



Relevant legislation covering plant protection products

Codes of practices, references and guides for technical managers

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WHAT I WILL COVER

- Key legal instruments covering plant protection products and their relevance
- Timelines of various legal instruments and amendments
- Statutory instruments – codes of practice and guides
- COSHH, HSWA and LERAP requirements
- Summary

Definitions - Acts, Regulations, and Codes of Practice

- Acts are the broad laws passed by a legislature, which give the government power to create detailed regulations. Regulations are the specific rules made by government agencies under the authority of an act to implement its general principles. Essentially, an act provides the framework and objectives, while the regulations provide the specific, practical instructions on how to comply.
- Regulations are the mandatory legal requirements, while codes of practice offer guidance on how to meet those requirements. Regulations are the 'what' you must do, and codes of practice provide the 'how', often through recommended or preferred methods. Codes of practice can be issued by regulatory bodies to help organisations understand and comply with the law.

Key Legal Instruments Covering PPPs

Timelines (note relevant pollution regulation not covered due to time restrictions)

Year	Legislation Title	Purpose	Territory	Status
1985	Food and Environment Protection Act 1985	Primary Act providing powers for PPP/pesticide regulation	UK-wide	Active
1986	Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986 (S.I. 1986/1510)	Early control and approval of pesticides	UK	Partially superseded
1998	Pesticides Act 1998	Amends FEPA and strengthens enforcement	UK	Active
2005	Plant Protection Products Regulations 2005 (S.I. 2005/1435)	Authorisation and placing on market	England / Wales	Retained
2005	Plant Protection Products (Scotland) Regulations 2005 (S.S.I. 2005/331)	Scottish equivalent to 2005 regulations	Scotland	Retained
2005	Plant Protection Products Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 (SR 2005/526)	Northern Ireland version	NI	Active
2009	Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009	EU framework for authorisation of PPPs (retained post-Brexit)	GB / NI	Retained
2012	Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/1657)	Transposes Directive 2009/128/EC on sustainable use	UK	Active
2020	Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020 (S.I. 2020/552)	Introduces official controls and operator registration	GB	Active
2023	Plant Protection Products (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2023 (S.I. 2023/1321)	Post-Brexit updates and transitional measures	GB	Active

1. EU Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009

Practical Implications for UK Stakeholders

- Professional Users (e.g., farmers, land managers, local authorities):
 - ✓ May only use **authorised products** and must follow label conditions precisely.
 - ✓ Must take all reasonable precautions to **protect human health and the environment**, as reinforced by the UK's Sustainable Use Regulations 2012.
 - ✓ Safe storage, application, and disposal practices are mandatory.

2. Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/1657)

Practical Implications for UK Stakeholders

- Professional Users (Farmers, Growers, Groundskeepers, Contractors)
 - ✓ Must take **all reasonable precautions** to protect human health and the environment when using PPPs.
 - ✓ Can only apply **authorised products** and must follow label instructions precisely (dose, frequency, target area, buffer zones).
 - ✓ Must ensure **spraying equipment is tested, maintained, and calibrated** (regular equipment inspections required).
 - ✓ Need to hold **proper certification/training** (e.g., NPTC or City & Guilds pesticide application certificates).
 - ✓ Must store PPPs securely and dispose of **leftover product, containers, and washings safely**, preventing contamination of soil and water.
 - ✓ Should **minimise use** by adopting **integrated pest management (IPM)** — using non-chemical alternatives where possible.
- Employers (Agricultural, Local Authority, or Contracting Organisations)
 - ✓ Responsible for ensuring all employees who use PPPs are **properly trained** and supervised.
 - ✓ Must provide **protective equipment** and enforce safe working practices.
 - ✓ Required to assess risks to operators, bystanders, and the environment under **Health and Safety at Work** and **COSHH** principles.

3. Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020 (S.I. 2020/552)

Practical Implications for UK Stakeholders

- Professional Users (Farmers, Groundskeepers, Local Authorities, Contractors)
 - ✓ May be subject to inspection to ensure they are using **only approved PPPs** in accordance with conditions of use.
 - ✓ Must be able to **demonstrate compliance** with sustainable use and record-keeping obligations (e.g. pesticide usage logs).
 - ✓ Required to cooperate with official inspectors and provide access to premises, equipment, and documentation.

