

# Understanding the Pennsylvania Pesticide Control Act

It has been over two years since changes were made in the Pa. Pesticide Control Act. Many people still do not know how the system of issuing and recertifying applicator's permits is done now. Hopefully this article will answer those questions.

If you use restricted pesticides for your own farm needs, for producing an agricultural commodity you must be certified by the Pa. Department of Agriculture. You are classified as a "private applicator". If you do application for people other than yourself or for a non-agricultural use of any pesticide, you must be certified as a commercial applicator. This would include people in the lawn-care business. Those that work for a public entity that use pesticides are certified as a "public" applicator. So the only users of pesticides that need not be certified are those that do not use restricted pesticides, they must only use them only for their own farm and it must be for producing an agricultural commodity.

To become a certified private applicator, a person must take a test called a "core" exam that is given by the PDA. This is done at a designated test location. South Central PA falls within PDA Region 6. The number to call to arrange to take the test is 787-3400. If you never had a permit before or had an old permit that expired before September 1988, you must take the test to become certified as a private applicator. To prepare for the test, you should purchase a copy of the "Pesticide Education Manual" which is available at county extension offices for \$14. If the individual passes the test, a \$10 permit fee is paid and a permit can then be issued. Commercial and public applicators must take the "core" exam, plus additional exams for each of a possible 18 categories that applies to their specific use. Fees for the core exam, each category exam and a business license are charged. Evidence of a certain amount of liability insur-

ance also is required of commercial and public applicators.

Once a permit is obtained, it is valid for a three-year period. During this three-year period the certified applicator must attend training sessions in order to renew or re-certify at the end of the third year. Under the amended law, the amount and the type of subject matter for the recertification training has been more clearly defined.

Training is to cover two basic subject areas. One covers topics of a general nature; information that any pesticide applicator needs to know such as equipment calibration, environmental protection, safety in handling, regulations, and label comprehension. The words "core training" has been used for this type of training. The second area of training required relates to specific uses. For example if a corn grower is trained on corn insect pesticides or if soybean growers are trained on control of soybean weeds, this is specific use training. The terms

"category specific" is used to describe this training. So category specific topics for training can include pest identification, pest control tactics, and integrated pest management techniques. The amount of this training required for private applications has been set at a minimum of six hours per three year certification period. Commercial and public applicators may be required to have more, depending on which categories they are certified in. But the minimum training for private applicators must consist of equal amounts of "core" and "category specific". Since it is unrealistic for the applicators to get this much at one time, and it is in fact encouraged that it be spread over three years, a credit system has been put in place to keep track of an applicators training. For each half hour of training on a recertification topic, one credit is assigned. For one hour, two credits, and so on. So in terms of credits, six core credits (three hours) and six category specific

credits (three hours) must be accumulated over the three year period. After the three year period when the permit is renewed, the accumulation of credits must begin again. In other words, credits earned above the minimum are not carried over for the next recertification.

The training is available from several sources. Cooperative Extension, Young Farmer Groups, and agri-business meetings can contain information which is related to pesticides and can be accredited for re-certification training. The number of both core and category credits earned is determined by an official from PDA who reviews the meeting agenda. A meeting number that identifies the meeting and it's associated credits is assigned. The applicators present at the meeting provide their permit identification number and the credits they earn go on record in a computer at PDA. When the time to renew the permit comes, the record of credits accumulated is there to determine whether or not the applicator has received sufficient training. If not, renewal is denied. Under the amended law, PDA sends out a statement once a year to each certified applicator that notifies them of what the department's records show they have accumulated in recertification credits.

Many cases have come up where there is a discrepancy between what the applicator claims to have earned and what the department has on record. If an applicator is faced with this problem he or she should call PDA, Bureau of Plant Industry at 787-4843. If the applicator has kept a record of each meeting that was attended and the meeting identification number they will have a better chance of correcting the situation. The sponsors of recertification meetings should keep attendance records in order to provide verification for applicators.

The system of pesticide applicator certification in Pennsylvania is not perfect but it has been improved from the standpoint of updating applicators in a continuing educational process.

## Garden Check Provides Advice

NEWARK, DE — "Garden Check," a bimonthly Extension newsletter for the home gardener, puts the proficiencies of plant care professionals at your fingertips.

Written by Cooperative Extension specialists in horticulture, entomology, plant pathology and human nutrition, the publication is offered on a subscription basis for \$5. "Garden Check" provides tips on lawn care; treatment for common plant diseases and insect pests; planting, fertilizing and pruning schedules; and care of ornamental plants, annuals, perennials and vegetables. Food preservation suggestions are also included.

This year's first issue of "Garden Check" will be published in mid-March. The newsletter will continue every two weeks until the end of August. Two special issues are also scheduled for the fall and holiday season.

To subscribe send a check for \$5 payable to the University of Delaware to GARDEN CHECK, Townsend Hall, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19717-1303.

# CLEAN CORN

## CONTROL TRIAZINE-RESISTANT WEEDS WITH PROWL®.

You want a good, clean stand of corn. A crop you can really take pride in.

That means getting control of triazine-resistant weeds, including pigweed and lambsquarters. So go with the herbicide that gets the job done. PROWL® herbicide. It not only helps control triazine-resistant weeds but other problem grasses and certain broadleaves such as foxtail and velvetleaf. And with PROWL, you don't have to worry about carryover.

You can surface-apply PROWL preemergence, or apply early postemergence in a tank mix with atrazine. Do NOT incorporate PROWL in corn.

So if you want a good, clean, healthy stand of corn, start with PROWL and you'll finish with pride.

Get PROWL at your local AgriCenter™ dealer.

Always read and follow label directions carefully. ®Trademark, American Cyanamid Company ©1988

Velvetleaf



Foxtail



Pigweed



Panicums



Lambsquarters



PROWL

AGRICENTER