



# Pesticide/Pest Inspector Licensing Fact Sheet

This fact sheet contains information about the licensing program administered by WSDA. For further information, visit the Pesticide Management Division website at: <http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert>.

## Licensing

Washington State's pesticide licensing program includes 12 license types and over 25 exam categories. All licenses except the Limited Private Applicator and Rancher Private Applicator must be renewed annually. The license needed to legally apply, distribute or consult on the use of pesticides in Washington depends on who your employer is and/or what type of pest control work you will be performing. All individuals who perform inspections for wood destroying insects or their damage must obtain the Structural Pest Inspector license. (Note: Those who inspect for wood destroying organisms (insects and/or rot) as part of a home inspection require licensing with the Department of Licensing (<http://www.dol.wa.gov/business/homeinspectors>.) To determine the type of license you need, refer to the section "WSDA License Types" on page 2. Pages 3 and 4 provide a description of the exam categories available. You must be licensed in all categories in which you will be working. **A Commercial Applicator must be licensed in all categories in which the company conducts pesticide applications.**

Once you have qualified for a license, your employment status or the licensing status of your employer may affect the validity of your license. For example:

- A Public Operator's license can be issued without employment by a public agency, but carries with it the stipulation that it is valid only when the licensee is employed by a public agency.
- A Commercial Operator's license can be issued without employment by a WSDA licensed Commercial Applicator, but carries with it the stipulation that it is valid only when the licensee is employed by a Commercial Applicator.
- A Structural Pest Inspector license is only valid for performing complete wood destroying organism inspections (see definition on bottom of page 3) if the inspector owns or is employed by a business with the Structural Pest Inspector Company License. (See the definition of Structural Pest Inspector on page 2 for further information.)
- A Dealer Manager license is only valid when the licensee is employed by an outlet licensed as a Pesticide Dealer by the Department of Licensing Master License Service (<http://www.dol.wa.gov/business/pesticidedealer.html> or 360.664.1400). (Pesticide dealer outlets must be licensed to distribute non-home and garden pesticides.)

## Washington State University (WSU) Study Manuals and Shortcourses

Study manuals may be purchased from WSU Cooperative Extension. Order forms are available from the WSU Bulletin Office at (800) 723-1763 or <http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/c0886/c0886.pdf>, WSDA, or your local extension office. Prelicense training courses are offered statewide, primarily January through April, by the WSU Pesticide Education Program and by some local extension offices. Information on these courses is available by calling (509) 335-2830, (509) 335-9222 or (253) 445-4577 or by going to the WSU website at <http://pep.wsu.edu/>.

## Testing

Testing is conducted by WSDA every Tuesday at our Olympia and Yakima offices at 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. sharp. In addition, testing is conducted by field staff at 12:30 p.m. at the following locations\*:

Everett	Once a month (call for specific date)	WSU Extension Office, 600 128 <sup>th</sup> St. SE
Spokane	First Wednesday of each month	WSDA Office, 222 N. Havana
Wenatchee	Fourth Tuesday of each month	Washington Apple Commission, 2900 Euclid Ave.
Moses Lake	Third Tuesday every other month (January, March, May, July, September & November)	Grant Co. Fire District #5, Station #8, 1021 Arlington Dr.

\* WSDA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ALTER THIS SCHEDULE WHEN NECESSARY.

**Reservations are required** and can be made by calling WSDA's toll-free, automated reservation line at (877) 301-4555. Only those with picture identification will be allowed to test. Please note: several WSU Cooperative Extension offices administer the Private Applicator exam upon request. Contact WSDA or your local extension office for further information or view a list of the offices on-line at <http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/docs/ExtensionOffices.pdf>. **NOTE: The Idaho and Oregon Departments of Agriculture will not accept Washington exams for individuals living in their state.**

You must be prepared to present picture identification and to pay all license fees at the time of testing. Please make checks payable to WSDA. If paying in cash, you must have the exact amount. **Test scores for applicants who have not submitted the required fee will be discarded after 10 working days.** After a second, third, or fourth failure in a calendar year, there is a mandatory 14-day waiting period between exam retakes. After the fifth and subsequent failures, you must wait 60 days before retesting. If an exam is revised or developed, all affected licensees may be required to pass the new exam.

