

December 14, 2008
Ag Notes
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Cache County

PESTICIDE CERTIFICATION TRAINING

Provisions of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act require training and certification of any individual applying a restricted-use pesticide. In recent weeks many applicators across the state have participated in annual Pesticide Re-certification Workshops, co-sponsored by Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) and USU Extension. The last three workshops will be held this week in northern Utah. Tuesday, December 16 participants will meet at the Davis Campus-Weber State University (2750 N University Park Blvd) Wednesday, December 17 instruction will be given at the BATC Brigham City Campus Conference Room(325 W 1100 S). The final session will be in the Southwest conference Room at BATC in Logan(1301 N 600 W). Classes begin at 9 a.m. each day. Private applicators will take their test at noon, if required. Commercial/Non-commercial tests will be administered at 4 p.m.

Utah has three classifications of Pesticide Applicators:

1. Commercial - Any person who uses any pesticide for hire or compensation.
2. Non-Commercial - Any person working as an individual or an employee of a firm, entity, or government agency who uses or demonstrates the use of any restricted-use pesticide and who does not qualify as a private or commercial applicator.
3. Private - Any person or said persons employer who uses or supervises the use of any restricted-use pesticide for the purpose of producing any agricultural commodity on property owned or rented by employee or employer.

Additionally, applicators are classified into one or more categories based on application site and the type of work they perform. Common categories are plant, animal, vertebrate, aquatic, ornamental and turf.

Applicators whose licenses expires on December 31, 2008 have three options to re-certify: (1) Complete a general and category test(s) with a score exceeding 70 percent, (2) Attend a re-certification workshop and pass a category test(s), or, (3) Obtain the required number of Continuing Education Units.(CEU's)

Commercial and non-commercial applicators must have accumulated a minimum of 24 CEU's to be exempt from taking the written exam. Private applicators must obtain 9 CEU's over a three-year period or take a written test. Applicators are required to keep documentation of all courses attended where CEU credits are earned. This documentation must be maintained by the applicator and turned in at the time of re-certification to receive credit for attendance at the CEU courses. CEU credits in Laws, Safety and Use Management are available for applicators who attend one of the training sessions this week. Documented training in CRP, First Aid and Hazmat may also be used to meet requirements in the Safety category. Check with Mark Ashcroft, Compliance Specialist for UDAF, for answers to specific questions. Mark can be reached at 752-6263. He will also be an active participant at the training sessions.

There is an examination and educational materials fee of \$20.00 for private and non-commercial applicators who need to recertify. Commercial applicators are required to pay a \$35.00 annual or \$65.00 triennial license fee before taking any tests. All commercial applicators must have affiliation with an employer who has a current commercial pesticide application business license. A check is preferable and should be made out to the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food.

Applicators that have never been certified are required to take an initial written exam that consists of the general and at least one category test. A score of 70 percent or above is required to pass each test. After an individual has been certified initially, UDAF officials are anxious to have applicators renew their license with CEU credits instead of retaking the written exams. There are sufficient opportunities each year to earn credits if applicators are paying attention.

The cautious use of pesticides is important to all of us. They are valuable when properly used, but dangerous if misused. This ongoing instruction is designed to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks.