

## Lesco Prosecutor - Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is Lesco Prosecutor?**

Lesco Prosecutor is a broad-spectrum herbicide that is used by the City of Lynnwood to control weeds and other unwanted vegetation throughout the city. It is a water-soluble liquid which is mixed with a surfactant (a solution that makes the herbicide stick to plants better) and a dye that makes sites which have been sprayed more visible.

### **How does it work?**

The active ingredient in Lesco Prosecutor (commonly called Roundup) is a chemical called *glyphosate*, which prevents the use of enzymes found only in plants which create certain amino acids that are necessary for plant growth. When Lesco Prosecutor is applied to a plant, the herbicide is absorbed and moves through the plant from the point of contact into the root system. From the roots, the herbicide begins to show effectiveness between 2 to 4 days on annual weeds and 7 or more days on perennial weeds. Effects appear initially as browning or yellowing of plant leaves and eventually advance to complete browning of above-ground foliage and the deterioration of underground parts of the plant.

### **Is it dangerous to my family or pets?**

Although Lesco Prosecutor is a very effective herbicide, it is not a serious hazard to the health of humans or pets in small quantities. Studies have shown that humans who come into mild contact with this herbicide via inhalation, skin or eye contact, or ingestion usually only experience slight irritation of the affected area. If ingested in large amounts (greater than a mouthful), similar products have been shown to potentially cause gastrointestinal distress such as irritation of the mouth, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

In pets, the ingestion of large amounts of this product or plants treated with this product produces similar gastrointestinal problems. However, so long as the animal is kept hydrated the symptoms should pass after about a day.

### **How will it affect the environment?**

According to recent studies, this herbicide would be slightly to moderately toxic to aquatic organisms and practically non-toxic to birds, honeybees and earthworms. The active ingredient *glyphosate* attaches strongly to soil particles and does not move more than six inches deep into the soil. Microbial activity in the soil breaks down glyphosate into carbon dioxide after several chemical reactions. In most cases, 90% of applied *glyphosate* degrades after about six months, with the average half-life (time it takes for 50% of a substance to degrade) of *glyphosate* being about 30 days.

While not a threat to contaminating groundwater, particles of soil which have become bonded to this herbicide can wash into a nearby waterway and potentially cause surface water contamination. However, microbes in surface water will break down *glyphosate* within a few weeks.