



You have a Pesticide Applicator's License, but...

ARE YOU LEGAL?

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I have been the golf course superintendent at the Yacht & Country Club for the past 6-1/2 years and working on golf courses for the past 17 years. I try to stay up-to-date with all the changes in the industry (agronomics, legal issues, pesticides, etc.). And for the most part, I thought I was doing a pretty good job. That is, I thought so until about four months ago when I found out about a pesticide law that affects me and I'm sure many others. I really have two points in writing this article: One is to inform you of a pesticide law that you may not be aware of and the other is to convey my feelings of worth in belonging to different allied associations (FTGA, USGA, IMA, LMA, etc.).

Lets tackle the big one first: Pesticide laws. The Florida Administrative Code is administered by the Bureau of Compliance Monitoring. If you are a golf course superintendent, you are subject to the Florida Pesticide Law, Chapter 487, Florida Statutes and associated rules, Chapter 5E-2 and 5E-9. This law regulates both general-use and restricted-use pesticides.

In general, a pesticide applicator license is required only for applicators purchasing and applying restricted-use pesticides. However, a license is also required for individuals who apply any aerial pesticide, or apply chlorine gas into residential swimming pools using a portable system, or apply metam sodium to sewer systems to control roots, although the products used may not be restricted-use pesticides.

The license required for individuals working on a golf course who use restricted-use pesticides is a commercial applicator's license. A commercial applicator is a person who uses restricted-

use pesticides in areas regulated by the Bureau of Compliance Monitoring for any purpose other than as provided by the other license classifications. A commercial applicator license is required for employees or owners of the following who apply restricted-use pesticides:

- Aerial application service
- Aquatic weed control service
- Cemetery
- Chemical/fertilizer company
- Golf Course
- Parks and recreational property (privately owned)
- Right-of-Way control contracting with government or utility (i.e., railroad, power lines, pipeline, telephone, public road, etc.)
- Seed treatment company
- Wood treatment company

Commercial applicators are required to pass the general standards (Core) examination and the examination(s) for each category of intended use.

The categories most often used on golf courses are the Ornamental & Turf and Aquatic. I can go on and on explaining Chapter 487 but you should be well aware of it.

I said that I would inform you of a pesticide law that you probably don't know about. Did you know that you need a different license for any pesticide applications made outside the boundaries of the golf course (i.e.) club house, tennis courts, security gate, pool areas, walking trails, etc.? These are just a few of the areas that I am also responsible for maintaining at The Yacht & Country Club.

I know what you're saying: either you already have a Turf & Ornamental license which should cover it, or you thought you didn't need a license if you don't spray restricted use pesticides. Well you're right on both accounts in my books, but that won't get you very far with the State of Florida.

What we are talking about is specifically chapter 482.156 Limited Certification for commercial landscape maintenance personnel.

The regulation covering the Limited Certification for Landscape License (as it's known) states the department shall establish a limited certification category for commercial landscape maintenance personnel to authorize them to apply herbicides for controlling weeds in plant beds and to perform Integrated Pest Management on ornamental plants using the following materials: insecticides having the signal word "caution" but not having "warning" or "danger" on the label; insecticidal soaps; horticultural oils; and *Bacillus thuringiensis* (BT) products.

What this means is if you want to spray something around your clubhouse, you must first have a Limited Certification for Landscape license, even if you are only going to spray Roundup. Only those personnel with the license may apply the pesticide (no supervising up to 15 people like the T & O license). You can only spray pesticides with the signal word "caution" and only use a portable, hand-pump-up sprayer. No power equipment!

OK, so the Limited Certification license just won't do for your operation. You need more control over the products applied. Well the way I see it, you have two choices: call a commercial pest controller (PCO) to do the spraying for you, which does have some advantages and disadvantages, or get a pest control license for yourself.

Get another license! How do you do it? The general rule is that first you must have a college degree in horticultural technology, entomology, botany, or agronomy.

That doesn't sound too bad for most people but you must also have three years' employment as a service employee of a licensed pest control operator, with

at least one of those years in Florida. The second requirement sounds kind of tough for most people that I know. You just can't stop working on the course to go out and work for a pest control operator to obtain a license.

So it sounds like you may have to contract those applications out, which will be more expensive. You will have less control over the specific application (the applicators are not your employees) and more than likely you won't have access to the same products.

What is the answer? Don't ask me; I'm just reporting the facts.

Last I wanted to talk about the advantages of belonging to allied associations (USGA, FTGA, LMA, IMA, etc.). It is very important to belong to allied associations for the information that you receive, the continuing education that can be learned and the support that you can get from colleagues and peers. I feel even stronger than I used

to about belonging to and supporting different associations because that is how I found out about the Limited Certification for Landscape.

A piece of mail came across my desk from the Landscape Maintenance Association advertising a seminar. On the back side of the flyer was a state-

ment in bold print, "Did you know?" I didn't know. That is how I found out about the law. The more I dug and the more information I found, the more I wanted to forget the whole thing. So if you are reading this now, you may wish that you never started.

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