Codes of Practices

Summary table

Area	Main Code	Key Focus	Applies To
Safe use of PPPs	Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products click here	Training, use, storage, disposal	GB
Distribution and sales	Code of Practice for Suppliers of Pesticides click here	Authorisation, buyer checks, records	GB
Workplace safety	COSHH and HSWA Codes	Exposure control, PPE, health surveillance	UK
Northern Ireland	DAERA Code of Practice	EU-aligned use and environmental protection	NI

Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products

Purpose and Legal Context

This Code translates **legal duties** under UK pesticide law into **everyday working standards**.

It supports compliance with:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA)

- The Food and Environment Protection Act 1985 (FEPA)

- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002

- The Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/1657)

It applies to **everyone** involved in the storage, supply, use, and disposal of PPPs in Great Britain.

Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products

Practical Implications for Key Stakeholders

A. Professional Users (Farmers, Growers, Groundskeepers, Contractors)

- ✓ Must hold **appropriate training and certification** (e.g., NPTC, BASIS, City & Guilds).
- ✓ Must **only use authorised products**, following label instructions precisely (dose, timing, target area).
- ✓ Required to **assess risks** before each application — to people, wildlife, and water.
- ✓ Must **maintain equipment** in good working order and have sprayers inspected regularly.
- ✓ Expected to **record all PPP applications** (date, product, dose, area, weather conditions).
- ✓ Must **prevent pollution** — use buffer zones, protect watercourses, and dispose of residues properly.
- ✓ Should prioritise **Integrated Pest Management (IPM)** — use non-chemical methods where possible.

Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products

Practical Implications for Key Stakeholders

B. Employers and Land Managers

Must ensure all operators are **trained, competent, and supervised**.

Required to conduct **COSHH risk assessments** for employees who handle or are exposed to PPPs.

Must provide **appropriate PPE** and ensure it's used and maintained.

Responsible for safe **storage, transport, and disposal** of products and packaging.

Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products

Practical Implications for Key Stakeholders

C. Distributors, Retailers, and Suppliers

Can only supply **authorised** PPPs to trained or certified buyers.

Must store products safely and **keep sales records**.

Should provide buyers with **product safety data** and guidance on correct use.

Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products

Practical Implications for Key Stakeholders

D. Environmental and Water Protection Stakeholders

Must cooperate with **catchment-sensitive farming initiatives** and water stewardship programmes.

Should avoid application near **surface water, drains, and protected habitats**.

Expected to manage handling areas and spills to prevent run-off or contamination.

Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products

Enforcement and Compliance

- The Code is **not itself law**, but **compliance provides legal protection** — it shows you've taken all reasonable steps to meet legal duties.
- Regulators (HSE, Environment Agency, DEFRA, and local authorities) use the Code as a **benchmark during inspections**.
- **Non-compliance** can lead to enforcement notices, fines, or prosecution under FEPA or HSWA.

Definitions – Hazard and Risk

A hazard is a **potential** source of harm, while risk is the **likelihood** that the hazard will cause harm and the **severity** of that harm. In simpler terms, a hazard is what can cause harm (e.g., a sharp knife), and risk is the chance of being hurt by that hazard, and how bad it would be (e.g., the risk of cutting yourself while chopping vegetables).

Workplace safety - COSHH and PPP Use in the UK

What COSHH Covers

- COSHH is the main UK law protecting workers from **harmful substances** — including **PPPs, adjuvants, and treated materials**.
- It applies to **all workplaces** where PPPs are stored, mixed, handled, or applied — from farms and golf courses to councils and pest control services.
- The goal: **prevent or control exposure** to substances hazardous to health using a hierarchy of use options and control measures.

Workplace safety - COSHH and PPP Use in the UK

Key Legal Duties

A. Assess the Risks (COSHH Regulation 6)

Before using any PPP, the employer or user must carry out a **risk assessment** covering:

- ✓ The product's **hazards** (from the label or Safety Data Sheet).
- ✓ How it will be used and the risks associated with it — mixing, spraying, cleaning equipment, etc.
- ✓ Who might be exposed — operator, bystanders, the public, animals.
- ✓ Where exposure could occur — skin contact, inhalation, ingestion.

