

MORE ABOUT PESTICIDE APPLICATOR LICENSING

In Maine, pesticide applicator licenses fall under two major categories: **private**, for pesticide use in the production of agricultural commodities on a single farm; and **commercial**, for a person who uses any pesticides in public places (such as golf courses, campgrounds, apartment houses, hospitals and nursing homes) on a “for-hire” basis (for services such as lawn care) or as a government employee.

The BPC classifies all pesticides into three categories: **general use pesticides**, products available to the general public, but requiring a license for some applications; **restricted use pesticides**, chemicals for use and application only by licensed individuals; and **limited use pesticides**, products for use only by licensed applicators with a special BPC permit.

This new Agricultural Basic pesticide applicator license is for **private** applicators who use only **general use pesticides**. By taking an additional commodity exam, applicants can qualify for the next level of licensure and a greater range of pesticide choices.

PESTICIDES IN MAINE

In Maine the sale and use of pesticides fall under the oversight of the Maine Board of Pesticides Control (BPC). The BPC is comprised of seven public members appointed by the Governor to serve four-year terms. Expertise of BPC members includes agriculture, forest management, medicine, agronomy, entomology or integrated pest management, commercial pesticide use and environmental protection. The staff of the Board resides within the Department of Agriculture.

Activities of the BPC include:

- Registration of pesticide products
- Certification and licensing of pesticide applicators and dealers
- Pesticide safety education
- Enforcement and compliance assistance
- Response to citizen inquiries and complaints
- Water quality monitoring
- Obsolete pesticide collection
- School integrated pest management



Maine Board of
Pesticides Control

If you are selling edible crops or products you make from those crops, you will probably need an Agricultural Basic pesticide applicator license by 2015



Agricultural Basic — pesticide applicator license

NEW LAW WILL REQUIRE MORE FARMERS TO OBTAIN A PESTICIDE APPLICATOR LICENSE

In the spring of 2011 the Maine Legislature passed Public Law 2011, Chapter 169: An Act To Require Certification of Private Applicators of General Use Pesticides which requires the Maine Board of Pesticides Control (BPC) to begin licensing growers who use only general use (over-the-counter) pesticides and annually sell more than \$1,000 of plants or plant products intended for human consumption. The new law also required the BPC to develop exam and licensing procedures. Chapter 33, details the requirements and can be viewed on the BPC website at thinkfirstspraylast.org.



IN A NUTSHELL

- The Legislature passed this new law to improve food safety and help bolster consumer confidence in locally grown, Maine produce.
- If you annually sell \$1,000 or more of plants or plant products intended for human consumption, you will need to be licensed.
- You must be licensed by April 1, 2015.
- To obtain the new Agricultural Basic Pesticide Applicator license, you must pass the BPC “core exam.” The core exam is based on the Pesticide Education (Core) Manual which is available from the University of Maine Cooperative Extension at pmo.umext.maine.edu/patrain/prices.htm or by calling 207-581-3880. The exam can be taken at the BPC office in Augusta (207-287-2731) or at County Cooperative Extension offices. Contact the BPC office to have the exam mailed to the Extension office, and then make arrangements with Extension for taking the exam.
- The license will expire on October 31 of the third year after the license is issued and it will cost \$15.
- To maintain your license, you will need to obtain three hours of continuing education credit during the three-year license period.

WHAT IS A PESTICIDE?

By definition, a pesticide is any naturally or synthetically derived substance used to kill, control or repel undesired insects, weeds, fungi, bacteria, mammals, birds, rodents or other organisms. **Products which are organic are also pesticides if they are used as described above.** Consequently, these substances may include insecticides or bug sprays; herbicides, including weed killers and top killer products; fungicides or disease controls; rodenticides; deer repellents; defoliants; growth regulators; and disinfectants.

WHY LICENSE?

Pesticides are important tools which, in the hands of a skilled applicator, offer numerous benefits. Increased crop yields, safer highways, enhanced landscapes and infestation-free structures are just a few.

But pesticides may also have negative impacts on food safety and consumer confidence.

As with any powerful tool, proper and effective use depends upon the judgment of the applicator. An educated applicator will likely produce a safer product. They will also have knowledge of existing rules that apply when growers use pesticides, e.g., recordkeeping, protective clothing, worker protection and label compliance.

The pesticide applicator license represents recognition of an individual’s qualifications to use these tools properly.