

# EPA advisory about clopyralid

## Advisory notice

November 2023

### Follow the rules for clopyralid weedkiller to avoid contaminating compost

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) advises people to follow the rules for selling and using weedkillers containing clopyralid, to prevent sprayed weeds contaminating compost.

Clopyralid is used to control weeds in lawns and on farms. It doesn't break down quickly in sprayed vegetation and will persist if that vegetation is added to compost.

The same happens if animals eat sprayed vegetation. Their manure will contain clopyralid and compost made using this manure will be contaminated.

Plants grown in clopyralid-contaminated compost may be stunted, distorted, or may not germinate at all if planted from seed. A wide range of plants are affected, including beans, peas, tomatoes, lettuce, carrots, roses, and other broadleaf plants.

The EPA is contacting people selling and using clopyralid because of ongoing reports of the herbicide being detected in commercial compost.

It's important for everyone in the domestic and commercial composting chain to take steps to avoid clopyralid getting into compost and into gardens, so that susceptible plants are not harmed.

The EPA regulates products containing clopyralid under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act.

More detail about the rules for people in the clopyralid supply chain (including common products containing clopyralid): [www.epa.govt.nz/industry-areas/hazardous-substances/rules-for-hazardous-substances/high-profile-substances/how-to-keep-clopyralid-out-of-compost/](http://www.epa.govt.nz/industry-areas/hazardous-substances/rules-for-hazardous-substances/high-profile-substances/how-to-keep-clopyralid-out-of-compost/)

More information about clopyralid for gardeners: [www.epa.govt.nz/everyday-environment/gardening-products/clopyralid-weedkiller/](http://www.epa.govt.nz/everyday-environment/gardening-products/clopyralid-weedkiller/)

### How you can prevent clopyralid entering compost

#### For anyone using clopyralid

- Check you are qualified to buy and use clopyralid.
- Take reasonable steps to stop your sprays damaging the wider environment, for example:

- Tell clients what you have sprayed and that they need to put sprayed grass clippings or weeds in landfill - **not** compost, mulch or council green waste.
- If you mow lawns for clients and get rid of the clippings, put them in landfill - **not** compost, mulch or council green waste.
- Follow the specific rules for the product in the approval for clopyralid. These are on the label and the safety data sheet.

Rules for using common products containing clopyralid:

[www.epa.govt.nz/industry-areas/hazardous-substances/rules-for-hazardous-substances/high-profile-substances/how-to-keep-clopyralid-out-of-compost/#rules](http://www.epa.govt.nz/industry-areas/hazardous-substances/rules-for-hazardous-substances/high-profile-substances/how-to-keep-clopyralid-out-of-compost/#rules)

- Be aware that, where entry into the compost chain cannot be controlled, alternative products exist that are safe for compost.

### **For anyone selling clopyralid**

- Check you are selling clopyralid products to qualified users. Some clopyralid products can only be sold to workplaces. You need to get a written notification that a qualified person works at the workplace and will accept responsibility of the product.

List of common clopyralid products you can only sell to workplaces:

[www.epa.govt.nz/industry-areas/hazardous-substances/rules-for-hazardous-substances/high-profile-substances/how-to-keep-clopyralid-out-of-compost/#rules](http://www.epa.govt.nz/industry-areas/hazardous-substances/rules-for-hazardous-substances/high-profile-substances/how-to-keep-clopyralid-out-of-compost/#rules)

- Follow the specific rules for the product in the approval for clopyralid. These are on the label and the safety data sheet.

### **For anyone importing or making clopyralid products**

- Ensure the product label, packaging and safety data sheet are correct and reflect New Zealand legislative and approval controls.

### **For anyone with plants treated with clopyralid**

- Don't put plants or lawn clippings treated with clopyralid into compost, mulch, or council green waste.  
We suggest disposing of sprayed plants at a landfill or an area away from gardens.

### **For anyone with animal waste that might contain clopyralid**

- Don't put animal waste into compost if the animal has eaten plants sprayed with clopyralid.  
Animal waste should instead go to a landfill or in an area where plants not susceptible to clopyralid are located, such as grasses, corn, berries, brassica crops (includes cauliflower, brussels sprouts, and kale), tree fruit, or most woody and perennial ornamental plants.

### **For anyone making or selling compost**

- Test your compost for clopyralid or get the people who supply compost material to test their products to ensure it is not contaminated.