# WSDA LICENSE TYPES

License Type/Fee	Definitions
<b>Structural Pest Inspector</b> Annual license Fee: \$60.00 <sup>1</sup>	A person who inspects a structure for wood destroying organisms, their damage or conditions conducive to their development. Wood destroying organisms include carpenter ants, termites, wood infesting beetles and wood rot (fungus). Proof of financial coverage required ( <a href="http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/LicensingEd/CaSpiInfo.aspx">http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/LicensingEd/CaSpiInfo.aspx</a> ). In addition, a business license from Dept. of Licensing is required ( <a href="http://www.dol.wa.gov/business">http://www.dol.wa.gov/business</a> or (360) 664-1400). Note: Home Inspectors require licensing with DOL, <a href="http://www.dol.wa.gov/business/homeinspectors">http://www.dol.wa.gov/business/homeinspectors</a> .)
<b>Commercial Applicator</b> Annual license Fee: \$215.00 <sup>2</sup>	A person engaged in the business of applying pesticides to the land or property of another. This land can either be publicly or privately owned. Proof of financial coverage required. Go to <a href="http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/LicensingEd/CaSpiInfo.aspx">http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/LicensingEd/CaSpiInfo.aspx</a> for further information.
<b>Commercial Operator</b> Annual license Fee: \$67.00	A person employed by a WSDA-licensed Commercial Applicator to apply pesticides to the land or property of another. This property can either be publicly or privately owned.
<b>Commercial Pest Control Consultant</b> <sup>3</sup> Annual license Fee: \$60.00	A person who sells or offers pesticides for sale at other than the licensed pesticide dealer outlet from which they are employed. In addition, Commercial Consultants may offer or supply technical advice or make recommendations to the users of non-home and garden pesticides. <b>Licensed and employed Commercial Applicators and Commercial Operators may act as Commercial Consultants without acquiring the consultant's license.</b>
<b>Dealer Manager</b> <sup>3</sup> Annual license Fee: \$33.00	A person who supervises the distribution of any <b>non</b> -home and garden pesticide from a licensed pesticide dealer outlet.
<b>Private Applicator</b> Annual license Fee: \$33.00 <sup>4</sup>	Person who applies or supervises the application of a restricted use pesticide on land owned or rented by him or his employer for the purpose of producing an agricultural commodity.
<b>Limited Private Applicator</b> Fee: \$33.00 <sup>4</sup> <b>Rancher Private Applicator</b> Fee: \$100.00 <sup>4</sup> 5-year licenses	Both licenses allow holder to apply or supervise the use of restricted use <b>herbicides</b> on non-production ag land (pastures, rangeland, areas around farm buildings) and in mixed rangeland-timber areas to control weeds designated for mandatory control. <b>Rancher Private Applicators</b> may also apply herbicides and rodenticides to limited production ag land where hay and grain are grown primarily for on-farm use. Neither license allows the use of restricted use insecticides, fungicides or aquatic herbicides.
<b>Private Commercial Applicator</b> Annual license Fee: \$33.00	A person who applies or supervises the use of a restricted use pesticide on land, property or materials owned or rented by him or his employer for purposes other than the production of an agricultural commodity. See Commercial Applicator definition if applying to land, property or materials owned by another person other than employer.
<b>Public Operator</b> Annual license Fee: \$33.00	A person who, while acting as an employee of a governmental agency, applies restricted use pesticides by any means or any pesticide by power equipment on public or private property. Public Operators may act as Public Consultants. (Public Operators licensed only in the Public Health category are exempt from the fee.)
<b>Public Pest Control Consultant</b> <sup>3</sup> Annual license Fee: \$33.00	A person who, while acting as an employee of a governmental agency, offers or supplies technical advice, or makes recommendations to the user of pesticides other than home and garden products. Public Consultants may not act as Public Operators without the operator license.
<b>Demonstration &amp; Research Applicator</b> Annual license Fee: \$33.00	A person who applies or supervises the use of any experimental or restricted use pesticide to small experimental plots at no charge. (Public employees performing research applications fall under the licensing requirements of the Public Operator.)

