

Reference Number: 2023/965

7 June 2023

[REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Response - Official Information Request

I refer to your request for information received on 10 May 2023. Your request has been considered under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) and I provide the following information.

“What chemicals (pesticides, herbicides, fungicides etc.) does the council apply to areas of wood chip or bark mulch on council owned and / or operated parks, recreational areas, and reserves (any public area where people may be foraging for mushrooms)?”

Although Council’s Open Space Maintenance Contractor do not generally use glyphosate in playground areas, if application of an herbicide is necessary in such areas to remove well established woody-perennial weeds, treatment would generally be confined specifically to the problem area. Glyphosate is not used on actively used sports fields.

“What chemicals (pesticides, herbicides, fungicides etc.) does the council apply to grass areas on council owned and/or operated parks, recreational areas, and reserves (any public area where people may be foraging for mushrooms)?”

Council uses glyphosate in public spaces including reserves and road reserves. Horowhenua District Council’s Open Space Contractor is Growsafe accredited, and applies glyphosate in line with manufacturer’s recommendations and as per the advice of the NZ Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

“What steps are undertaken to notify the public about areas that have been sprayed?”

Council does not notify the public about areas that have been sprayed, but has strict controls in place around what can be sprayed and the times that spraying can take place – weather conditions, equipment (to apply the minimum amount of spray by having adjustable low flow nozzles), and pedestrian levels are all considered before spraying takes place. Council also limits the times that spraying takes place near schools, playgrounds and kindergartens.

Council also operates a 'no-spray' register whereby residents can choose not to have glyphosate used on road reserves in the urban areas and wall lines outside their private houses. Once a property is put on the 'no-spray' list, the resident will then be responsible for weed control.

"Does the council spray any areas as a response to the growth of illegal (psilocybin containing) mushrooms?"

Council do not spray any areas as a response to the growth of illegal psilocybin containing mushrooms.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or free phone 0800 802 602.

Horowhenua District Council publishes responses to Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) requests that we consider to be of wider public interest, or which relate to a subject that has been widely requested. To protect your privacy, we will not generally publish personal information about you, or information that identifies you. We will publish the LGOIMA response along with a summary of the request on our website. Requests and responses may be paraphrased.

If you have any queries regarding this information, please contact the LGOIMA Officer on LGOIMAOfficer@horowhenua.govt.nz

Ngā mihi



Steve McTaylor-Biggs
Executive Sponsor