

The Montana Private Applicator Program

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The Montana State University Pesticide Safety Education Program coordinates the certification needs of private* applicators wishing to apply restricted use pesticides across the state.

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PESTICIDES ARE AN IMPORTANT TOOL FOR MANY

Montana farmers, ranchers and landowners. Many commonly used 'general use' pesticides can be purchased without a license and used on your own property. These pesticides do not generally cause unreasonable adverse effects on the environment and include such products as Ortho, Sevin and Roundup. Other 'restricted use' pesticides are more strictly regulated and require you to have a license to purchase or apply them due to the potential adverse effects these products may cause the environment, non-target animals or the applicator. This would include such products as Tordon 22K®, Furadan 4F®, Warrior 1E® and many more. The Montana State University Pesticide Safety Education Program coordinates the certification needs of private* applicators wishing to apply restricted use pesticides across the state. This is a combined effort between the Montana Department of Agriculture and MSU Extension personnel.

There are many things a certified private applicator *cannot* do that are often misunderstood. Certified private pesticide applicators cannot apply pesticides commercially and can only apply restricted-use pesticides on land that they own, rent or lease. A certified applicator also cannot sell or give away pesticides. Finally, a certified applicator cannot give his/her permit to non-family members or non-employees to purchase restricted use pesticides.



Private applicators wanting to purchase or use restricted use pesticides should read this publication. For more information on non-private (commercial, governmental, non-commercial) certification contact the Montana Department of Agriculture, (406) 444-5400 for further details.

The process of obtaining private certification

To become certified as a private applicator for the first time, you must either attend an approved six-hour initial training program or pass the open book Initial Private Pesticide Applicator exam with at least a grade of 70 percent. This test is offered at all local county Extension offices and must be administered by an authorized representative of the MSU Pesticide Safety Education Program (generally the local county Extension agent).

If you qualify for certification, a completed 'Farm Applicator Special Use Permit' must be completed and sent with the appropriate fees to the Montana Department of Agriculture. The Montana Department of Agriculture will then mail you a farm applicator license within two to six weeks

(Figure 2). The county Extension agent may issue a temporary permit to allow the purchase of restricted use pesticides as soon as possible, provided that it is the first time you have applied for a license. Temporary permits cannot be issued to applicators who have allowed their certification to expire (within the last 24 months).

* A farm (private) applicator is defined in the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) as an applicator that uses or supervises the use of any restricted use pesticide for the purpose of producing any agricultural commodity on property owned or rented by the applicator or his/her employer.

Certification is not needed for:

- *Immediate family members of certified private applicators*
- *Employees of certified private applicators but they must be trained and supervised by the certified applicator*

If you do not receive your license within six weeks, contact the MDA (406) 444-4900. After you receive your license contact the local county Extension office PAT (Private Applicator Trainer; Extension agent) coordinator to register on the local Pesticide Education Record Keeping System. You can then receive information on all Pesticide Education program opportunities, credit updates, and miscellaneous pesticide registration information. This will also assure that all training sessions you attend will be properly recorded for recertification.

Private Applicator Fees

Since 1993, according to the Montana Pesticide Act, the fee for private pesticide applicators is \$50 and is distributed as:

- \$15 (30 percent) to the Montana Department of Agriculture for administration.
- \$15 (30 percent) to the Extension office of the county in which the private applicator resides. This money is used to support pesticide certification and training programs conducted in those counties.
- \$5 (10 percent) to the Montana State University Pesticide Safety Education Office.
- \$15 (30 percent) to the Montana Department of Agriculture Waste Pesticide and Pesticide Disposal Program.

The \$50 fee is prorated over a five-year recertification cycle. For example, an initial applicator paying fees during the second year of the cycle would pay \$40. The payment for the third year would be \$30 and so forth. Refer to the Pesticide Certification Districts Map (Figure 1) to see what your prorated initial certification fee is.

