the CRD/HSE
- Apply pesticides as per current label recommendations to meet the highest standards of product stewardship

6. How is an Amenity Assured Contractor different

Unfortunately the amenity industry includes some unprofessional contractors who may operate illegally. Their prices for work, on the face of it, can be lower but so are their standards. Protection of the public, safety of your employees and even their own staff may be compromised.

Issues that have been recorded include:

- Using non-certificated and illegal operators
- Use of non-registered pesticide stores
- Incomplete insurance for liabilities, risks, damage
- Use of non-approved products or approved products applied illegally
- Water contamination and environmental damage
- Public safety issues

These issues all lead to inconsistent job performance, risk of contamination of water and the environment and dissatisfaction with the results, leaving the employer of poor contractor services with exposure to claims and liability.

“Appointment of any contractor does not absolve the client of responsibility”

7. The problems weeds cause - and how pesticides help

Weed problems

- Types
 - Annuals
 - Perennials
 - Invasive – e.g. Japanese Knotweed

- Issues caused
 - Unsightly
 - Harmful - thistles, nettles, brambles, giant hogweed
 - Spread to other areas
 - Damage surfaces
 - Tarmac/Paving
 - Railways
 - Turf, sports pitches, golf greens
 - Fire risk
 - Encourage litter and harbour vermin
 - Reduced access
 - Poor public perception
 - Untidy = 'not bothered'
 - Image/aesthetics

How pesticides help

- Types (herbicides)
 - Total
 - Residual
 - Systemic
 - Contact
 - Selective
 - Aquatic

Benefits

- Efficiency of performance (longer lasting)
- Reliable and cost effective
- Energy efficient – lower carbon footprint
- More environmentally friendly than alternatives (when used correctly)
- Less weather dependant than alternatives

Alternative options

- Propane Burners
 - High energy (use high amounts of fossil fuel)
 - CO2 Emissions (greenhouse gases)
 - Low productivity (takes longer)
 - No residual effect on weeds
 - Access difficult with large equipment
 - Operator, public and property safety issues from burners
- Hot water / foam application
 - Same as for propane burners

- Steam
 - Same as propane burners – poor efficacy and safety
- Gels
 - Poor control of perennial weeds
 - Messy residue for a time
 - Work needs doing more often
 - Much lower efficacy of performance
- Machinery (e.g. sweepers, mowers, strimmers)
 - Less efficient
 - Costly in manpower and machinery
 - Higher use of fossil fuels
 - More frequent work requirement
 - Slow
 - Damaging to footpaths / road surfaces
- Hand labour
 - Very costly
 - Very inefficient

8. So what should I do?

- Specify an AMENITY ASSURED CONTRACTOR for all work requiring pesticide application, herbicides for weeds, fungicides for disease etc.
- **Don't rely** on contractor "Tick-box" assurances of their credibility – state on the tender that you will ask to see all current certificates (and ensure that you do check!).
- **Do rely** on the proven assurances of AMENITY ASSURED CONTRACTORS – ask to see their currently dated certificate of compliance to the AMENITY ASSURED standard.

Consequently you will experience:

- The high quality work you need and expect
- Improved safety for your site/location
- Improved safety and respect for the public and the environment
- Avoidance or reduction of liability problems
- Value for money for all work undertaken

9. How to contact us

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Other Useful Contact Numbers

Chemicals Regulation Directorate	01904 455775
Crop Protection Association	01733 355370
Environment Agency	08708 506506
NAAC	08456 448750
NPTC	024 7685 7300

"The Government believes it is important that those who use, or employ others to use, pesticides understand and adopt best practice measures to help minimise the risk of pollution. There is some evidence to suggest that the understanding of best practice within the amenity sector may not be as great as that in other situations. The Government has sought to address this, firstly, by incorporating the old voluntary code of amenity use into the revised statutory Code of Practice; and secondly, in our National Pesticide strategy by creating an amenity action plan. This plan highlights the importance of stakeholders working collaboratively. We welcome, therefore, the creation of AMENITY ASSURED which is consistent with, and will help support the work of, the national pesticide strategy. It is an important step in helping to improve standards in the Amenity Sector."

Source: Chemicals Regulation Directorate