

EPA Requests Comments on Extending the Timeline for Pesticide Applicator Rule

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(Photo by Cecil Tharp, 2010)

Pesticide applicators should be aware of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) pesticide certification and training rule finalized on December 12th, 2016 and published in the Federal Register on January 4, 2017. The implementation of the final rule was extended to May 22nd, 2017; however the EPA is now proposing to extend the implementation of the final rule another 12 months to allow states and stakeholders more time to prepare. EPA has a comment period that expires May 19th to consider extending the final rule another 12 months.

Comments on this rule can be submitted to docket #EPA-HQ-OPP-2011-0183 via: <https://www.regulations.gov/> on or before May 19, 2017 after the Federal Register notice publishes. See the EPA press release for more details of this comment period at <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/updated-epa-requests-comment-extending-timeline-pesticide-applicators-rule>.

Details Regarding the EPA Final Rule on Pesticide Certification and Training Rule

The proposed rule applies to those that apply restricted use pesticides (RUP) across the nation. Restricted use pesticides are those deemed by EPA as having the potential to cause unreasonable adverse effects to the environment and injury to applicators or bystanders without added restrictions. Only licensed applicators can use or purchase RUP's. According to the EPA, stronger standards will reduce risks to applicators, communities and the environment from pesticide exposure. The increased competency requirements will impact approximately one million certified applicators across the nation; with approximately 5,600 private and 2,700 commercial/government applicators in Montana. Changes include a minimum age of 18 for all restricted use applicators with an exemption for private applicator

immediate family members for a minimum age of 16, mandatory categories for certain applications, increased competency standards, and annual training for individuals working under the supervision of licensed restricted use pesticide applicators. States can expect variable impacts depending on their pre-existing state minimum requirements. See more details of the rule and impacts in Montana at: http://www.pesticides.montana.edu/documents/news/20170124_PN_EPA_CT.pdf.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: See the EPA certification training rule website at <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-worker-safety/revised-certification-standards-pesticide-applicators>. You can view the EPA comparison chart at <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-01/documents/certification-rule-simple-comparison-chart-011217.pdf>. For any additional questions feel free to contact Cecil Tharp, Pesticide Education Specialist (406-994-5067; ctharp@montana.edu).