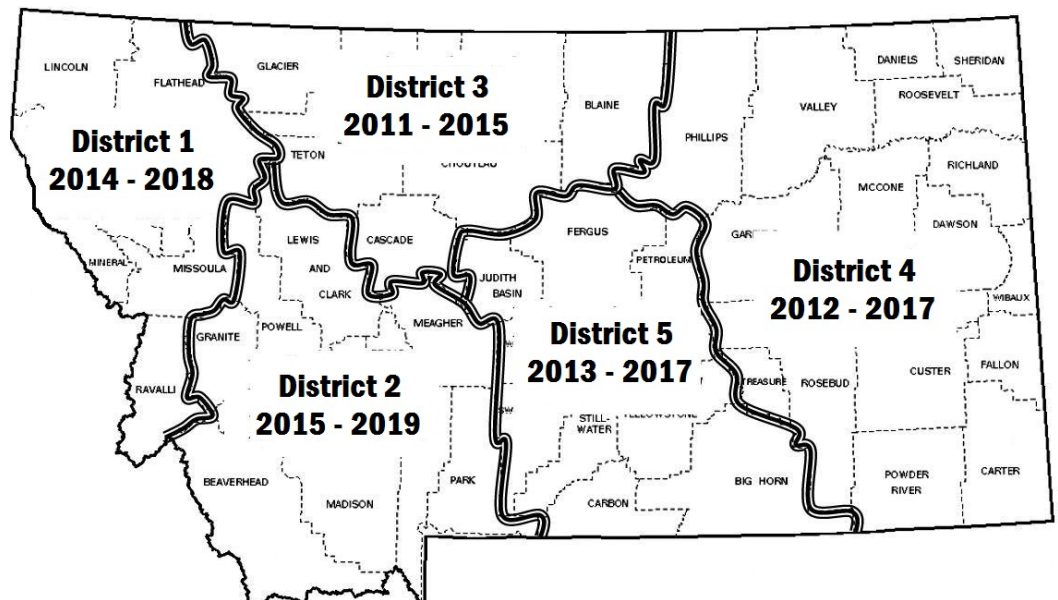
Pesticide Certification Districts/Accruing Recertification Credits

All applicators must accrue six recertification credits by the end of their certification cycle. Recertification credits can be obtained by attending approved training sessions, taking an online quiz or taking a closed-book exam at the local PAT office. Montana is divided into five districts (Figure 1), with all the private applicator licenses in any given region expiring on December 31st of a given year. If applicators fail to accrue six recertification credits by the end of this cycle, they will lose their current private applicator certification. Applicators who are certified in the fifth year of the certification cycle are automatically grandfathered into the next cycle and do not need to accumulate six recertification credits. Applicators who are initially certified after July 1st of the 2nd year of their certification cycle will be pro-rated 3 recertification credits. The only way to become certified within the first 12 months of a lapsed certification is a closed-book exam at the county MSU Extension office or attending a private applicator initial certification program.

An applicator may elect to take a closed-book exam (pass with a score of more than 70 percent) at any time during the fifth year of the certification cycle to qualify for the next cycle.

As a certified private pesticide applicator you are responsible for maintaining your license. You are also responsible for keeping track of the programs you attend. Do not procrastinate or you may be caught at the end of the cycle without any program credit opportunities in your local

FIGURE 1. Montana Pesticide Certification Cycle by Districts.



area. You have five years to attain six recertification credits. All program credit opportunities available in Montana are on the 'Private Applicator Training' link on the Montana Pesticide Safety Education Program (PSEP) Web site (www.pesticides.montana.edu). If you have any questions regarding other program opportunities contact the your MSU county Extension Office. For accessing recertification credits accumulated on your license navigate to <https://app.mt.gov/pest/index> and select 'View Education Credits'.

Individual applicators may request credits for meetings, conventions or other events that were not pre-approved by the MSU PSEP. Credits may be awarded if proof of attendance and program agenda are submitted to a PAT coordinator within 30 days of the event.

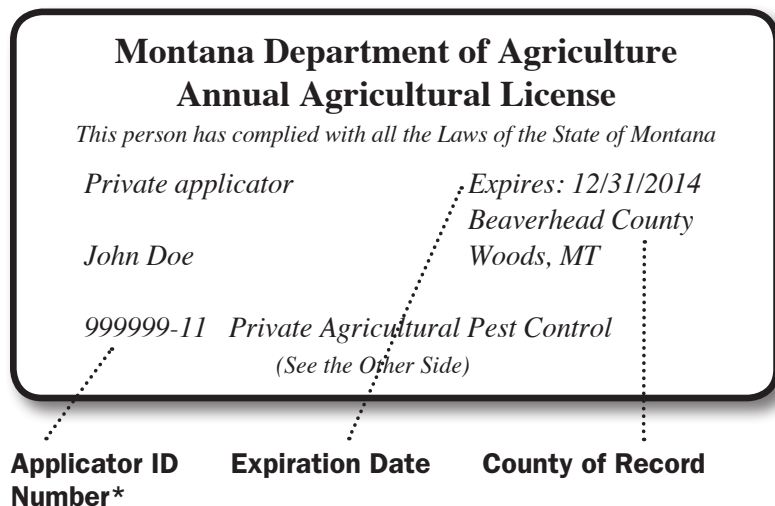
What can I expect if I qualify for recertification in the next certification cycle?

If you have qualified for recertification in the next cycle by accumulating six recertification credits or passing a closed-book exam, you should receive notice from the Montana Department of Agriculture in December or January of the recertifying year. This notice will explain that you qualify for recertification and will ask for your payment of \$50 for the next cycle. If you do not pay the \$50 fee, you will not be recertified in the next cycle. Upon paying your fee, your license should arrive by February 1st of the recertifying year. Contact the Montana Department of Agriculture if you have paid your fee and still have not received your license.

