

Code of Practice Mobile Sheep Dipping

For Farmers, Mobile Dipping Contractors and Prescribers

It is vital that sheep dipping is carried out professionally, complying with all relevant legislation, to safeguard animal welfare and to ensure we do not inadvertently cause OP resistance in sheep scab mites. This guidance has been produced to remind farmers, contractors and prescribers of their responsibilities. It is essential we work as a team to ensure that scab can be controlled, animal welfare is safeguarded, and the Organophosphate (OP) dip is prescribed, stored, used and disposed of safely to protect the environment and operator safety.

Prescribing, Supplying and Purchasing OP Dip

1. Evidence must be provided to the prescriber (supplier) that a Certificate of Competence (NPTC Level 2 Award in the Safe Use of Sheep Dip) is held by the person buying dip, including a contractor collecting dip on behalf of an individual customer.
2. The prescriber (supplier) must make a record of that person's certificate number as soon as is reasonably practicable and keep it for at least three years, according to the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013.
3. A contractor cannot legally purchase and store dip in advance of prescription.

Siting and Maintenance of Mobile Dipping Equipment

4. Dip equipment must be sited in accordance with the [Defra Sheep dip – Groundwater Protection Code](#) in England or, in Wales, the [Groundwater Protection Code for Sheep Dip](#), the [SEPA Dipping Code of Practice in Scotland](#) or the [NI Code of Good Agricultural Practice](#).
5. Mobile dipping systems should be at least:
 - 10m from watercourses (e.g. streams) and wetlands - further away if possible
 - 50m from any well, spring or borehole
 - 30m from watercourses that could drain into a river or wetland designated as a European site or a site of special scientific interest (SSSI)
 - Avoiding sites in a flood plain and with a high-water table
 - Avoiding any risks to the water environment.

(Note: requirements differ across the UK and must be checked in national Codes refer point 4).
6. All mobile dipping equipment, including PPE, must be checked thoroughly before use for signs of damage, corrosion or excessive wear, and to make sure it's working properly and cannot leak. Replace any damaged or ineffective PPE immediately and always have spare PPE available.

Before Dipping

7. A Certificate of Competence (NPTC Level 2 Award in the Safe Use of Sheep Dip) must be held by the person dipping, or supervising dipping, and they must be present throughout the dipping process.
8. All staff involved in dipping must have read and agreed to comply with the requirements of the [HSE Advice for farmers and others involved in dipping sheep](#).
9. The person responsible for dipping, at each site in England, Wales and Scotland must have read and comply with the [Defra Sheep Dip – Groundwater Protection Code](#), or the [Groundwater Protection Code for Sheep Dip](#) in Wales or, in Scotland, the [SEPA Sheep Dipping Code of Practice](#) and the [NI Code of Good Agricultural Practice](#).

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10. Sheep should have at least 1cm of fleece growth prior to dipping and be dry at the time of dipping.
11. Choose a day for dipping which is forecast to be cool and dry. Avoid dipping when the temperatures are close to, or below, freezing.

Mobile Sheep Dipping – Contractor Responsibilities

12. OP dip must only be used in plunge dips. It is illegal to use OP dip off-licence in showers or jetters.
13. Mobile dipping equipment must allow sheep to drain for a minimum of 5 minutes and all excess dip must drain back into the dip tank. The mobile dipping unit must have properly sealed floors and built-in slopes - to allow excess dip to drain back to the bath, not soaking into the ground, soil or into a surface water drain. It must be used in a way to ensure there is no escape of dip to the environment.
14. The contractor must read, understand and comply with the OP dip's current [product data sheet](#).
15. Sheep must be fully immersed (except head and ears) for no less than 1 minute and the head plunged under at least once.
16. The contractor must also read, understand and comply with the OP dip manufacturer's instructions, to include:
 - Handling of dip concentrate in a closed system
 - Dip concentration and replenishment rates
 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - Storage, handling and disposal after use
 - Disposal of containers / cleaning the equipment at the end of dipping including wash water drainage containment.
17. No more than 1 sheep per 2 litres of the starting capacity of the dip bath can be dipped before the bath is completely emptied, cleaned and refilled, no matter how many times it has been replenished.
18. The dip bath must be emptied and cleaned at the end of each day (or earlier if it is dirty) to minimise the risk of post-dipping lameness.
19. Diluted dip must not be stored in the bath overnight.
20. Emergency procedures must be in place, and all staff must be made aware, in case of an accident. This will include the requirement to report any incidents immediately to appropriate authorities.
21. Records should be retained, as necessary, to comply with permits and licensing for a minimum of 5 years.

Mobile Dipping – Sheep Handling and Welfare

22. Treat all animals calmly and with respect
23. Do not dip sheep with a full stomach or if tired, thirsty, heated, have open sores/wounds (including open foot rot lesions) or whose fleece is already wet.
24. Rams and fat sheep should be assisted into, through and out of the bath.
25. If dipping pregnant sheep it is essential they are gently lowered into, assisted through and out of the bath.
26. Dip lambs separately from older sheep.
27. Care should be taken to avoid sheep swallowing or inhaling dip.
28. Challenge any inappropriate handling of sheep whether by contract dippers or farm staff.



