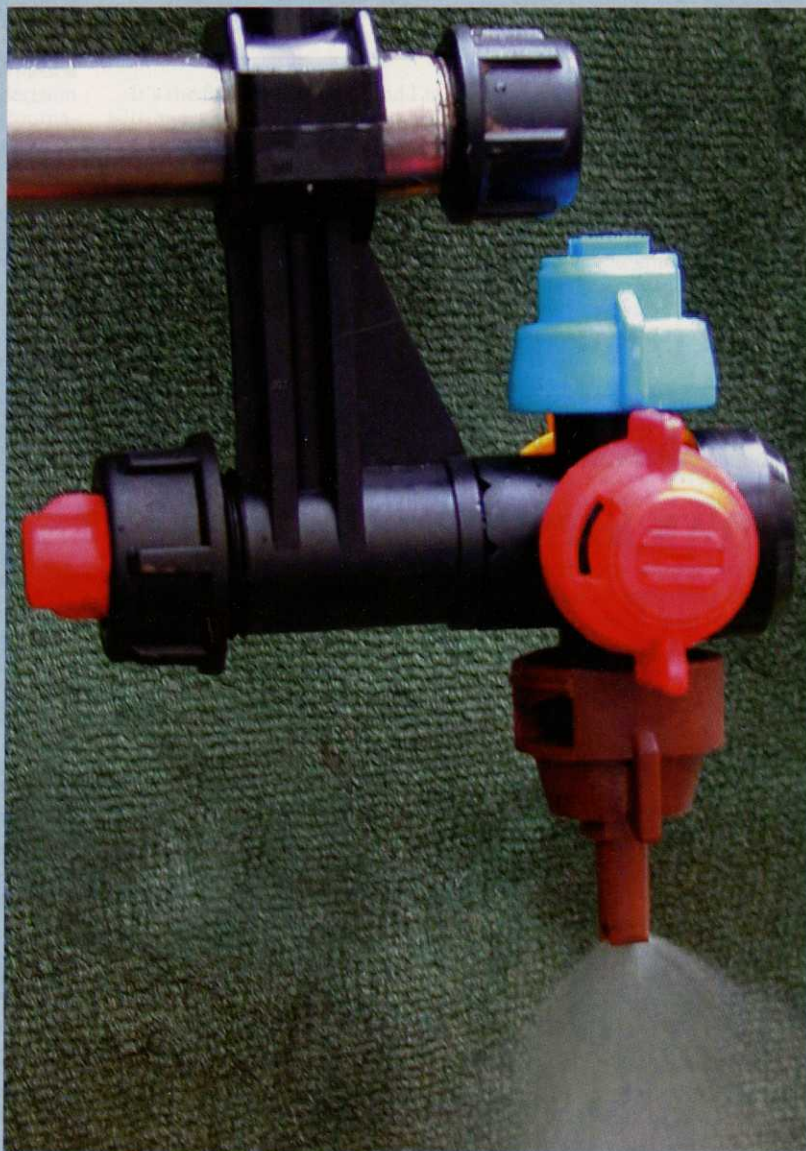


**Bill Oliver looks at the latest legislation which effects sprayers and gives some useful advice on how to stay on the right side of it...**

# Spray away



It is virtually impossible for dealer sales staff to be on top of all the latest in sprayer health and safety legislation so perhaps the best policy is to ask the people at the sharp end – the manufacturer, through its sales representative.

With that in mind I offer the following assistance in understanding the latest regulations which have been brought in to assist with safe spraying.

#### **Ground Water**

Ground water regulations after spraying. You are not allowed to flush sprayer washings down the drain or onto waste ground.

The sprayer must be fully rinsed and sprayed back out over sprayed or designated area.

That's the regulations but it's more than that. **A clean sprayer is a safe sprayer.**

There are three main ways to rinse sprayer units properly.

A full tank of water but make sure it is to the brim of the tank, cleaning inside roof of tank and operate all controls to flush out pipes. Spray out as required.

Carry extra water. In a full rinsing system this must have a rinsing head fitted to clean tank properly and have at least 10% of tank capacity of clean water. Rinse and operate all controls. Spray out as required.

Have cleaning head fitted and put clean water at least 10% of tank



capacity. Rinse and operate all controls. Spray out as required.

This 10% comes from tests used in agriculture where tank capacities are much larger giving larger flow and rinse capability but how can you safely rinse, say, a 200 litre tank six metre boom with balanced pressure controls induction hopper & can rinse with 20 litre of water add to this possibly hose reels with 30/50 metre of hose lance/possible walk booms.

A good guide below 400 litres tanks would be one quarter of the tank capacity. Don't forget to operate all control systems

Be aware of some can rinsing units. Although they need to be flushed of chemical residues they can leak around lid if bottle or container is not placed over them.

Practicality of carrying extra water for rinsing, especially on lightweight vehicles and tractors, could make them unstable as well as the extra weight on greens.

In my experience a good quality direct flow-rinsing head with 40/50 litres of water giving flow and presser would complete the job properly.

#### Local environment risk assessment for pesticides

Drift from certain pesticides could effect water quality and would be harmful to aquatic-life and wildlife so a six metre buffer zone has been set for some pesticides. Please read labels carefully, you can bring this down to one metre by using LERAP tested jets.

Turning any sprayer into a top 3 star rated unit is easy, well almost.

There are several three star jets on the market that will do this but only when using specification from LERAP test. This could be, say, 50cm spacing at 50cm above target at two bare pressure six kmh at a maximum given wind speed so choose your jet carefully.

These details should all be recorded when doing your spraying record and assessment.



It is possible to put two jets on the same holder thus doubling your output. This would also, in my view, break specification.

After saying this, I believe bubble/low drift nozzles are very good on fine to medium droplet applications. A true end users tool.

Finally, after going on about LERAP and ground water regulations the key questions are - Is your sprayer fit to use? and will your new sprayer be fit to use?

There are still low specification sprayers they will try to sell you. So find out about British Standard EN907 as just part of what you should be looking for. Look at pump application rates. Often cheap sprayers mean small pump. You will have to operate at high revs giving wear and tear on vehicle / pump / operator noise & vibration and even then you might not achieve some of the higher application rates. 75 litres per minute and above is a good size to start for six metre booms. Try list below as guide to other safety features.

- Balanced pressure controls.
- Clothing locker.
- Clean water bottle.
- Hose pipe holder or way of filling without contamination of hose.
- Chemical induction hopper.

Finally, I'm often asked about sprayer MOTs. This is a voluntary scheme at the moment run by the AEA and having it done does not mean that your sprayer will pass HSE regulations but it will give you a good starting point as jets, application, pipes and pressure fittings will all be tested. Our sprayer cannot be failed in these tests but a recommendation can be made that you fit a new part or whatever. It would be down to your own safety assessment or equipment and the onus would be on you.

Hope this look into the world of spraying will assist you. I would be happy to help with any problems you may have with any make of sprayer.

Good spraying, see you all soon.



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