



Answers to common questions about the types of pesticide applicators in Nebraska and how to obtain a license

What is a Pesticide?

The term *pesticide* is very broad and includes substances such as repellents, insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, plant growth regulators, and even disinfectants.

The mixing, loading, application, and disposal of pesticides present risks to humans (applicators and others) and to the environment.

Some pesticides pose a relatively high degree of risk and are classified by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as "restricted-use pesticides" (RUPs). Due to the risks associated with them, **RUPs can only be purchased and used by persons certified and licensed as pesticide applicators.**

Pesticides which present a lower level of risk to humans and the environment are classified as "general-use pesticides" (GUPs). These GUPs are made available to the general public and typically do not require a license to apply. However, **persons making applications of GUPs to an ornamental and turf site or structural site are required to be licensed when the application is done commercially (on a for-hire basis).** Ornamental and turf sites include lawns, sports fields, golf courses, cemeteries, etc. Structural sites include homes, hospitals, schools, office buildings, food handling facilities, food manufacturing facilities, etc.

Additionally, persons making applications of GUPs for mosquito vector control or blackfly control must be licensed when working for a government agency/subdivision or for hire.

A third group of pesticides are the "minimal-risk pesticides." These products lack EPA registration and are often marketed as alternatives to traditional pesticides. Because these products meet the definition of a pesticide, the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) views the regulation of their use the same as GUPs.

Types of Pesticide Applicators:

Private

A private pesticide applicator is a certified applicator that uses or supervises the use of any RUP for the purposes of producing any agricultural commodity on property owned or rented by him or his employer. The private applicator designation includes farmers, commercial fruit growers, commercial gardeners, potato seed producers, sod producers, and the agricultural producer who applies RUPs to stored agricultural commodities. Private applicators receive no outside compensation for their work other than trading of personal services between producers.

Commercial

A commercial pesticide applicator is a certified applicator that uses or supervises the use of an RUP (and/or GUPs, and “minimal risk” pesticides for persons applying to Ornamental and Turf or Structural Sites) on a contract or for-hire basis.

Non-commercial

A non-commercial pesticide applicator is a certified applicator that uses or supervises the use of an RUP (and/or GUPs and “minimal risk” pesticides for mosquito vector control) solely to sites owned or controlled by his or her employer or for a governmental agency or subdivision of the state. As an employee, these people are applying pesticides for their employer as part of their regularly assigned duties. Contracted work, which provides the employee an income beyond their base pay, requires a commercial license.

A comparison of contrasting situations where an applicator would be required to hold a commercial or non-commercial license appears on the back of this brochure.

How can I acquire a license?

The first step is to become *certified!*

Private applicators become certified by attending approved training, completing a cooperative extension self-study packet, or by examination. Contact your local extension educator for specifics.

Commercial and non-commercial applicators must complete and pass (70%) a General Standards exam and a category-specific exam for each category in which they desire to become certified. A schedule of exam dates and locations is available online at: bit.ly/vtxWgg

To order study materials or register for training online go to: pested.unl.edu

A list of the category descriptions can be found online at: bit.ly/A8Zt7z

Once you are *certified*, the next step is to become *licensed*. Persons who complete private or commercial applicator certification requirements will be issued a billing statement from NDA for the license processing fee. Upon receipt and processing of the license fee (three to four working days), NDA will issue you a pesticide applicator license. **An applicator will not be considered licensed to purchase or apply pesticides until payment for their license has been processed.**

A three-year pesticide applicator license costs \$25 for private applicators, \$90 for commercial applicators, and is free to non-commercial applicators. Fees are non-refundable and not prorated for less than three years.

Commercial Licensing

A commercial pesticide applicator license allows an applicator to apply, for hire or under contract, pesticides to property the applicator or his or her employer do not personally own or control. Employees of commercial pest control businesses need this license.

A commercial applicator license is needed by:

- A grain elevator employee treating for an elevator client other than his employer;
- A hi-boy/floater operator or farmer treating another’s property **for hire**;
- A county weed control person treating a field or pasture of a landowner for hire;
- A contracted applicator treating livestock or farm animals;
- A contracted applicator treating a golf course property, a city park, school, commercial property or a cemetery;
- A lawncare business employee treating the property of a client or customer;

- A golf course employee treating property other than that of his employer;
- A Game and Parks employee treating a privately owned aquatic site for hire;
- A weed superintendent treating a private aquatic site or wetland for hire;
- An employee of a seed producer treating seed not owned by his employer;
- A contracted employer treating forest or park trails, railroad right-of-way (ROW), roadsides, or parking areas for hire;
- A contracted applicator treating grain elevator structures and perimeters, homes, barns, outbuildings, etc., for hire; and
- An employee doing additional or contracted work and receiving additional pay.

Non-commercial Licensing

A non-commercial pesticide applicator license is limited and only allows the applicator to use and apply pesticides for his or her employer or government agency or subdivision of the state, as a part of their regular job description.

A non-commercial applicator license is needed by:

- A grain elevator employee treating a grain bin or the grounds owned or controlled by the employer;
- County weed control personnel when controlling State-listed noxious weeds in a regulatory capacity;
- A government forest service employee applying pesticides on forest service land;
- An irrigation district employee treating aquatic sites owned or controlled by his/her employer;
- A school maintenance employee making applications to the school grounds;
- A city employee performing city mosquito control;
- A city groundskeeper applying to city parks, paths, public gardens, and cemeteries;
- A golf course employee applying to grounds owned by the golf course;
- A Game and Parks employee treating state controlled aquatic or recreational sites;
- A Department of Roads employee treating State-controlled ROW sites;
- An employee of a seed producer treating seed owned by his or her employer;
- A utility employee treating lumber owned by the utility; and
- A wildlife service employee controlling animals on a not-for-profit basis.

Please see the following brochures for related information at bit.ly/pdsloZ:

- [Pesticide Applicator Certification and Training](#)
- [The 60-Day Rule: Temporary Exemption from Licensing](#)
- [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