1 *The fee is not required if applicant holds and is working under the authority of a current Commercial Applicator, Commercial Operator, Private Commercial, Commercial Consultant, Demo & Research or Public Consultant license.*

2 *Includes licensing of one spray apparatus. There is a \$27 fee for each additional apparatus.*

3 *May not use or supervise the use of a restricted use pesticide or commercially apply any pesticide.*

4 *No fee required if applicant pays for another WSDA pesticide license.*

# Pesticide License Exam Categories

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*To become licensed, individuals must receive a passing grade of 70% on all required exams.*

**Laws and Safety (available in English and Spanish):** This exam is required for all licenses **except** the Dealer Manager, Structural Pest Inspector, Private Applicator, Limited Private Applicator and Rancher Private Applicator. It is incorporated into the Aquatic Antifouling and Stump Treatment exams.

**Dealer Manager:** Exam fulfills the requirements for a Dealer Manager license and qualifies the licensee to act as a Dealer Manager for a licensed pesticide dealer outlet.

**Private Applicator (available in English and Spanish):** This person uses or supervises the use of restricted use pesticides for the production of any agricultural commodity on property owned or rented by them or their employer. The aquatic category is required if applying a pesticide to water which moves off the property.

**Limited Private Applicator:** Use or supervision of restricted use herbicides on non-production ag land. May also use herbicides in timber areas to control weeds designated for mandatory control. **May not use restricted use insecticides, rodenticides, fungicides or any aquatic herbicide.**

**Rancher Private Applicator:** Use or supervision of restricted use herbicides and rodenticides on non-production ag land and on limited production ag land where hay and grain are grown for primarily personal use. May also use herbicides in timber areas to control weeds designated for mandatory control. **May not use restricted use insecticides, fungicides or any aquatic herbicide.**

**Turf and Ornamental Weed (available in English and Spanish):** The control of weeds (and moss) in all ornamental and turf situations, which includes but is not limited to golf courses, parks, schools, lawns, yards, gardens, and hospitals. *There is a Stump Treatment exam for those doing ONLY stump treatment applications.*

**Agricultural Weed (available in English and Spanish):** The control of weeds in all agricultural crops including forest environments. *This category does not cover the application of soil fumigants. Refer to the Soil Fumigation category.*

**Rights-of-Way Weed (available in English and Spanish):** The control of weeds on but not limited to: rights-of-way locations such as city, county, state and federal roads and/or highways, railroads, power lines, and irrigation ditches; and, to industrial sites such as airports, industrial parks and large parking areas. *This category does not include the application of pesticides into water. Refer to the Aquatic Pest Control category.*

**Stump Treatment:** The very limited use of herbicides on cut stumps only to control resprouting. Does not include basal applications. *Note: Use the Turf & Ornamental study manual for this exam. Disregard chapters on "Turf Weed Management" and "Ornamental Weed Management." Under Herbicide Application Principles, only study sections on "Hand Sprayers" and "Sprayer Nozzles." Under "Herbicide Application" section, study material beginning with "Sprayer Delivery Rate."*

**Agricultural Insect & Disease Control:** The control of insects and diseases in agricultural crops including forest environments. *This category does not cover the application of soil fumigants. Refer to the Soil Fumigation category.*

**Ornamental Insect & Disease Control:** The control of insects and diseases in ornamental, turf and rights-of-way situations including but not limited to golf courses, parks, schools, lawns, yards, gardens, greenhouses, hospitals and rest homes. This includes but is not limited to the use of insecticides, miticides, fungicides, bactericides, molluscicides and nematocides. *This category does not include perimeter treatments around structures for spiders. The PCO General exam is required for these applications.*

**PCO General:** The control of insects, spiders, birds, rodents and animal pests, including but not limited to: residences, public buildings and grounds, commercial buildings and grounds, disposal sites, animal feed lots and farmsteads, including buildings and transportation equipment. *This category does not include the control of ornamental pests, structurally destructive pests, and the inspection of properties for real estate transactions.*

