



## **Answers to common questions about the certification and licensing of pesticide applicators in Nebraska.**

**If you apply pesticides, you may need a pesticide applicator license.** In Nebraska, pesticide applicator licensing is administered by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA), Animal and Plant Health Protection. In the public interest, NDA regulates the labeling, distribution, storage, transportation, use, application, and disposal of pesticides in Nebraska for the protection of human health and the environment.

### **WHAT DO THESE TERMS MEAN?**

For the purposes of the Nebraska Pesticide Act:

- 1. Certified Applicator** shall mean a person who has demonstrated, through exams and/or training, that he/she is knowledgeable and competent to purchase, transport, store, use, dispose of, or supervise the use of a restricted-use pesticide (RUP) in situations related to their training. Once certified, a person may apply to NDA for a pesticide applicator license.

A Certified Pesticide Applicator will have general knowledge of proper management practices concerning pesticide use. Pesticide use includes the receipt, handling, storage, and disposal of pesticides, while following all necessary safety precautions (personal and environmental). This individual must be able to read and understand all label information, including application and use directions, formulations, storage, and disposal hazards, precautionary statements, and statements of practical treatment.

This applicant will:

- Have a basic understanding of pest biology;
- Be able to recognize and accurately diagnose pest infestations;
- Recommend and/or use the proper chemical(s) for their control;
- Possess basic arithmetic skills appropriate to pesticide use and equipment calibration;
- Have a working knowledge of the use and maintenance of all necessary application equipment;
- Be familiar with pesticide toxicities, types of exposure, harmful effects, and signs and symptoms of poisoning;
- Be able to assess the treatment site to minimize or prevent the potential adverse effects of the pesticides on the surrounding environment; and
- Be aware of, and able to comply with, federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding pesticide use, including record keeping requirements.

2. **Licensed Applicator** shall mean an individual who has completed the requirements of certification, has remitted an application form with the appropriate fee to NDA, has been granted a pesticide applicator license under the Act, and is authorized to use, or supervise the use of, any RUP.
3. **Pesticide** shall mean any substance, or mixture of substances, intended to prevent, destroy, repel, or mitigate any pest; and any substance, or mixture of substances, intend for use as a plant regulator, defoliant, or desiccant.
4. **Restricted-use pesticide** shall mean any pesticide classified for restricted use by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), any state-limited-use pesticide, or any pesticide receiving an emergency use exemption under the Federal act.
5. **Under the direct supervision** shall mean the act or process whereby application of a pesticide is made by a competent, trained person acting under the instruction and control of a certified applicator responsible for the actions of that person. This person will also be available if and when needed, even though such certified applicator may not be immediately, physically present at the time and place the pesticide is applied.

The Nebraska Pesticide Act allows for a person to apply pesticides without a license for a 60-day period (offered once-in-a-lifetime), if a person applies for this exemption to licensing within 10 days of the first pesticide application and works under the direct supervision of a licensed applicator. See the NDA 60-Day Rule brochure for more information.

### **COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

1. **Who needs to be licensed?**

All persons engaged in the supervision, mixing, loading, application, or use of any pesticide restricted by EPA or NDA. Any person who applies lawn care or structural control pesticides to the land of another person for hire or compensation shall be certified. Any employee of a political subdivision who uses pesticides for outdoor vector control on property which has public access.

2. **Is there an age limit for being certified?**

Yes, 16 years of age.

3. **How does a person become a certified pesticide applicator in Nebraska?**

Private applicators become certified by attending approved training, completing a cooperative extension self-study packet, or by examination.

Commercial and non-commercial applicator certification requires demonstration of competency in the use and handling of pesticides by written examination due to liability and a greater potential for personal exposure to pesticides. The examinations are based upon standards set forth in EPA's Code of Federal Regulations. Persons requesting commercial or non-commercial applicator certification must complete and pass (by 70%) a General Standards exam and a category-specific exam for each category in which they desire to become certified.

