

## **MDA RECERTIFICATION CREDITS**

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The Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA), Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division is the state lead agency for the pesticide applicator certification (PAC) program. The PAC program is required by the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), and 40 CFR, Part 171. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has granted primacy for the MDA to implement and maintain the existing state certification plan. The Michigan Pesticide Control Act, Act 171, P.A. of 1976, as amended identifies the existing PAC program, and Regulation 636 outlines the categories, standards, and procedures for certification in Michigan.

The current PAC program requires both private and commercial pesticide applicators applying or directly supervising the use of restricted use pesticides (RUP) to become certified in the appropriate categories and standards of pesticide applications. In addition, Act 171 also requires that commercial applicators who apply pesticides in the course of their work duties must also be either certified or registered applicators. Recent amendments to Act 171 allows applicators who are not part of a licensed commercial pesticide application business and who only apply general use ready to use pesticides an exemption from the certification or registered technician requirements.

Initially, all applicators entering the certification program must complete an application, submit the required fee, and pass core and category examinations to become certified in Michigan. Study materials for exam preparation are available from the Michigan State University Extension office. Once an applicator completes all the requested examinations, MDA will issue a credential which expires in three years on December 31. Three to six months prior to expiration, MDA will issue a renewal packet to the address identified on the application. If your address has changed since your last certification/recertification process, notify the Lansing office of the MDA.

The renewal process includes completion of the pre-printed application, submission of fee, and recertification by either reexamination or seminar credits. Reexamination consists of retesting in those areas identified on the applicators credential. Commercial applicators will take a core renewal test in addition to any category or standard renewal examinations. The alternate method for recertification is by attending seminars approved for credits by the MDA. Michigan certified or registered applicators can accumulate credits for renewal of one or more categories of certification by attending approved seminars and attaining the required number of credits. By recertifying one or more categories of commercial certification, a commercial applicator is not required to take the core renewal exam. By recertifying all categories and standards through the seminar attendance program, an applicator can bypass all examination requirements. Any seminar which contains pesticide related training can be submitted by the seminar host to the Certification Program Manager in the Lansing office of the MDA. Once the seminar has been reviewed, the MDA will grant recertification credits to the participants who's recorded attendance is monitored by the host. Once the seminar is completed, the host submits a record of attendance to the MDA office where the applicator's name, certification number, date of seminar, and number of credits are maintained on a recertification data base. Hosts are also responsible to notify the participants that applicators must maintain a log of seminars attended to insure that an accurate record is available at the time of renewal. Although the MDA maintains a data base of applicator attendance, this record will not contain seminar attendance information which is not returned by the seminar host or include illegible handwritten information.

During an applicators renewal process, he or she must submit a record of seminars attended for recertification of categories or standards, and complete any renewal examinations for any categories or standards for which insufficient credits exist. The MDA will check and verify the applicator's record of attendance, and record the information in the applicators file. Once an applicator has completed any outstanding examination requirements, MDA will issue a new credential which will expire three years from the previous expiration date.

Remember, once an applicator's credential has expired, that person may not purchase, use, or directly supervise the use of restricted use pesticides or apply pesticides in such a manner as to conflict with Act 171 certification/registration requirements. Any certified or registered applicator may renew an expired credential within one year from the date of expiration. If an applicator fails to renew within one year from expiration, the applicator's record is deleted from the MDA files. Once deleted, an applicator must follow the requirements for initial certification or registration.

For further information concerning the Michigan pesticide applicator certification or registration program, please contact your local MDA office.