

Mobile Sheep Dipping Code of Practice 2024

For Farmers, Mobile Dipping Contractors and Prescribers

Sheep dipping must be carried out professionally and must comply with all relevant legislation to safeguard animal welfare, human health and the environment. It is also vital to minimise the risk of resistance developing in sheep scab mites to organophosphates (OP). This guidance has been produced to remind farmers, contractors and prescribers of their responsibilities. It is essential to work as a team so that scab can be controlled effectively and the OP dip is prescribed, stored, used and disposed of safely.

Prescribing, Supplying, Purchasing and Storing OP Dip

1. Evidence must be provided to the prescriber that a Certificate of Competence (NPTC Level 2 Award in the Safe Use of Sheep Dip) is held by the person buying dip. This includes a contractor collecting dip on behalf of an individual customer.
2. The prescriber¹ 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. The contractor must sign a document with each prescription to confirm that the latest version of this Code will be complied with in its entirety. A copy of the signed document must be retained by the prescriber¹.
4. A contractor can legally purchase and store OP dip, that is intended for up to 7 days of continuous dipping, provided the dip has been properly prescribed* for each farm and it is then stored in accordance with the conditions stated in the relevant regional guidance or legislation under point 10. **The information contained in Appendix 3 should be completed by the contract dipper and be given to the prescriber, every time a prescription is required.*

Siting and Maintenance of Mobile Dipping Equipment

5. 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](#) or the [SEPA Dipping Code of Practice](#) in Scotland or in Northern Ireland the [Groundwater Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2009](#).
6. 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 5).
7. 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.

¹Legally, the responsibility falls to the person carrying out the "supply" duties. In practice, this is almost always the Prescriber. In the very rare instances where the person prescribing is not the person "supplying" as in the Veterinary Medicines Regulations, then the legal duty falls on the supplier, but it is recommended that the prescriber fulfils these duties too.



Before Dipping

8. A Certificate of Competence (NTPTC 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.
9. 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](#).
10. The person responsible for dipping, at each site in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland must 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 Dipping Code of Practice](#) in Scotland or in Northern Ireland the [Groundwater Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2009](#). This includes the requirements for storage and transport of dip concentrate.
11. Sheep should have at least 1cm of fleece growth prior to dipping and be dry at the time of dipping.
12. 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

13. OP dip must **only** be used in plunge dips. It is illegal to use OP dip off-licence in showers or jetters.
14. The contractor must ensure the farmer is aware of the responsibilities that continue after the contractor has left. This includes knowledge of the withdrawal period, plus the safe handling and management of the sheep to minimise human and environment risk in the period after dipping (which lasts 3 months). The contractor should advise the farmer to inform the new owner and/or the market if the sheep are sold within 3 months of the dipping operation. The contractor should leave the information in Appendix 2 with each customer.
15. The contractor must check with the farmer, prior to beginning the dipping operation, that no drench containing levamisole has been administered to the sheep within the last 14 days, and if so, must not proceed. A levamisole drench must not be given to sheep for 14 days after dipping.
16. If, in the opinion of the contractor, the sheep are in particularly poor health, the dipping operation should not proceed, and the contractor should advise the farmer to consult their veterinary surgeon.
17. 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.
18. The contractor must read, understand and comply with the OP dip's current [product data sheet](#).
19. Sheep must be fully immersed (except head and ears) for no less than 1 minute and the head plunged under at least once.
20. 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
 - PPE requirements
 - Storage, handling and disposal after use
 - Disposal of containers / cleaning the equipment at the end of dipping including wash water drainage containment.
21. Do not dip more than 1 sheep per 2 litres of dip wash that was in the bath at the start of dipping – no matter how many times the bath has been replenished and topped-up. Once this threshold is reached, the bath must be completely emptied, cleaned and recharged with fresh dip wash.



- 23. Empty and clean the dip bath at the end of each day (or earlier if it is dirty) to minimise the risk of post-dipping lameness and the risk of other conditions caused by pathogens that can survive in dipwash.
- 24. Do not store diluted dip wash in the dipping tank overnight- it is a potential health hazard so cannot be re-used the following day.
- 25. 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.
- 27. Records should be retained, as necessary, to comply with permits and licensing for a minimum of 5 years.
- 26. Part used cans of dip should be handled and stored in the same manner as full cans.

Mobile Dipping – Sheep Handling and Welfare

- 28. Treat all animals calmly and with respect.
- 29. 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.
- 30. Rams and fat sheep should be assisted into, through and out of the bath.
- 31. If dipping pregnant sheep it is essential they are gently lowered into, assisted through and out of the bath.
- 32. Dip lambs separately from older sheep.
- 33. Care should be taken to avoid sheep swallowing or inhaling dip.
- 34. Challenge any inappropriate handling of sheep whether by contract dippers or farm staff.

