



GUIDANCE NOTES ON WHITE LINE MARKING OF FOOTBALL PITCHES

There are a wide range of marking compounds, paints and machines on the market, in order to make the marking of white lines a safe practice, in accordance with present regulations.

There have, in the past, been a number of practices when applying white lines to football pitches, in order to reduce labour and materials costs, while endeavouring to keep lines visible for a greater length of time without the requirement to remark. Some of these practices have led to injury and subsequent court action.

In order to clarify this position the Institute of Groundsmanship has drawn up the following guidelines:

BEST PRACTICE - WHAT SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT BE USED?

The main governing factors for marking out white lines are the same as that for many other routine tasks in the workplace, they are:-

1. Duty of Care

Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 every employer has a duty of care to their employees, contractors, visitors, players, and spectators to ensure the workplace is safe.

2. The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1994 (COSHH)

These are designed to prevent ill health from exposure to hazardous substances present in the workplace.

3. Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment requires you to carry out the following assessment, nature of hazard, worst outcome, who is at risk, current precautions, estimated risk and further precautions, on all tasks carried out in the workplace.

If all three of the above are adhered to which incidentally is required by law then this will automatically govern what to use for white line marking and ensure best practice and above all safety.

It is the duty of all Managers to ensure that the regulations are adhered to, as they are ultimately responsible.

SUITABLE LINE MARKING COMPOUNDS

Permanent paints

These are based on pigmented viscous liquid. These "paints" can be applied either in a diluted form or neat.

Powders

There are whitening powders available that are non-toxic which are based on ground natural calcium carbonate and can be used wet or dry and are safe to use provided COSHH is applied. This will tell the user to wear gloves and eye protection and wash off any contact with the skin with water as a precautionary measure.

Most powders are a fine powder

Hydrated Lime (Calcium hydroxide) should never be used for line marking. It is toxic and can give rise to chemical skin burns and irritations and can burn the eyes and skin on contact in its dry or wet form.

Its use is not recommended by The Institute of Groundsmanship.



USE OF HERBICIDES TO REINFORCE LINE MARKINGS

Until The Food and Environment Protection Act, 1985 (FEPA) was introduced many groundsmen and club members used various herbicides mixed in with whitening compounds to keep the lines in longer and more visible during the winter playing season.

However it is only permissible to use a herbicide, which is approved for use on sports turf, which is likely to be a total herbicide, and again COSHH and Risk Assessment must be carried out prior to any application. A further governing factor is that the user must have obtained his/her Certificate of Competence in Use of Pesticides, PA1, PA2A or PA6A. The legal aspects of using any herbicide product for line marking must be used within the conditions of its approval, granted under The Control of Pesticide Regulations, 1986 (COPR), and outlined on the product label. At all times there should be no risk to players by contact or transfer of the active herbicide to any part of the body.

- The addition of herbicides to whitening materials is not a practice recommended by The Institute of Groundsmanship unless a competent, certificated person carries out.
- Creosote is another compound used in the past to mark and reinforce line markings but is not approved for use on sports turf under COPR.
- The use of Hydrated Lime, herbicide additives and creosote can end up with serious injury to players, which can ultimately lead to actions against clubs or individuals.
- Play safe and use only safe and approved compounds that are available on the market today - not old compounds.
- It is recommended that the new ready prepared liquids available from the manufactures are the best to use.

MACHINES AVAILABLE TO MARK WHITE LINES

Marking machines fall into the following categories.

- Dry Line Markers, which as the name implies are for applying dry powder compounds.
- Pressure Pump Markers, a wheel driven pump forces marking fluid through a jet or spout directly onto the turf surface.
- Electric Pump Markers, these markers are battery driven and constantly maintain the required pressure and direct the liquid onto the turf surface.
- Belt Feed Markers, have a moving belt system, which conveys a continual supply of liquid onto the turf surface by contact.
- Wheel Transfer Markers; convey the liquid via rotating wheel, onto a tray and then onto a sponge wheel directly onto the turf surface.

All of the above markers are obtainable from most sports ground suppliers, and before purchasing any marker have a demonstration first, get the right marker for your requirements.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Institute of Groundsmanship (Training Courses)	01908 31251 or www.iog.org
Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI)	01274-565131 or www.stri.co.uk
Crop Protection Association (Code of Practice)	01733-349225
Pesticides Safety Directorate	01904-640500
Health & Safety Executive	Info line 0541-545500
HSE Books	01787-881165
Sport England (Health & Safety Guidance Notes)	020-7388-1277
Suppliers of products: Turfpages	www.turfpages.co.uk

Institute of Groundsmanship Guidance Notes Disclaimer.

These notes are intended to provide helpful guidance for club managers and groundsmen.

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