

Technical Circular T-08/09

Date: July 30, 2009

To: All HQ Directors: Operations, Planning and Major Projects
All Regional Directors
All District Managers Transportation

Subject: Use of Herbicides for Invasive Plant Control

Purpose:

This Technical Circular amends the policy directive issued in August, 1992, regarding chemical application for vegetation and brush control.

Background:

In 1992, the Ministry discontinued the use of herbicides by its contractors for all programs except noxious weed control, i.e. – for the control of introduced plants that are particularly aggressive in growth habit, and that cause environmental degradation and economic impact.

This treatment option was retained for the program in order to comply with the *Weed Control Act*, and its *Regulations*, requiring occupiers of land to control designated noxious weeds. The selective and timely application of herbicides on these weeds remains the most practical and effective method for dealing with new infestations, and for controlling established plants that are resistant to non chemical alternatives such as cutting, pulling & digging.

In recent years, the general term “invasive plant” has been used to include not only designated noxious weeds, but other troublesome plants that have been introduced into the province, and that exhibit similar undesirable characteristics. The amended policy accommodates the discretionary use of herbicides on these plants as well, and allows MoT to be more effective in its work with other ministries when implementing “Early Detection, Rapid Response” plans for new invasives.

However, while the range of weeds potentially treated may be larger, the overall intent of the program remains unchanged. Herbicide use is still limited to the treatment of invasive plants deemed to be detrimental to ecosystems, and the work will be ancillary to existing non chemical control methods such as mowing.

Policy:

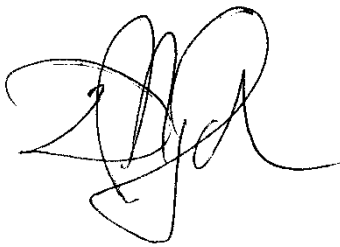
The use of herbicides for all Ministry vegetation management programs will be limited to the control of invasive plants only, as determined and approved by the Office of the Chief Engineer, in consultation with Headquarters and Regional Environmental Services Managers.

Decisions to use herbicide will be based on the net benefit of this control method in consideration of:

- Context of the specific weed site
- Alternate control methods available
- Pest Management Plan constraints
- Local stakeholder input

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