



University of Nevada Cooperative Extension

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THE NEVADA PESTICIDE SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM

Wayne S Johnson, Associate Professor, Department of Resource Economics, College of Agriculture, Biotechnology & Natural Resources; Pesticide Applicator Training Coordinator, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension
Charles Moses, Environmental Scientist IV, Nevada Department of Agriculture
Scott Cichowlaz, Agriculturist III, Nevada Department of Agriculture
Sue Strom, Pesticide Safety Education Program Assistant, University of Nevada, Reno

The Nevada Pesticide Safety Education Program trains pesticide applicators to become certified or recertified applicators of restricted-use pesticides (Table 1). In 1972, the Federal Environmental Pesticide Control Act (FEPCA) amended the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) of 1947 to require that all pesticides be registered with the EPA and that they be classified as either “general-use” pesticides or “restricted-use” pesticides (RUP). The FEPCA (commonly called FIFRA, because of FIFRA’s long-standing use) defines a restricted-use pesticide as a pesticide which, when applied in accordance with widespread and commonly recognized practices, may cause unreasonable adverse effects on the environment unless applied by a competent applicator.

In Nevada, pesticide applicators are classified into two categories: **certified applicators** and **licensed or custom pesticide applicators**. The purchase of restricted-use pesticides is limited to applicators that have been certified through a regulatory process to buy, use, or supervise the use of restricted-use pesticides or those who are licensed as the **primary principal** of a Nevada pest control company.

Certified Applicators

Certified applicators may be either nonprimary principal commercial applicators or private applicators. **Nonprimary principal commercial applicators** are those who apply restricted-use pesticides as part of their job, such as park and landscape workers, golf course employees, government workers, and others. Nonprimary principal commercial applicators are not licensed to apply pesticides for hire and cannot advertise custom pest control services. **Private applicators** use restricted-use chemicals for purposes of producing any agricultural commodity on their own or rented land without direct compensation for the service.

Both nonprimary principal commercial and private applicators must be legally certified by the Nevada Department of Agriculture to apply restricted-use materials. Certification is for a period of four years, after which an applicator must recertify in order to continue to legally purchase, use, or supervise the use of restricted-use pesticides. The Nevada Department of Agriculture administers the certification examination and certifies or recertifies pesticide applicators. University of

Table 1. Nevada Pesticide Certification and Licensing Requirements for Applicators.

Items	Certified Applicator ¹		Licensed Applicator ²			
	Private	Nonprimary Principal Commercial	Primary Principal	Principal	Operator	Agent
License Required	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
License Period	N/A	N/A	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year
RUP Certification Required	Yes	Yes	No	No	N/A	N/A
Certification Period	4 years	4 years	1 year	N/A	N/A	N/A
Original Certification/License Method	WE ³	WE ³	WE ³	WE ³	WE ³	Video ⁴
Recertification Method	WE ³	WE ³	CEUs	N/A	N/A	N/A
License Renewal Method	N/A	N/A	CEUs	CEUs	CEUs	Video ⁴
Certification by Categories Required	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	N/A	N/A	N/A
License by Category Required	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Able to Supervise RUP Application	Yes	Yes	Yes	conditional ⁵	conditional ⁵	No
Supervision of RUP Application Required	No	No	No	yes	yes	N/A ⁶

¹Certified to purchase, apply, or supervise the application of restricted-use pesticides (RUP).

²Licensed/custom pesticide applicators (for hire and profit) are licensed after passing an examination. Thereafter, they must complete six NDOA approved continuing education units (CEUs) annually regarding pesticide applications to renew their business applicator license. Primary Principals are automatically certified and may purchase, apply, or supervise the application of restricted-use pesticides (RUPs). Principals, operators and agents are not certified unless they pass the certification examination.

³Written examination required.

⁴A written examination is given based on a video presentation each year of licensing.

⁵NDOA regulations now allow an operator or principal who 1) holds a C4 fumigation license; and 2) is designated to do so by the primary principal, to supervise the use of a RUP (fumigant only).

⁶Agents are not allowed to apply any general or restricted-use pesticides.

Nevada Cooperative Extension is responsible for providing training for pesticide applicators.

Persons who need to certify or recertify are encouraged to attend the annual pesticide applicator training school and then take the written examination for certification or recertification on the second day of the school. Training schools are held annually in mid-winter at selected locations around the state. A training manual is available for purchase to assist in preparing for the examination.

Private and nonprimary principal commercial applicators may certify in many categories of pesticide use based upon their needs. The most common categories for each are listed in Table 2. Additional certification categories can be added by the state as needed. Only personnel from USDA Wildlife Services are certified in Category 15.

Licensed or Custom Pesticide Applicators

A licensed or custom pesticide applicator is defined in the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) as one who applies pesticides for hire and/or has a state business license for pest control. To be licensed originally, one must pass an examination administered by the Nevada Department of Agriculture. In order to renew the license annually, Nevada pesticides applicators must obtain six continuing educational units (CEUs) each year. Primary principals and principals must obtain at least one unit relating to laws and regulations governing the use of pesticides. Operators need only obtain six CEUs.

All licensed applicators, principals, primary principals, and operators must pass the general examination and one or more category

Table 2. Certification categories commonly used by private and nonprimary principal commercial applicators.

#	Category	Private	NPC
1.	Agricultural Plant Pest Control	✓	✓
2.	Agricultural Animal Pest Control	✓	✓
3.	Forest Pest Control	✓	✓
4.	Ornamental & Turf Pest Control	✓	✓
5.	Seed Treatment		✓
6.	Aquatic Pest Control	✓	✓
7.	Right-of-Way Pest Control		✓
8.	Industrial & Institutional Pest Control	1	✓
9.	Structural Pest Control		✓
10.	Public Health Pest Control		✓
11.	Fumigation	✓	✓
12.	Mosquito Pest Control		✓
13.	Greenhouse & Nursery Pest Control	✓	✓
14.	Wood Preservatives		✓
15.	M44/Predator Pest Control	Wildlife Services Only	
16.	Chemigation	✓	✓
17.	Metam Sodium		✓

¹Private applicators may be certified in the industrial, but not the institutional category.

examinations in order to become licensed. Agents are required to watch a video and pass an examination based on the video. To be licensed as a **principal**, a person must have two years of documented related experience in the category or categories of the license or six months of documented related experience and sixteen credits in biological sciences from a university or community college. NDOA regulations now allow an operator or principal who 1) holds a C4 fumigation license; and 2) is designated to do so by the primary principal, to supervise the use of a RUP (fumigant only).

One licensed principal for each company must be designated as the **primary principal**. As such, the person is responsible for all aspects of the company's pesticide activities and serves as the company's representative and liaison to the Nevada Department of Agriculture. A primary principal may purchase, use, and supervise the use of restricted-use pesticides for purposes that are allowed in the category or categories for which he or she is licensed as primary principal. A business may only have one primary principal per category, but may have several principals per category. An **operator** does not have sufficient experience or schooling to qualify as a principal, but is still licensed. NDOA regulations now allow an operator or principal who 1) holds a C4 fumigation license; and 2) is

designated to do so by the primary principal, to supervise the use of a RUP (fumigant only).

An **agent** is a solicitor or salesperson representing the company and as such, cannot apply pesticides or give recommendations about their use.

For more information on licensing procedures, call the Nevada Department of Agriculture office or go to http://agri.nv.gov/PCO_AppInfo.htm.

Responsible Use of Pesticides

Pesticides are substances or mixtures of substances used to kill, destroy, repel, or mitigate pests such as insects, rodents, weeds, unwanted plant growth, molds, fungi, and bacteria. They are chemicals that have biological activity against the pest to be controlled, and they can be toxic to humans, animals, plants, microorganisms, or damaging to the environment. Both federal and state laws make users of pesticides responsible for properly applying pesticides according to their label directions and for properly disposing of excess pesticides and their containers.

In Nevada, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Nevada Department of Agriculture must register all pesticides that are sold or used. This requirement is found in the FIFRA and the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS).

The label directions have been examined and approved by these regulatory agencies. When pesticide label directions are followed, proper pest control should be achieved and hazards or risks reduced. When pesticide label directions are not followed, the results of use are less predictable, risks increase, the pest may not be controlled, and time and money are wasted. Almost all poisonings and other pesticide accidents can be attributed to failure to adequately follow the label directions. Consequently, **use inconsistent with a pesticide's labeling is a violation of federal and state laws**. Fines, license or certification revocation, and imprisonment are penalties for pesticide misuse.

Pesticide users should follow label directions to protect the continued availability of a pesticide. When a pesticide is misused further restrictions may be placed on its use or it may be canceled, thus making the product unavailable for anyone's use. **Continued availability of a pesticide is dependent**

upon its proper and judicious use as directed on the label.

When you choose to use a pesticide, you assume legal responsibilities for its use. The applicator protects humans, animals, the environment and the continued availability of a pesticide by carefully following all the instructions on the label.

Pesticide Programs

The University of Nevada, Reno, a land grant university, participates in several USDA programs of national interest that relate directly to pesticide use. These programs are administered through the University Agricultural Experiment Station and University of Nevada Cooperative Extension. Two of these programs are:

- 1) **The Nevada Pesticide Applicator Training Program.** This program provides educational training and information to assist pesticide applicators in becoming certified or recertified to buy and use restricted-use pesticides.
- 2) **The IR-4 Minor Use Pesticide and Animal Drug Registration Program.** This program assists in obtaining pesticide and animal drug registrations for minor uses by conducting efficacy and residue studies.

These pesticide programs assist the agricultural industry of Nevada to efficiently

produce food and fiber. The green, service, restaurant, and housing industries are benefited by better, safer pest control. These programs also assist in protecting the health and safety of pesticide applicators, the public, and domesticated and wild animals as well as the environment.

For more information about pesticide applicator certification training, contact your local University of Nevada Cooperative Extension office. You may also write or call the State Pesticide Safety Education Program office at: Department of Resource Economics/204, University of Nevada, Reno, Reno, Nevada, 89557-0105. Phone inquiries may be directed to 775-784-1931.

If you have questions regarding certification testing or licensing, contact the Nevada Department of Agriculture:

Office	Location and Phone
Las Vegas	2300 McLeod Street, 89104 (702) 486-4690
Reno	350 Capitol Hill Avenue, 89502 (775) 688-1182
Winnemucca	1200 E Winnemucca Blvd., 89445 (775) 623-6502

Approved CEU Course List (Licensees):
http://agri.nv.gov/PCO_CEindex.htm

PRECAUTIONARY STATEMENT

All pesticides have both benefits and risks. Benefits can be maximized and risks minimized by reading and following the labeling. Pay close attention to the directions for use and the precautionary statements. The information on pesticide labels contains both instructions and limitations. Pesticide labels are legal documents and it is a violation of both federal and state laws to use a pesticide in a manner inconsistent with its labeling. The pesticide applicator is legally responsible for the proper use of a pesticide. Always read and follow the label.

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