**PCO Structural:** The control of those pests that attack structural material, including but not limited to fungus, termites, carpenter ants and wood-boring beetles. May perform specific wood destroying organism inspections.\*

**Structural Pest Inspector:** May perform specific wood destroying organism (WDO) inspections; required for complete WDO inspections.\*\* Passage of two exams with a 70% or greater is required to qualify for the SPI license. There is a 100-question general knowledge exam and a 50-question practical exam. Although WSDA does provide magnifying lenses for the practical exam, you are encouraged to bring your own high quality hand lens.

\* Specific WDO inspections – for the purpose of identifying or verifying evidence of an infestation of WDOs prior to pest management activities.

\*\* Complete WDO inspections - for the purpose of determining evidence of infestation, damage, or conducive conditions as part of the transfer, exchange, or refinancing of any structure in Washington State.

**Aquatic Pest Control:** The control of aquatic pests (fish, insects and weeds) of water areas including but not limited to canals, rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, marshes and water supply pipelines.

**Aquatic Pest Control - Irrigation Districts:** Limited to the control of aquatic weeds in irrigation district water delivery systems. Pests include but are not limited to moss, algae, cattails, pondweeds and other emerged and submersed aquatic weeds.

**Aquatic Antifouling:** Use of antifouling paints to control fouling organisms on the bottom of marine vessels. (Study material is available at <http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/docs/AquaticAntifoulingFactSheet.pdf> or by contacting WSDA at (877) 301-4555.)

**Fumigant:** The use of fumigants (such as methyl bromide and aluminum phosphide) on stored commodities. Study the chapter "Controlling Pest Infestations" in the Stored Grain Pest Control study manual (MISC 0157).

**Pest Animal Control:** The control of pest animals in agricultural situations. (Trapping of animals does not require a pesticide license but may require a permit from the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife. Contact that agency's Problem Wildlife Program at (360) 902-2926.)

**Public Health Control:** This category allows for the use of pesticides in public health situations such as, but not limited to, mosquito control, rodent control and insect control in situations of medical and public health importance.

**Soil Fumigation (available in English and Spanish):** Use of soil-applied fumigant on agricultural crops and non-crop land to control pests including weeds, insects and diseases.

**Stored Grain:** The use of pesticides (including fumigants and rodenticides) in grain storing facilities, railcars, etc.

**Structural & Turf Demossing:** Limited to the control of moss on structures and turf.

**Wood Treatment (available in English and Spanish):** Use of wood preservatives for the control of wood damaging pests.

**Specialty Exams:** Interior Landscaping, Seed Treatment, Livestock, Sprout Inhibitor and Sewer Root Control. (Study material for the Sewer Root Control exam is available at <http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/docs/SewerRootCtrlManual.pdf> or by contacting WSDA toll free at (877) 301-4555.)

## EXAM SUBSTITUTIONS

EXAM	PERMITTED SUBSTITUTION(S)*
Private Applicator*	Agricultural Weed Control or Agricultural Insect & Disease Control/plus Laws & Safety
Limited Private Applicator*	Private Applicator or Laws & Safety plus a weed exam
Rancher Private Applicator*	Private Applicator or Laws & Safety, a weed exam and Pest Animal Control
Laws & Safety	Dealer Manager or Private Applicator

\*Note: To obtain one of these licenses using substituted exams, you must submit a completed application and, if applicable, the license fee (refer to page 2).

### For further information, contact Pesticide Licensing at:

**Administrative Offices:** 1111 Washington Street SE / PO Box 42560, Olympia WA 98504-2560  
21 North 1st Avenue, Suite 236, Yakima, WA 98902-2663

**Toll-free:** 1-877-301-4555

**Fax:** 360-902-2093

**Email:** [license@agr.wa.gov](mailto:license@agr.wa.gov)

**Website:** <http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert>

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Persons of disability should notify WSDA in advance at (360) 902-2015 [TTY Relay at (800) 833-6388] if accommodation is necessary.

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