

Pesticide Applicator Certification  
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Release: January 10, 2022

For those who apply pesticides on a contractual or for hire basis, or as a part of their job to land owned or controlled by their employer, a pesticide applicator license is likely required.

Training to obtain a commercial or noncommercial applicators license, or to recertify a current license, is coming up in February, March, and April. Now is the time to check training dates and locations to register. These can be found at [pested.unl.edu](http://pested.unl.edu) under the certification and training tab.

In this article, I will cover information for commercial and noncommercial applicators, not private applicators.

A commercial applicator is a licensed applicator who uses any restricted use pesticide on a contractual or for hire basis. It also includes anyone using restricted or general use pesticides for hire or compensation for lawn care, structural pest control, or community wide outdoor vector control.

A noncommercial applicator is someone who applies restricted use pesticides only on lands owned or controlled by his or her employer or for a governmental agency or subdivision of the state. It also includes people who apply either general or restricted use pesticides to control mosquitoes on behalf of a political subdivision of the state.

Restricted use pesticides can only be purchased and applied by licensed individuals. General use pesticides are products that can be purchased and applied, in some cases, without a license. These are the types of products homeowners purchase and apply to their own property.

However, anyone making pesticide applications for hire or compensation for control of pests to protect ornamental trees, shrubs, flowers, and turf in and around structures, greenhouses, plant nurseries, golf courses, athletic fields, parks and public or private grounds must be licensed to apply either or both general and restricted use pesticides.

For those needing a commercial or noncommercial license for the first time, or if their license has expired, they must pass the Nebraska Department of Ag administered general standards exam, plus an exam for each applicator category needed. If a category needs to be added to an existing license, that person must pass that category's exam as well.

There are 16 different categories depending on the site pesticides are being applied to. All applicators must be licensed in the 00 general standards category and at least one other category. The category that relates most to horticulture is 04 ornamental and turf.

To obtain a license, a person can attend one of Nebraska Extension's in-person trainings which consist of video reviews of the study manual, followed by exams. A license can also be obtained by ordering study guides to study independently and then attend a testing only session to take the exams.

Currently licensed applicators whose license is expiring this April must attend a recertification training to avoid their license expiring. This can be done by attending an in person Nebraska Extension training session. There is also an on-line recertification training option available.

Initial and recertification pesticide training is held at a number of locations on numerous dates throughout the state. In our area, pesticide training takes place in Columbus, Norfolk, Grand Island, Lincoln and Omaha. Again, these are all held in February, March and early April.

For information on commercial and noncommercial pesticide training dates, and to register to attend, go to [pested.unl.edu](http://pested.unl.edu) or call your local Extension office.