

Licensing of Commercial Pest Control Operators (Commercial Pesticide Applicators)

*Darrell Hensley, Extension Assistant Professor,
Edward Burgess, Professor Emeritus
Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology*

Procedures for Licensing of Commercial Pest Control Operators (Commercial Applicators)

The Pest Control Board was created by the General Assembly in 1955. The board is responsible for making rules and regulations governing commercial pest control operations in the state — determining the categories of licenses and qualifications for each license and examining and recommending applicants for licenses.

Anyone wishing to be licensed in a particular category may write the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Pesticide Certification Supervisor, P.O. Box 40627, Porter Bldg., Nashville, TN 37204, or The University of Tennessee, PSEP, 2505 E.J. Chapman Dr., 370 PBB, Knoxville, TN 37996-4560 for an application and information. You may also visit: psep.utk.edu.

Applications for exams will need to be submitted to the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Consumer and Industry Services Division, TDA, or postmarked by midnight of the 10th of the month preceding the month of the exam date. A fee of \$150 must accompany the application for each licensing category of interest. If approved, the applicant may take the exam the following month (next scheduled exam). For example, an application must be submitted by March 10 to qualify for the April exams; June 10 to qualify for the July exam; September 10 to qualify for the October exam; and December 10 to qualify for the January exam. Applicants should study specimens on the respective category specimen list preceding the exam. Specimens may be found at various university websites and other websites.

Regulations require that, “at the time of application or at such other times as the board may require, the applicant shall present the affidavit or certification (‘certificate of experience’) of persons or firms in whose employment the applicant has acquired any qualifying experience; or a copy of a diploma or certificate as evidence of a qualifying college degree or professional standing.”

To be eligible for licensing examinations, the applicant must show that he/she has one or more of the following qualifications:

- The equivalent of a bachelor's degree in entomology, biology, agriculture or related subjects; or
- Have at least two years' work experience in the category of license for which application is made, provided that no credit shall be allowed for failing to comply with the licensing requirements of this act or of a substantially equivalent law of another jurisdiction. Exceptions concerning the degree or two years' experience under a licensed applicator are made to the Agriculture Ground and Horticulture, Lawn and Turf categories. However, some experience and knowledge are still required by the board for these categories. And, the applicant must appear before the pest control board for a brief oral exam.
- Hold a license in the same category from another state.

Requirements for Public Health Mosquito Control licensing category:

1. BS degree or minor in a related field and C08 certification (Public Health) **OR**
2. Current GRC license and C08 certification (Public Health) **OR**
3. Two years of verifiable work experience under a licensee and C08 certification **OR**
4. A license (GRC or Public Health or PHMC) from another state and C08 certification.

Each person, firm or corporation who wishes to engage in the business of commercial pest control must have an instrument authorizing that person to do so. This instrument is called a **charter** and may be obtained from the TDA/Consumer and Industry Services Division.

A charter is required for each office and branch office. Each person applying for or holding a charter is required to have for each office or branch office a licensed commercial pest control operator for each category of service offered. An individual pest control operator may be licensed in one or more categories.

The requirements for holding a charter for a pest control business are as follows:

1. A minimum corporate surety bond of \$10,000 must be posted (\$50,000 for the first three years in Category 7).
2. Each applicant is required to have a minimum insurance of \$250,000 for a single occurrence and \$500,000 aggregate liability. In addition, the WDO applicant must secure errors and omissions liability insurance in the amount of \$100,000 single occurrence and \$300,000 aggregate liability.

Each applicant is required to pay \$400 initially and every two years thereafter for a charter and \$40 every two years for a license for each category in which he/she is licensed.

Each of these (charter and license) expire every two years. The fee may be prorated, depending on when you obtain your charter. All persons chartered

are required to register with TDA/Consumer and Industry Services Division the names, residences and addresses of all salespeople or agents who are authorized to solicit business for them and/or anyone authorized to enter into pest control contracts on their behalf. Each person chartered is required to secure from TDA/Consumer and Industry Services Division a solicitor's registration for any sales people or agents (technicians and solicitors). The fee for a registration card is \$40.

Forty dollars must be paid every two years for each technician, solicitor and licensed operator. This may be prorated on initial purchase.

Categories of Licensed Pest Control Operators

Licenses are issued in 17 separate categories. To obtain a license in the category for which you are going to do pest control work, you must pass the required exams. The respective certification category, consisting of the general standards (CORE) and the certification category (one exam) is the first exam to be taken, followed by the appropriate licensing category exam. The CORE/Certification Category exam must be passed before you can take any licensing category exam(s).

Steps in Obtaining a License

1. Obtain certification in corresponding category.
2. Obtain education requirements and/or experience under a licensed applicator.
3. Apply to TDA with the \$150 fee and receive approval to take the licensing exam.
4. Take and pass licensing exams (written and practical).
5. Secure an application for a charter and bond form from TDA.
6. Secure a \$10,000 (\$50,000 in C7, 1st 3 years) bond and liability insurance of \$250,000 for a single occurrence and \$500,000 aggregate liability. In addition, the WDO applicant must secure errors and omissions liability insurance in the amount of \$100,000 single occurrence and \$300,000 aggregate liability.

7. Show proof of bonding, certificate of insurance and pay fees to TDA/Consumer and Industry Services Division to obtain a charter.
8. UT offers licensing training the day before the exams for HLT, PHMC, GRC and WDO in Nashville.

Address to obtain applications:
Tennessee Department of Agriculture
Pesticide Certification Supervisor
P.O. Box 40627, Porter Building
Nashville, TN 37204

LICENSING CATEGORIES AND CORRESPONDING COMMERCIAL CERTIFICATION CATEGORIES			
WDO	Wood Destroying Organisms	Cat. 7	Industrial, Institutional, Structural and Health
GRC	General Pest and Rodent Control	Cat. 7	Industrial, Institutional, Structural and Health
WEC	Weed Control — Right-of-Way and Industrial	Cat. 6	Right-of-Way
APC	Aquatic Pest Control	Cat. 5	Aquatic Pest Control
FUS	Fumigation — Agricultural	Cat. 1	Agricultural Pest Control
FUM	Fumigation — Structural	Cat. 7	Industrial, Institutional, Structural and Health
PHMC	Public Health Mosquito Control	Cat. 7, 8	Industrial, Institutional, Structural and Health — Public Health
BDC	Bird Control	Cat. 7	Industrial, Institutional, Structural and Health
AGE	Agriculture — Ground Equipment	Cat. 1	Agricultural Pest Control
HLT	Horticulture — Lawn and Turf	Cat. 3	Ornamental and Turf
HRI	Horticulture — Interior	Cat. 3	Ornamental and Turf
PCC	Pest Control Consultant	Cat. 10	Demonstration, Research and Regulatory
SPC	Special Category	Cat. 1-16	Category depends on special situation
AER	Aerial	Cat. 1, 2, 5, 6	Required category is dependent on area of treatment Agriculture, Forest, Aquatic, or Right-of-Way Pest Control
WPC	Wood Preservatives	Cat. 11	Wood Preservation Pest Control
MPC	Microbial Pest Control	Cat. 14	Microbial Pest Control
MRC	Mold Remediation	Cat. 7 or 14	Industrial, Institutional, Structural and Health, or Microbial Pest Control



AG.TENNESSEE.EDU

SP 363-E(Rev) 11/16 200 17-0046 Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating. UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.