If risks are significant, measures must be taken to **reduce or eliminate exposure**.

Workplace safety - COSHH and PPE Use in the UK

Key Legal Duties

B. Prevent or Control Exposure (Regulations 7–8)

Do not use.

Avoid exposure if possible (e.g., switch to a less hazardous method or product).

If not, use **engineering controls** and **safe systems of work**:

- ✓ Closed transfer systems, enclosed cabs, or low-drift nozzles.
- ✓ Mixing/loading in designated areas away from drains or water.
- ✓ Good ventilation during indoor applications.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is a last line of defence — gloves, coveralls, masks, or visors as specified on the product label.

Workplace safety - COSHH and PPP Use in the UK

Key Legal Duties

C. Maintain and Inspect Controls (Regulation 9)

- ✓ Application equipment (e.g., knapsacks, sprayers) must be **maintained and inspected regularly**.
- ✓ PPE should be **checked, cleaned, and replaced** as necessary.
- ✓ Records of maintenance and inspections should be kept.

D. Monitor Exposure and Health (Regulations 10–11)

If there's a risk of harmful exposure, employers may need to:

- ✓ Monitor exposure levels (e.g., air sampling or contamination checks).
- ✓ Provide health surveillance (for operators regularly handling PPPs).

Medical advice should be sought if symptoms of poisoning or irritation occur.

Workplace safety - COSHH and PPP Use in the UK

Key Legal Duties

E. Training and Information (Regulation 12)

All employees must receive **training and instruction** on:

- ✓ Safe handling and use of PPPs.
- ✓ Emergency actions (spills, poisoning, first aid).
- ✓ Proper use and care of PPE.

Records of training should be maintained and updated regularly.

Workplace safety - COSHH and PPP Use in the UK

Key Legal Duties

F. Emergency Procedures (Regulation 13)

- ✓ Must have clear procedures for spills, leaks, and accidental exposure.
- ✓ Provide suitable first aid facilities and emergency wash areas.
- ✓ Spill kits and absorbent materials should be accessible near storage and mixing areas.

Workplace safety - COSHH and PPP Use in the UK

Documentation and Records

Keep the following on site and up to date:

- ✓ COSHH risk assessments (for all hazardous materials).
- ✓ Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for all products used.
- ✓ Equipment and PPE maintenance logs.
- ✓ PPP application records.
- ✓ Training and certification records for operators.

Workplace safety - COSHH and PPP Use in the UK

Enforcement and Penalties

- ✓ Enforced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Local Authorities.
- ✓ Breaches can result in Improvement Notices, Prohibition Notices, or prosecution under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare

Purpose and Scope

- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 require employers to ensure that the **workplace environment and facilities** are safe, healthy, and suitable for employees.
- These regulations **apply to all premises** where PPPs are handled, stored, or used — including farms, glasshouses, depots, golf courses, local authority stores, and contracting bases.
- They sit under the **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA)** and complement more specific rules like **COSHH** and the **Sustainable Use Regulations 2012**.

Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare

Key Practical Requirements

A. Workplace Conditions

- ✓ Clean, well-maintained, and adequately ventilated areas must be provided for mixing, decanting, and storing PPPs.
- ✓ Surfaces should be **impermeable and easy to clean** to prevent contamination or chemical absorption.
- ✓ **Good lighting** is essential for reading labels, measuring products, and checking for leaks or spills.
- ✓ Areas must be **free from obstructions** and designed to reduce trip or spill risks.

Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare

Key Practical Requirements

B. Washing, Changing, and Sanitary Facilities

- ✓ Provide **handwashing facilities** near PPP mixing and filling areas — with running water, soap, and towels.
- ✓ Workers handling PPPs must have access to **washing and changing areas** separate from eating spaces.
- ✓ **Emergency eyewash and drench facilities** should be available near storage or mixing points.
- ✓ Ensure **toilets and rest areas** are clean and kept away from PPP storage zones.

Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare

Key Practical Requirements

C. Safe Storage of PPPs

- ✓ PPPs must be stored in a **dedicated, lockable, and ventilated store** that prevents contamination and protects against fire and spills.
- ✓ Stores should be **clearly marked with warning signs** and kept away from food, feed, and animal housing.
- ✓ **Secondary containment** (bunds or trays) should be used to catch leaks or spills.
- ✓ Keep **spillage kits and absorbent materials** on hand and train staff in their use.

Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare

Key Practical Requirements

D. Safe Working Practices

- ✓ Provide **written safety procedures** for handling, mixing, and applying PPPs.
- ✓ Ensure **training and supervision** for all employees and contractors handling PPPs.
- ✓ Prohibit **eating, drinking, or smoking** in any area where PPPs are present.
- ✓ Keep **clear emergency procedures** visible and ensure all workers know what to do in case of spills, exposure, or fire.

Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare

Key Practical Requirements

E. Welfare for Outdoor and Protected Workers

Where PPPs are used outdoors (e.g. farms, amenity areas, forestry), employers must:

- ✓ Provide **mobile washing or cleaning kits** when fixed facilities are not nearby.
- ✓ Ensure workers have access to **drinking water, shelter, and rest breaks**.
- ✓ Supply **suitable PPE** (coveralls, boots, face shields, masks, RPE, SRSU gloves etc) and ensure safe removal and cleaning at the end of tasks.
- ✓ Thermal Comfort Checklist – [click here](#)

Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare

Employer Responsibilities

- Carry out **risk assessments** to identify workplace hazards related to PPP use.
- Maintain **records** of inspections, cleaning, and maintenance of stores and equipment.
- Ensure **first aiders** are trained to respond to PPP exposure incidents.
- Display **emergency contact numbers** and **Safety Data Sheets (SDS)** in storage and mixing areas.

Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare

Enforcement and Accountability

- Enforced by the **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)**.
- Inspections may include checking:
 - ✓ Condition of PPP stores.
 - ✓ Welfare and washing facilities.
 - ✓ Training records and risk assessments.
- Breaches may result in **Improvement or Prohibition Notices**, or prosecution under HSWA.

LERAP (Local Environmental Risk Assessment for Pesticides, UK)

What is LERAP?

- LERAP stands for Local Environmental Risk Assessment for Pesticides.
- It's a UK-specific legal requirement (under the *Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations 2012*) designed to protect **watercourses, hedgerows, and aquatic habitats** from spray drift and contamination.
- Applies to professional PPP users when using products near **ditches, streams, rivers, ponds, or lakes**.

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LERAP (Local Environmental Risk Assessment for Pesticides, UK)

Why It Matters

- Many PPPs are harmful to aquatic life.
- The LERAP system allows **risk-based flexibility** — operators can reduce statutory buffer zones **only** if they can demonstrate reduced environmental risk.
- Following LERAP guidance ensures compliance and helps prevent **water pollution incidents** and **cross-compliance penalties** (for farm assurance or environmental schemes).

LERAP (Local Environmental Risk Assessment for Pesticides, UK)

When LERAP Applies

- LERAP must be carried out **before spraying** any PPP:
- Near **watercourses** or **dry ditches** that could carry water within 6 months.
- When the product label carries a statement like:
- **LERAP A** - Fixed buffer zone – **no reduction allowed**, must maintain full statutory buffer (usually **5 m**)
- **LERAP B** - Adjustable buffer zone – **reduction possible**, may reduce from 5 m → 1 m if local assessment supports it
- Carrying out and recording LERAP – [click here](#)

SUMMARY

- Legislation is complex (*and much is now old*) and captures various interchangeable statutory instruments.
- Tiered approach from Acts of Parliament to Codes of Practices and guidance factsheets.
- HSE is the main source as reference for managing PPPs on farms/nurseries.
- Users and employers have their roles and responsibilities.
- Official Controls regulations provide End-to-End control of PPP, transparency and ‘audit 365’.
- *Note other Pollution Regulations and Codes of Practice also impact PPP transport, storage, mixing, application, and disposal.*