



Minister for the Environment; Climate Change; Peel

Our Ref: 21-012256

6009

Dear Ms Jones

HERBICIDE USE, TREE REMOVAL, EPA APPEALS AND SOUTH PERTH CITY COUNCIL

Thank you for your email dated 18 December 2007 regarding the use of herbicide, tree removal, Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) appeals and South Perth City Council.

1. Herbicide Use

I note the material you have provided on safety issues relating to herbicides and pesticides. Before a pesticide or veterinary medicine can be supplied, sold or used in Australia, it must be registered by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA). Registration of a product involves rigorous scientific assessment aimed at ensuring that when used in accordance with the label, it works, is safe and has been manufactured to high quality standards. In accordance with the governing legislation, prior to registering a product, the APVMA must be satisfied that the use of the product would not cause an undue hazard to the general public or those exposed to it during its application, to the environment, animals, plants or Australia's trade with other nations.

The APVMA operates a Chemical Review Program for re-evaluating the registration of pesticides and veterinary medicines in the marketplace where potential risks to safety and performance have been identified. A review may be initiated when new research or information has raised concerns about the use or safety of a particular chemical or product. At the completion of a chemical review, for a chemical to continue to be registered, the APVMA must be assured that the product remains safe and effective when used according to the label.

If you have any further questions regarding the safe uses of herbicide, please direct them to the APVMA through the following avenues:

29th Floor, Allendale Square, 77 St Georges Terrace, Perth 6000
Telephone: (08) 9220 5050 Facsimile: (08) 9221 4665
Email: david-templeman@dpc.wa.gov.au

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- call the enquiry line on (02) 6210 4701;
- send an on-line question through their webpage at www.apvma.wa.gov.au, once on the home page, click on Ask A Question; or
- write to APVMA at PO Box 6182, Kingston, ACT, 2604.

2. Tree Removal

I note your comments regarding the impact of mature tree removal programs on greenhouse gas emissions. The benefits of retaining and maintaining mature trees for their aesthetic and environmental values are recognised by local and State Governments. While local government tree removal policies are developed on an individual basis, the removal of mature trees is not generally common practice or policy, unless considered essential. In many situations, these trees are replaced by more appropriate species.

Local governments may keep statistics on the number of mature trees removed from within their area, therefore the use of a 'Tree Carbon Calculator', such as the one developed by the Cooperative Research Centre for Greenhouse Accounting, would be beneficial. Unfortunately the Tree Benefits Estimator on the Sacramento Municipal Utilities District website does not list Australian tree species but the concept is similar to that of the Tree Carbon Calculator, which can be accessed via the following link http://www.greenhouse.crc.org.au/counting_carbon/forests.cfm.

The Western Australian State Government and some local governments are committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, in particular by ensuring their car fleet is greenhouse neutral. This includes emission 'offsets' which may include the planting of trees, either as plantations or in conservation plantings. The planting of trees provides additional benefits to the environment, including reductions in salinity, wind erosion problems, waterlogging and farm fertiliser runoff, as well as the regeneration of local ecosystems and habitats.

Extensive tree planting programs are operating in this State. For example, in August 2006, the Australian and Western Australian Governments launched the \$64 million Strategic Tree Farming program, which is managed by the Forest Products Commission to abate greenhouse gas emissions and combat salinity. There are also a number of other initiatives highlighted in the Western Australian Greenhouse Strategy in relation to carbon sequestration that you may find of interest. A copy of the strategy can be accessed via the following link www.greenhouse.wa.gov.au.

3. EPA Appeals Process

In relation to your question on the appeals process, you will be aware that the Appeals Convenor is independent of both myself and the EPA, and he has his own procedures in place regarding meetings with appellants. You should direct your queries and concerns to his office.

4. South Perth City Council

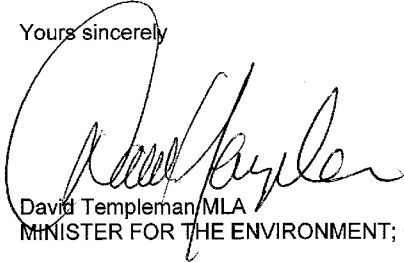
The clearing of mature trees on public land in urban areas is typically not regulated by the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* and is generally a local government matter.

I recognise that mature trees, particularly native trees, often provide significant aesthetic and habitat values in an urban context. These values must be balanced against the need for orderly planning and public safety. I am pleased that the development of a

Model Tree Policy for the Protection of Mature Trees on Public Lands is proposed. As the matter of protection of mature trees in an urban environment falls largely within their portfolios, I consider that the Ministers for Planning and Infrastructure and Local Government are most appropriate to lead this policy. The Department of Environment and Conservation could provide input and advice if necessary.

I appreciate you bringing these issues to the Government's attention.

Yours sincerely



David Templeman/MLA
MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT; CLIMATE CHANGE; PEEL

13 FEB 2000