*A list of the category descriptions can be found online at:*

[bit.ly/A8zt7z](http://bit.ly/A8zt7z)

4. **Where can a person get study materials to prepare for exams?**

- Study materials are printed and distributed by the University of Nebraska, Cooperative Extension Service.
- Private applicators can contact their county extension educators to obtain self-study materials.

- Commercial and non-commercial applicators can **order study materials or register for training** online at: [pested.unl.edu](http://pested.unl.edu)

**5. How does a person become a licensed pesticide applicator?**

Once certified, a person may apply to NDA for a pesticide applicator license. Upon receipt and validation of an application form and the appropriate license fee, NDA will issue a pesticide applicator license.

**6. How much does a license cost?**

A three-year pesticide applicator license costs \$25 for private applicators, \$90 for commercial applicators, and is free to non-commercial applicators.

**7. What is a non-commercial applicator?**

Any person who applies a restricted-use pesticide strictly to property controlled by their employer on a not-for-hire basis. This would include employees of corporations, state agencies, municipalities, public works, and others.

**8. How long is a person's certification and license good for?**

Nebraska residents are certified and licensed for a three-year period. Licenses granted on a reciprocal basis with other states will expire on the same date as the license for the state of residence.

**9. When the three years is nearly over, how does a person renew their certification and license?**

Resident applicators can renew their certification by attending a training session approved by NDA for that purpose (provided by the UNL Extension Service, Associations, or industry). Another method of renewing a certification is by successfully completing written exams. Once recertified the person may apply for a renewal of their license.

**10. What if I let my certification lapse?**

Any person who allows his or her commercial or non-commercial applicator's certification to expire shall be required to submit to testing for renewal of their certification.

**11. What if I'm from another state?**

Nebraska has reciprocal agreements with a number of other states. Under these agreements, a person certified in a partnering state may apply to NDA for a reciprocal license, typically without submitting to exams. If there are significant differences between the home state's requirements for certification and Nebraska's requirements, an exam may be required before a reciprocal license would be issued.

**12. What records does a commercial or non-commercial applicator need to keep?**

Records must be kept of all commercial and non-commercial applications of RUPs. In addition, records must be kept of commercial applications of all structural pest control pesticides and non-commercial applications of both general-use and restricted-use pesticides for outdoor vector control on public access sites.

Private applicators must keep records of RUP use. Contact NDA for a listing of Private applicator required records.

### **Commercial and Non-commercial Record Keeping Requirements**

The following shall be recorded within 48 hours of the commercial or non-commercial pesticide application and be kept for a minimum of three years:

- Name and address of the person for whom the pesticide was applied;

- Name, address, and certification number of the person making the application; (when a noncertified applicator makes the application, include both the noncertified and supervising applicator information.)
- Location of the pesticide application;
- Target pest(s) (i.e., type of insect, weed, or disease);
- Site of application; (i.e., specific crop or commodity, type of field, type of surface, etc.);
- Day, month, and year of the application;
- Initial starting time of the application;
- Trade name and EPA registration number of the pesticide applied;
- Rate of pesticide applied per unit of measure (i.e., pounds per acre, ounces per 1,000 square feet, etc.);
- Total amount of pesticide applied to the site;
- Area or size of the treated site; (i.e., acres, cubic feet, square feet, linear feet, crack and crevice, trap or bait placement, or spot treatment.);
- Method of disposal of unused pesticide;
- Estimated wind direction and velocity at the time of the application (it is recommended these records be kept);
- Estimated ambient temperature at the time of the application (it is recommended these records be kept);
- Records of all pesticide use. (it is recommended that commercial applicators of general use pesticides for lawn care purposes maintain these records)

Please see the following brochures for related information at [bit.ly/pdsloZ](http://bit.ly/pdsloZ):

- [The 60-Day Rule: Temporary Exemption from Licensing](#)
- [Which Pesticide Applicator License Do I Need?](#)
- [The Pesticide Enforcement Process](#)

Nebraska Department of Agriculture  
 Animal and Plant Health Protection  
 P.O. Box 94756  
 Lincoln, NE 68509-4756  
 877-800-4080 or (402) 471-2351  
[www.agr.ne.gov/pesticide](http://www.agr.ne.gov/pesticide)