Your License and Applicator ID Number

You will receive your license (Figure 2) from the Montana Department of Agriculture within six weeks of initial certification. You should be aware of your applicator ID number, your expiration date and your county of record.

FIGURE 2. Your Farm (Private) Applicator License.



* Certified applicators are indicated by the number 11. Commercial applicators receive the number 12 and government pesticide

County of Record. Your county of record is usually the county where you reside within the state. This is important, as the local county you are registered in tracks your individual records and recertification credits. Your records are forwarded to your local county PAT coordinator. This is usually based on your address information given when you apply for the initial certification. If you move to a different address, be certain to call your local extension office and contact the PAT coordinator for updating the database.

Applicator ID Number. The applicator ID number is located in the lower left hand corner. Your applicator ID number is needed to verify attendance at any private applicator recertification credit opportunity event.

Expiration Date. The expiration date is the last day that your certification will be valid. This marks the last day in your certification cycle for the region in which you reside. You must have accumulated six recertification credits or have taken a closed-book exam (passed with a score of more than 70 percent) on or before the expiration date to requalify for certification in the next cycle. If you are certified in the final year of your certification cycle, you automatically qualify for recertification in the next cycle (Figure 2).

Online Credit Opportunities

At times, private applicators can find themselves short on recertification credits in the final days of their certification period. Online credits are available to all Montana private applicators. This opportunity is available on the MSU PSEP Web site at www.pesticides.montana.edu by selecting the 'Private (Farm)' link, then selecting 'Online Credit Opportunities.'

Each applicator has the opportunity to gain up to two credits within one certification cycle through the online process. Many different online tests are available and include topics on pesticide safety, calibration, record keeping, pesticide labels and personal protective equipment

Online credits are offered by many organizations including MSU Pesticide Education Program. Directions may vary so applicators must read and follow all directions by each online credit provider. Applicators that select online credits provided by MSU Pesticide Education Program should beware that an applicator only has two chances, whether they pass or fail. If the applicator receives a 70 percent or better he can print off the page and send it in with a \$10 payment to the MSU PSEP. This money will be used

to support the MSU PSEP in purchasing new training materials and updating the online exam Web site. Online testing submittals will be reviewed by the MSU Pesticide Education Office. Credits will be forwarded to PAT coordinators (county Extension agents) in counties that the applicator is certified within.

The MSU Pesticide Safety Education Program would like to stress that online opportunities should be viewed as a last resort to applicators. Priority should always be given to attending regular programs that focus on interaction and valuable feedback. This online credit opportunity should supplement the already existing credit opportunities within your county.

When purchasing restricted use products

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has listed approximately 19,000 pesticide products at the federal level. These products are either registered as restricted use or general use products that may be purchased by anyone. Restricted use pesticide product labels will contain the statement, "RESTRICTED USE PESTICIDE", on the top of the first page. A local vendor or dealer will ask for your private applicator certification when purchasing a restricted use pesticide product. If you do not have a current private applicator certification you will not be allowed to complete the purchase. Always keep your license with you when purchasing pesticide products and never purchase restricted use pesticide products for others.

Reference Materials

As a certified private applicator, it is your responsibility to use pesticides in a manner consistent with the product label, while following all state and federal laws regarding your pesticide applications, storage and disposal. Using reference materials to answer questions is an invaluable tool for Montana private applicators who find themselves in remote locations where quick answers are needed. All applicators should have a copy of the EPA Core Manual and Montana Addendum and be familiar with the MSU Pesticide Safety

Education Program Web site.' These manuals can be viewed online at www.pesticides.montana.edu by selecting the 'Private (Farm)' link and then selecting either 'EPA Core Manual' or 'Montana Addendum' links. These manuals can also be ordered from MSU Extension at (406)994-3273.

For questions on new pesticide products available, products delisted by EPA, new pesticide laws, and pesticide news stories of Montana interest see the MSU Pesticide News Source at www.pesticide.montana.edu. Select 'Pesticide News' on the home page. By periodically reviewing this site, a private applicator can stay current on new events in the pesticide world that may impact their operation.

The MSU PSEP home page also has a link titled 'reference materials.' On this page you will find a comprehensive list of Montguides, Web sites, and Extension bulletins related to a variety of pesticide subjects an applicator may have questions about. These are the same resources that are used at pesticide programs around the state.

For More Information

Contact your local MSU Extension office or the MSU Pesticide Safety Education Program office at:

Department of Animal and Range Science
103 Animal Bioscience Building
P.O. Box 172900
Bozeman, MT 59717-2900
Phone: 406-994-5067
www.pesticides.montana.edu
Email: pesticides@montana.edu

REMEMBER!

Keep your Farm Applicator License with you for all private applicator credit opportunities. To attain recertification credits you must attend the entire event, as well as mark your applicator ID number, county of record and signature on the attendance sheet for the event. Credits will not be awarded if applicators fail to mark this information.



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