

Use a drip tray- protect the environment



Water is a **valuable resource** and despite what it feels like sometimes, we are in **one of the driest regions of the UK**. With that in mind, it is very important to ensure we keep our river water as clean as possible to meet the ever increasing **drinking water needs of the region**.

The amount of chemicals or nutrients that are needed to cause an issue for **water quality and water life is very small** - the legal limit for any chemical in raw water is 0.1 µg/L. This is a tiny amount – as much as one second in one thousand years.

One way to protect **water quality is by using a drip tray**. This can help capture drips and spills when preparing chemicals for application or when storing chemicals on a shelf or in a locked shed.

This is important as a recent survey carried out by the **independent consultancy company**, ADAS found that the **majority of weed killers** used by gardeners and allotment holders were **diluted from concentrate (69%), with only 16% of those surveyed using ready diluted products**. There is **greater risk of spillages** when diluting products at home, and so doing this **process over a drip tray on stable ground** e.g. a grassy area away from watercourses, would help **reduce any potential risk to water**.

Chemical spills are accidents and can happen to anyone. Being prepared and knowing in advance how to deal with a spill when using a garden or allotment chemical is helpful. This includes using **absorbent material** (such as soil or sand) to limit the spread of the spill on hard ground and **disposing of spilt chemical on a sacrificial area** in the garden or allotment such as grass (away from watercourses or drains) or **capturing the spill in a drip tray**.

Following these measures helps **protect the aquatic life** in rivers and streams, which thereby **safeguards the whole food chain** e.g. insects, fish, birds, mammals etc while also protecting water quality. **Reducing risk of spills by using a drip tray is the right thing to do to protect the local rivers, ponds and streams from harm**.

What you can do?

- Use a **drip tray** to capture any drips or spills when filling up or mixing a product.
- **Don't mix products over the sink or near a drain**.
- **Store garden products in a locked, secure and safe place**, ideally in a drip tray to catch any unwanted drips and spills.
- **Seek advice on best practice in pesticide usage**- Information on the safe use of pesticides for amateurs is available from Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) and the Crop Protection Association (CPA) through their Common Sense Gardening website.



Being careful with water is an all-year-round challenge. Not just when there's a dry spell.
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