Following Dipping – Farmer’s Responsibilities

29. Sheep should be managed in compliance with the [Defra Sheep Dip – Groundwater Protection Code](#), or the [Groundwater Protection Code for Sheep Dip](#) in Wales or, in Scotland, the [SEPA Sheep Dipping Code of Practice](#) or the and the [NI Code of Good Agricultural Practice](#).
30. Handle sheep as little as possible post-dipping. If sheep are handled in the 3 months immediately following dipping, wear gloves and appropriate protective clothing.
31. Sheep must not be drenched with a 2-LV (yellow) anthelmintic for at least 14 days prior to and 14 days after dipping.
32. Avoid shearing sheep within three months of dipping.
33. Ensure sheep cannot enter watercourses after dipping; in accordance with the relevant Code (see above point 29).
34. It is essential that sheep remain dry/are allowed to completely dry for 2-4 days post-dipping.
35. Report any [adverse events](#) to the manufacturer or VMD immediately and comply with the current [product data sheet](#).

Safe Disposal of Used Dip

36. Before dipping the farmer and contractor must reach agreement (ideally in writing) who will take responsibility to safely dispose of used dip.

On-Farm

37. Used dip can be disposed of by the farmer under an [Environmental Permit](#) by land spreading in England, or in [Wales](#) or [Scotland](#) following guidance, if suitable land is available.

Removal from Farm

38. Used dip can be collected from the farm by a registered waste carrier for recovery or disposal at a waste treatment facility. If your dipping contractor is removing used dip off-site they must be a registered waste carrier. The waste carrier can also take away surplus sheep dip concentrate, dip that has passed its expiry date and empty containers, if they can't be returned to the manufacturer. Waste Carrier licences differ in [England](#), [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).
39. If disposing of used dip onto land, the contractor must have and comply with an [environmental permit \(for a groundwater activity\) from the EA or NRW in Wales](#) or [Scotland](#) (CAR 2005).
40. If storing used dip, the contractor must have a suitable storage facility for holding dip which must:
 - Be in impermeable containers designed to store toxic materials
 - Located where spills won't enter drains or run over adjoining land
 - Containers must be bunded to contain spills.
41. If storing large quantities of used dip (used for more than one dipping operation), the system must comply with British Standard 5502 and:
 - Storage capacity must not exceed 20,000 litres
 - It must include capacity for 110% of the amount stored and factor in any rainwater ingress
 - Tanks must be bunded and the volume of any bund maintained to 110% of total volume stored (*see below for more details)
42. If used dip is to be collected from the contractor, a registered waste carrier must be used to transport waste to a licensed waste contractor for disposal.
43. Records must be kept for 5 years of all waste removed by a licensed waste contractor (date, contractor and volume).



*Storing used dip before it's collected for treatment or disposal at a waste treatment facility would normally require an Environmental Permit for a waste operation. If you can comply with the conditions below the Environment Agency (in England) and Natural Resources Wales (in Wales) allow you to carry out this storage activity without an environmental permit.

Conditions you must comply with:

- only store used sheep dip which has been diluted according to the manufacturer's instructions
- follow the relevant sheep dip: groundwater protection code
- only store up to 20 cubic metres of waste sheep dip at any one time
- only store waste sheep dip for up to 3 months

You must store the waste sheep dip:

- in a bunded area with an impermeable base that can retain 110% of the largest container or 25% of the total volume that could be stored, whichever is greater
- at least 10 metres from a watercourse
- at least 50 metres from any spring, well or borehole that is not used to supply water for domestic use or food production
- at least 250 metres from any spring, well or borehole used to supply water for domestic use or food production
- not within a groundwater source protection zone 1

You must make sure your activities do not endanger human health or the environment. You must not:

- cause a risk to water, air, soil, plants or animals
- cause a nuisance through noise or odours
- adversely affect the countryside or places of special interest

Produced by



Supported by



Record Keeping (circle if appropriate)

Date:	Customer Name:
	Contact Details:
Venue:	
Record Keeping:	
Name and Certificate of Competence number of holder of NPTC Level 2 Award in the Safe Use of Sheep Dip	
Siting of equipment - Location on a map, location of watercourse and proximity:	
Weather (incl wind speed):	
Number of Sheep:	
Sheep dipped:	Ewes, Rams, Lambs <6 months, Lambs > 6 months
Max Weight of Sheep:	
Prescribing SQP number:	
Dip used: Product Name	
Dip used: Batch number and expiry date	
Dip used: Amount used under prescription	
Dip used: Details of replenishment	
Disposal of Dip - On-farm or contractor responsibility - details	
Any problems encountered/accidents	
Emergency Planning:	
Contact details for:	
Environment Agency	
HSE	
Planning: Have a copy of the OP dip's SPC or link to it e.g. on a phone that could be shown to medical or veterinary staff in the case of an emergency.	

