

Why Treat Japanese Knotweed?

Failure to treat Knotweed is financial suicide. The rhizomatous roots grow at an alarming rate, so while a Knotweed stand may not be causing you problems now, you can rest assured that it will be in the future.

If not controlled the destruction of Knotweed will lead to the repair of structures, tarmac and paving, as Knotweed root will persistently cause more damage year on year.

However the repair cost is only half the story; the real issue is not visible and comes in the form of soil contamination. Knotweed roots are akin to icebergs; there is a lot more root underground than there are stems above. One square metre of Knotweed can generate in excess of 20 tonnes of waste. Soil containing Knotweed is classified as controlled waste and at over £80.00 per tonne to move off-site (including Landfill Tax), it becomes easy to understand why PBA Solutions promote the use of herbicide. Through early intervention and the use of herbicides to control Knotweed, huge savings can be found, against the financial penalty of doing nothing.

Herbicide & Japanese Knotweed

There is no one chemical that will eradicate Japanese Knotweed in a single application. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a control programme to eradicate Japanese Knotweed over a period of time.

Essentially two types of chemical are available commercially that can control Knotweed; residual or translocating chemical. The latter is more environmentally friendly. There are a number of methods employed to treat Knotweed.

Key Issues

- Controlling Knotweed is not an option, landowners must take action
- Early implementation of a herbicide control programme is critical. Herbicide control is the very cost effective solution
- Implement an effective control programme that complies with Environment Agency guidelines
- Use a Knotweed Specialist to inspect and assess your property
- Select the appropriate chemical and application method for site and environment

At PBA Solutions we recommend stem injection and traditional spraying. Chemicals can also be applied using a weed glove, being effective if Knotweed is close to other ornamental plants that are to be retained. The chosen method of control and chemical selection will dictate the efficacy and duration of control.

Several firms claim a quick HIT when advising on controlling Japanese Knotweed. At PBA Solutions we concur with the Environment Agency in advising that one treats these claims with caution. The Environment Agency state:

"There are various control methods available from companies specialising in Japanese Knotweed management on development sites. You should be careful of products and methods that claim to quickly eradicate Japanese Knotweed."

Source: EA CoP 2006

If in doubt, call PBA Solutions for Knotweed control. We follow industry best practice and have a BASIS qualified consultant trained to give impartial advice on chemical selection. At PBA we are professionals specialising in Knotweed management.

At PBA Solutions we follow the Environment Agency Code of Practice (EA CoP) and model all our treatment programs around 2 solution programs.

3 Year Herbicide Control Programme

A 3 year programme of herbicide application combined with site inspections. Our herbicide programme is completed in line with the Environment Agency Code of Practice. On completion we can offer a full guarantee that Japanese Knotweed will not return or re-establish itself (for full details please contact us).

2 Year Herbicide Control Programme

The two year herbicide programme incorporates a digging/cultivating Knotweed rhizome to weaken its energy reserves in order to achieve a quicker kill. This programme lasts for 2 years and after this we offer a guarantee that Japanese Knotweed will not return or re-establish (for full details please contact us).

As part of all herbicide solution programmes PBA promote the virtues of winter stem cutting. Our standard practice would be to mulch the stems back into the Knotweed stand. The action of cutting dead stems tidies the stand up, allows easier access to the stand and can instigate earlier and healthier growth in the coming season. Healthy growth is needed for effective herbicide application.

It is important that only dead stems are removed. The highly invasive crown material at the base of the stems must stay in-situ and must not be removed. It is vital that this work is undertaken by experienced individuals or overseen by a Knotweed clerk of works.

Once the herbicide programme is complete we provide a documentation pack. This pack includes location plans, herbicide application records and photographs.

At PBA Solutions we believe that providing accurate information is fundamental. We have tailored our Japanese Knotweed documentation to support the requirements of solicitors, insurance companies and for building manuals.

After we have completed our treatment programme we can offer a free monitoring service (please contact us for more information). Our monitoring service is in place to make absolutely sure that Knotweed has been controlled. Obviously if we did find re-growth this would then be treated for free under the PBA Solutions guarantee.

We can also complete viability tests on a sample of Knotweed rhizome. The test involves putting the sample in an artificial situation that is near to perfect for stimulating re-growth. A viability test helps to substantiate that Knotweed has been eradicated. The Environment Agency (EA CoP 2006) states that Knotweed can stay dormant for 20 years, making viability testing an important aspect of a control programme. Where clients want to ensure that they have done everything reasonable and practical to control Japanese Knotweed this additional test should be undertaken.



The Importance Of Herbicide In Controlling Japanese Knotweed

Japanese Knotweed is regarded by many environmental agencies as the most undesirable weed in the UK. The Wildlife & Country Side Act 1981 lists Japanese Knotweed as an invasive or pernicious weed. Anyone who plants or allows Japanese knotweed to grow in the wild could become liable under this Act. Over and above this the financial cost of damage, which can occur through the destructive power of the rhizomatous roots; piercing tarmac and penetrating concrete can be enormous. Knotweed roots will cover vast areas of ground and quickly smother other plants that stand in its way. When knotweed needs to be removed quickly, excavating and removal to landfill is often the only option that offers total piece of mind. With escalating landfill costs this control method does not always make financial sense. Herbicide application can, if implemented early enough, eliminate the need for landfill thus giving a significant cost saving. Finally knotweed will often spread from property to property and this has resulted in private nuisance claims being made under common law. Controlling Knotweed is not an option, and herbicide control is the most effective solution.

Controlling knotweed using herbicide will initially inhibit the invasive characteristic of the plant, culminating in eradication. **Herbicide treatment is by far the most economic of control measures for Knotweed** and if implemented early enough will over the expense of repair costs to property and/or litigation. At PBA Solutions herbicide control is implemented professionally through tailored programmes that meet our client's needs.