Following Dipping – Farmer's Responsibilities

- 35. 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 Northern Ireland the [Groundwater Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2009](#).
- 36. 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.
- 37. Sheep must not be drenched with a levamisole (Group 2 - yellow) anthelmintic for at least 14 days prior to and 14 days after dipping.
- 38. Sheep dip is a POM-VPS medicine and the relevant withdrawal periods must be observed. The withdrawal period is available on the product packaging and the summary of product characteristics (SPC) which is available on the VMD website. Note: organophosphate dips are not authorised (licensed) for use in sheep producing milk for human consumption.
- 39. Avoid shearing sheep within three months of dipping.
- 40. Ensure sheep cannot enter watercourses after dipping; in accordance with the relevant Code (see above point 35).
- 41. It is essential that sheep remain dry/are allowed to completely dry for 2-4 days post-dipping.
- 42. Report any [adverse events](#) to the manufacturer and/or VMD immediately and comply with the current [product data sheet](#).

Safe Disposal of Used Dip

- 43. The farmer and contractor must reach agreement (ideally in writing), before dipping, on who will take responsibility to safely dispose of used dip.



On-Farm

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

Removal from Farm

45. Used dipwash can be collected from the farm by a registered waste carrier for recovery or disposal at a waste treatment facility. The registered waste carrier can also take away surplus or expired sheep dip concentrate and empty containers if they can't be returned to the manufacturer.
46. If the contractor is transporting used dip off site for disposal, they must be a registered waste carrier and comply with all waste duty of care requirements. Waste Carrier licences differ in [England](#), [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).
47. If disposing of used dipwash to land, the contractor must have and comply with an [environmental permit](#) (for a groundwater activity) from the EA in England or NRW in Wales or [Scotland](#) (CAR 2005) or NIEA in [Northern Ireland](#).
48. If storing used dipwash, 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.
49. If storing large quantities of used dipwash (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 over for more details).
50. If used dipwash is to be collected from the contractor, a registered waste carrier must be used to transport waste to a licensed waste contractor for disposal.
51. 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. For guidance in Scotland, contact SEPA, or for Northern Ireland, contact DAERA direct.

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

* 'Bunded' is defined in the [HSE Guidance on storing pesticides for farmers and other professional users](#) and the [Sheep dip: groundwater protection code](#) on Gov.UK states that if operators are storing large quantities of waste dip (used for more than one dipping operation) then the storage system needs to comply with [BS 5502-22:2003+A1:2013 - Buildings and structures for agriculture - Code of practice for design, construction and loading.](#)

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Appendix 1

Recommended Record Keeping for Contractors Carrying Out Mobile Dipping

Contractor name:	
Contractor Address:	
Contractor phone:	
Date:	
Location of Dipping	
Customer Address:	
Customer phone:	
Record Keeping:	
Name of holder of NPTC Level 2 Award in the Safe Use of Sheep Dip	
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	
Average age of Sheep	
Max Weight of Sheep	
Prescription (Name and number of holder)	
Dip used: Product Name	
Dip used: Batch number	
Dip used: Amount used under prescription	
Dip used: Details of replenishment	
Disposal of Dip - On-farm or contractor responsibility - details	
Any problems encountered/accidents	
Appendix 2 details given to farmer/customer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No



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.	



Appendix 2

(The contractor should provide a copy of Appendix 2 to each customer following dipping)

Following Dipping: Farmer's Responsibilities

- ✓ 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 in Northern Ireland the Groundwater Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009.
- ✓ Ensure sheep cannot enter watercourses after dipping; in accordance with the relevant Code (see above).
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Sheep must not be drenched with a levamisole (Group 2 - yellow) anthelmintic for at least 14 days prior to and 14 days after dipping.
- ✓ Sheep dip is a POM-VPS medicine and the relevant withdrawal periods must be observed. The withdrawal period is available on the product packaging and the SPC which is available on the VMD website.
Note: organophosphate dips are not authorised (licensed) for use in sheep producing milk for human consumption.
- ✓ Avoid shearing sheep within three months of dipping.
- ✓ It is essential that sheep remain dry/are allowed to completely dry for 2-4 days post-dipping.
- ✓ Report any adverse events to the manufacturer and/or VMD immediately and comply with the current product data sheet.



Appendix 3

Prescription of OP Sheep Dip to a Contractor

This form should be completed by the contract dipper and given to the prescriber, every time a prescription is required. (Copy to be retained by the prescriber and the contractor)

Prescriber's Name:	
Prescriber Registration number:	
Contractor's name:	
Company name:	
Company address:	
Postcode:	
Phone Number:	
Size of contractor dipping tank (litres):	
Certificate of Competence number:	

Date of planned dipping (Consecutive dates)	Farm name, address & phone number	SBI or CPH	Reason for Dipping (Refer Code: table below)	Tick if farmer informed 2-LV can't be used 14 days before/after dipping	Number of sheep to be dipped on each farm	Amount of OP dip prescribed per farm (l)	Total amount of dip for each day (l)	Batch number and expiry of dip prescribed



I confirm that all advice in the most recent version of the Code of Practice on Mobile Sheep Dipping 2023 has been followed to the best of my knowledge:

Signature of the Prescriber:

Date:

Signature of the Contractor:

Date:

CODE	Reason for Dipping	CODE	Reason for Dipping
PS	Prevention- scab	TS	Treatment- scab
PB	Prevention- blowfly	TB	Treatment- blowfly
PT	Prevention- ticks	TT	Treatment- ticks
PL	Prevention- lice	TL	Treatment- lice
PK:	Prevention- keds	TK	Treatment- keds
PMP	Prevention- multiple parasites	TMP	Treatment- multiple parasite

