

Herbicide application requirements for urban areas including hamlets, subdivisions, parks and playgrounds.

In Canada, use of pesticides/herbicides in areas frequented by the public is regulated by several agencies.

1. Health Canada regulates which pesticides and herbicides can be used in populated or urban areas where they could be readily accessible to the public. Only those herbicides tested for safety in urban areas are registered. Landscape pesticides can be used on public properties in urban areas, including parks, sports fields, golf courses and public property when applied under the supervision of a Certified pesticide applicator. Domestic pesticides can be used on private property by the property owner and typically is pre-mixed and/or less concentrated version of the pesticide to ensure safe usage.
 - a. 2,4-D, MCPA, dicamba, mecoprop either alone or in combination carry a Landscape registration, as does glyphosate, iron chelate, horticultural vinegar and herbicidal soap
 - i. Killex is 2,4-D + mecoprop + dicamba
 - ii. Weedex is 2,4-D + mecoprop
 - iii. Par III is 2,4-D + mecoprop + dicamba
 - iv. Trillion is mecoprop + 2,4-D + MCPA + dicamba
 - v. Civitas is 2,4-D + mecoprop + dicamba
 - vi. Roundup is glyphosate
2. Alberta Environment requires that any herbicides applied on public property in urban usage, parks, playgrounds, around condominiums, schools, hospitals and daycares be licensed by Health Canada as Landscape or Domestic pesticides and be applied only under the supervision of a Certified Pesticide Applicator holding a certificate in Landscape application.

Health Canada conducts rigorous testing to ensure all pesticides, including herbicides registered in Canada pose an acceptable level of risk to the public and the environment when they are used according to label directions. However, there are still concerns from the public about the safety of herbicides being used. The following table summarizes the risks of several Landscape herbicides, along with some Industrial herbicides currently being used by the County of Vermilion River and a couple of household products for comparison.

Comparison of relative toxicities of herbicides (Health Canada data)			
Brand Name/Active ingredient	Application Classification	Oral toxicity (Eaten)	Dermal toxicity (Through skin)
2,4-D	Landscape	Moderately toxic*	Slightly toxic
mecoprop	Landscape	Moderately toxic*	Slightly toxic
Par III (2,4-D, mecoprop, dicamba)	Landscape	Moderately toxic	Slightly toxic
MCPA	Landscape	Slightly toxic	Practically non-toxic
dicamba	Landscape	Slightly toxic	Slightly toxic
Horticultural vinegar (acetic acid)	Landscape	Slightly toxic	Slightly toxic
Killex (2,4-D, mecoprop, dicamba)	Domestic	Practically non-toxic	Practically non-toxic
Roundup (glyphosate)	Landscape/Industrial	Practically non-toxic	Practically non-toxic
Clearview (aminopyralid, metsulfuronmethyl)	Industrial	Practically non-toxic	Practically non-toxic
Navius Flex (metsulfuron-methyl, aminocyclopyrachlor)	Industrial	Practically non-toxic	Practically non-toxic
Tordon 22K (picloram)	Industrial	Practically non-toxic	Practically non-toxic
Table salt (sodium chloride)	Domestic	Slightly toxic	No data
Advil (ibuprophen)	Domestic	Slightly toxic	No data
Tide Pods	Domestic	Slightly toxic	Slightly toxic
Health Canada deems that all registered pesticides have "acceptable risk levels" when used according to label directions.			
* Suspected carcinogen according to Health Canada			

Due to concerns with non-essential (or “cosmetic”) herbicide use to control unsightly but not noxious weeds like dandelions, many municipalities in Canada have restricted their use on lawns and playgrounds. Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and much of the Maritime provinces have banned cosmetic spraying of weeds and pests on lawns, gardens, parks and play areas. Spraying is allowed on boulevards and sports fields to protect public safety, as well as to manage noxious weeds. In British Columbia, many municipalities have similar restrictions. In Alberta, Edmonton, Calgary and Red Deer all limit herbicide application to only areas where needed to control noxious weeds and ensure public safety on sports fields, cemeteries. These municipalities do not allow spraying in in/besides playgrounds unless they are closed to the public at the time. The City of Lloydminster notes on their

website that they do spray for noxious weeds when needed in green spaces and parks. Buffalo Trail Public School Division sprays their sports fields during the summer when no students are present. The Town of Vermilion sprays parks and playgrounds for dandelions when needed but has no formal program or budget allocation.