

Application of pesticides using vehicles

Following a request from the Crop Protection Association, the Health and Safety Executive has issued the following statement giving HSE's view on what constitutes good practice in applying pesticides using a vehicle such as an ATV, quad bike, mini tractor or similar vehicle on footpaths or in other public areas:

- Employers of spraying contractors and sprayer operators have a duty of care to those who may be affected by their application of pesticides. Whether or not a particular method of application can be considered to be safe in terms of operator, public or environmental safety at any point of time should be considered in a site specific risk assessment.
- Applications should only be carried out by competent, trained (certificated) operators.
- Drivers/operators should not hold a spraying lance while riding on such a vehicle as two hands are generally needed for safe control, particularly where there is a risk of encountering people, animals, uneven surfaces or obstacles.
- The use of hand-held pesticide application equipment by the driver of a moving vehicle is not appropriate and does not represent good practice in applying pesticides. Hand lances may be attached to or carried on vehicles but should only be used when the vehicle is stationary and not in gear.
- Further guidance can be found in HSE's Agriculture Information Sheet 33 (AIS 33) 'Safe Use of ATVs in Agriculture and Forestry' (see <http://hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais33.pdf>) and the jointly badged 'Pesticides; Code of practice for using plant protection products' published by Defra in January 2006 (see <http://www.pesticides.gov.uk>).

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Addendum

This statement has not changed the legal position on the use of hand lances, but simply sets out what is seen as good practice. The key requirement continues to be the use of a site specific risk assessment to assess whether the measures you choose to take will reduce risks to employees and others 'so far as is reasonably practicable' (SFAIRP) to meet the requirements of health and safety legislation.