



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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WSDA issues fines, license suspensions on pesticide cases Includes violation of worker protection standards, unlicensed structural pest inspection operation

OLYMPIA – During the third quarter of 2007, the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) issued fines totaling \$4,350 and imposed license suspensions for violations of state pesticide laws and rules. Fines ranged from \$50 to \$2,400 for violations that included operating without the necessary license, faulty pesticide application records and insufficient worker protection.

WSDA completed investigations in Grant, Jefferson, Klickitat, Pierce and Yakima counties and issued fines or license suspensions in the following cases:

Celso Alvarez, Mabton. WSDA alleged that in April 2007 Alvarez submitted a pesticide application record that did not have all of the required information. The matter was resolved when Alvarez agreed to pay \$50.

Blue Sky Landscape Services, Milton, was fined \$300 and the firm's commercial applicator license was suspended for three days. In May 2007, the firm failed to submit pesticide application records after receiving a written request from WSDA.

Cameron Calaway, CK Agri, Mattawa, was fined \$600 and his commercial applicator license was suspended for six days. In March 2007, Calaway used an unlicensed person to apply a restricted-use soil fumigant, and also did not properly license the application apparatus.

Cherry River Farms, Roosevelt, was fined \$400. As the result of an inspection in June 2007, WSDA found that the farm had failed to display pesticide application information that was readily accessible to workers at the orchard.

Evans Fruit Co., Sunnyside, was fined \$2,400 for violations of state pesticide worker protection standards. As a result of an inspection in March 2007, WSDA found that the firm did not fit-test pesticide handlers for wearing respirators and the company allowed the handlers to take pesticide-contaminated personal protective equipment home for cleaning. The firm was also cited for not providing adequate decontamination supplies for pesticide handlers, and for not posting all of the required worker safety information at their central notification board.

Wendy Forsyth, Wendy Forsyth Home Inspections, Brinnon, was fined \$600 for advertising on her Web site that she performs structural pest inspections. Forsyth was not licensed with WSDA to conduct structural pest inspections.

Penalty matrix used by WSDA to levy fines and suspensions

A penalty matrix is used to ensure penalties are uniform and fair. The matrix takes into account the seriousness of the violation, whether it is a first or a repeat offense, and whether there are any aggravating or

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mitigating factors involved. Larger penalties often reflect repeat offenses or multiple violations within the same incident.

WSDA enforces state and federal laws to protect people, property and the environment against the improper use of pesticides. Staff members provide technical assistance to the pesticide industry and consumers, including providing on-site pesticide safety training for growers' pesticide handlers and farmworkers. The agency also enforces rules on structural pest inspections for wood destroying organisms, such as wood rot, carpenter ants or termites. About 200 allegations of improper distribution or misuse of pesticides, or faulty structural inspections are investigated each year.

To file a complaint involving the misuse of a pesticide, or to find out if a pesticide applicator or structural pest inspector is licensed, call (877) 301-4555.

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