

More About Pesticide Applicator Licensing

In Maine, pesticide applicator licenses fall into three categories:

- ◆ **Agricultural Basic** applicators use pesticides to produce plants or plant products that are intended for human consumption on property owned or leased by the grower.
- ◆ **Private** applicators use restricted or limited-use pesticides in the production of agricultural commodities on property owned or leased by the grower.
- ◆ **Commercial** applicators use 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 government employees.

Pesticides fall into two classes:

- ◆ **General-use**—products available to the public, but which require a license for some applications; and
- ◆ **Restricted-use**—chemicals for use and application only by licensed individuals.

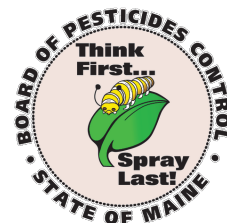
There are two types of Agricultural licenses. The new Agricultural Basic pesticide applicator license is for growers who use only general-use pesticides. Growers wishing to also use restricted-use products need to take an additional commodity exam to qualify for the Private applicator license.

More About 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 Board staff can be reached by calling (207) 287-2731 or by email at pesticides@maine.gov.

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



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Maine Board of
Pesticides Control

New Agricultural Basic Pesticide Applicator License

Growers of food crops may need to be licensed



New Law Requires More Farmers to Obtain a Pesticide Applicator License

In the spring of 2011, the Maine Legislature passed a law which requires many growers to be licensed by the Maine Board of Pesticides Control (BPC). Growers who annually sell more than \$1,000 of plants or plant products intended for human consumption and use any general-use pesticides—those with an EPA registration number on the label—on those crops, must be licensed by April 1, 2015.

This law applies to:

- Growers of fruits, vegetables, herbs and grains for human consumption
- Growers of the above crops who make bread, jam, french fries, wine, cider, juice, etc., or sell produce to be processed into the above
- Greenhouse growers selling fruit, vegetable and herb seedlings

How to Get a License

To obtain the new Agricultural Basic pesticide applicator license, growers 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 <http://umaine.edu/ipm/pesticide-safety/certification-manual-prices/>, 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.

Licenses expire on October 31 of the third year after issuance and cost \$15. To maintain a license, growers must obtain three hours of continuing education credit during the three-year license period.

The licensing requirements are detailed in Chapter 33 of the BPC rules and can be viewed on the BPC website at thinkfirstspraylast.org.

Why is Licensing Important?

Pesticides are important tools which, in the hands of skilled applicators, offer numerous benefits. Increased crop yields, reduced crop losses, 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. With training, an applicator will also have knowledge of existing rules that apply when growers use pesticides, e.g., record keeping, protective clothing, worker protection and label compliance.

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

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 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.

Pesticides registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are extensively tested and approved for use. General-use pesticides are available to the public, and are found in many products used by homeowners and gardeners. They have an EPA registration number on the label.

