

Montana Private Applicator Program Policies & Procedures

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Written & compiled by Cecil Tharp, MSU Pesticide Education Coordinator

**Montana State University Extension
Pesticide Education Program**

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Montana Private Applicator Program Policies & Procedures

The policies described in this publication are additional MSU Extension policies that meet the requirements of [FIFRA](#), [Montana Pesticide Act](#) & [MT Administrative Rules](#). Policies are binding only to the Montana Private Applicator Program, and don't connote policies of the Montana Commercial Applicator Program. Once again, these policies and procedures don't apply towards MT commercial, government or non-commercial applicators. Individuals interested in changing these policies or procedures should direct these suggestions to the MSU Extension Pesticide Education Program (ctharp@montana.edu; 406-994-5067). New policies/rules are considered through careful consideration from MSU PEP stakeholders.

1. Background

In 1983, MDA and Extension signed [a memorandum-of-agreement](#) in which Extension assists with Private Applicator Training (PAT) in Montana. In addition, all Extension personnel demonstrating, making recommendations, researching or supervising the use of pesticides, and/or conducting pesticide training are to be licensed (certified) as governmental applicators in the commercial applicator classification. Under this agreement most county agents act as local [PAT coordinators](#). PAT programs are developed and conducted by PAT coordinators within each county or reservation. Sometimes, a county agent may act as the PAT coordinator for multiple counties. Where there is no county agent available, other individuals may be PAT Coordinators upon approval by the Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA). In a few cases other non-extension individuals are local PAT coordinators. In addition, tribal extension agents also conduct PAT training often covering more than one county. Montana is divided into five PAT regions with one of the regions reaching their recertification year annually.

2. Getting Certified

Private applicators must be licensed prior to purchasing and using a pesticide designated by the Department of Agriculture as a restricted use pesticide. To become certified a private applicator **must** have a copy of [Montana Addendum](#) and [EPA Core Manual](#). Individuals must have these materials in their possession prior to:

- A. Completing the 50 question open book **Montana Private Applicator Certification Exam** at their local extension office and passing with a 70% or better. Test may be proctored by any member of the MSU Extension office as long as this individual is supervised by the designated PAT coordinator.
- B. Attending a 6-hour training session and taking an ungraded 50 question open book '**ungraded quiz**'. These 6 hour sessions must adhere to criteria set forth for initial programs (section 5).

The agent must then review the exam with individuals that answered less than 70% of the questions correctly or they must review the correct answers to the '**ungraded quiz**' after completion by the applicators.

Upon successful completion of the certification exam:

1. The agent notes the exam score on the [Application For A Farm Applicator Special Use Permit](#) that is provided by the Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA).
2. The agent signs the application in the appropriate box.
3. The agent gives the application to the applicator, who mails it and fees to the MDA.
OR
The agent collects the fee from the applicator and sends it and the permit to the MDA.
4. The applicator will then receive a permit in the mail and will be entered into the MDA private pesticide applicator database.

*If an applicator allows their certification to lapse by not attaining 6 recertification credits prior to the January 1st deadline, and they wish to apply RUPs, they must take a closed book **Montana Private Applicator Certification Exam** within the 12 months after their license expired. The lapsed applicator can once again take the open book exam 12 months after his license lapses. The lapsed applicator has the option of attending a 6-hour initial certification training session and taking the 50 question open book 'ungraded quiz' at any time.

PRO-RATING OF PRIVATE APPLICATOR CREDITS: Individuals who enter the system prior to June 30th of the 3rd year of their certification cycle must accrue 6 recertification credits before the end of the recertification cycle in order to be eligible to renew. Initial applicators that attain their license after June 30th of the 3rd year of their certification cycle will be pro-rated 3 recertification credits and would only need to accumulate 3 recertification credits in order to be eligible for renewal. Initial applicators that get their license in the last 12 months of their certification cycle will be pro-rated 6 recertification credits and would not need to accrue any credits before the end of their certification cycle.

For example, Applicator John Doe lives in Gallatin County (Region 2). For this example, his recertification cycle is from January 1, 2005 through December 31, 2009. He takes the 50 question exam at his local extension office on May 19, 2008 (4th year of the recertification cycle). He needs to obtain only 3 private applicator credits by the end of December 31, 2009. On the other hand, Jane Doe, who also lives in Gallatin County, received her license on April 15, 2009 (5th year of recertification cycle). She DOES NOT need to accumulate any private credits to recertify.

3. Staying Certified.

Once an individual has received their private pesticide license they are termed as a recertifying applicator. In order to be eligible to renew their private (farm) licenses for another [5 year cycle](#), recertifying applicators have two options:

1. Complete the 50 question ***closed book Montana Private Applicator Certification Exam*** during the last year of their certification cycle and pass it with a 70% or better. The agent will go over the exam with individuals that answered less than 70%.
2. Accrue 6 pesticide recertification credits over the course of the 5 year recertification cycle for their region. The accrual of the 6 credits does not need to take place all in the last year of the certification cycle but can be spread out over the 5 year period.

If an applicator allows their certification to lapse and they want to apply RUPs, they must either take a closed book **Montana Private Applicator Certification Exam** within the 12 months after their license expired, or attend a 6 hr initial private applicator training program and take an ungraded quiz.

4. Approval as an Initial Private Applicator Certification Program.

Restricted Use Pesticides (RUP's) are pesticides that are available for purchase and use only by certified pesticide applicators or persons under their direct supervision. This designation is assigned to a pesticide product because of its **relatively high degree of potential human and/or environmental hazard** even when used according to label directions. Therefore, initial pesticide training programs are primarily geared towards pesticide safety, preventing environmental contamination from pesticides and compliance with pertinent pesticides laws and regulations. Initial training programs must be a minimum of 6 hours over 7 core topics, followed by a 50 question open book quiz.

The following subject areas and topics are required for a 6 hour initial training sessions:

A. Private Applicator License (minimum of 30 minutes):

- What are pesticides and what are Restricted Use Pesticides (RUP's)?
- How to read your license number and why it is important
- How to keep certified.
- Pesticide fees and where they go!
- What you can and can't do with your license

B. Reading the Pesticide Product Label (minimum of 30 minutes):

- What is active versus inert ingredients / signal words.
- What is and where do you find the restricted entry interval (REI).
- What/where is the pesticide product rate. Can you go above product rates.
- What/where do you find storage and disposal information.
- Importance of crop / site locations.

C. Integrated Pest Management (minimum of 60 minutes):

- Must define integrated pest management.
- Benefits of IPM (why zero tolerance doesn't work)
- Economic thresholds & economic injury levels.
- Monitoring techniques.
- Pest identification.
- Control methods (chemical, cultural, bio-control, transgenic, and mechanical).
- Resistance / Resistance Management

D. Pesticide Safety (minimum of 60 minutes):

- What is toxicity; acute vs. chronic.
- Four routes of exposure.
- Pesticide Formulations and applicator safety: Liquid vs. dry formulations.
- What is an LD50 and Signal Words.
- How your body processes toxic substances.
- Protecting Yourself; Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Laundering Pesticide Contaminated Clothing.
- Proper Pesticide Storage: storage of pesticides in their original containers, triple rinsing, storage checklist, disposal of empties and excess pesticide
- Procedures for poisoning.

E. Pertinent Pesticide Laws (minimum of 60 minutes):

- [Worker Protection Standard \(WPS\)](#)
- Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act.
- Montana Pesticides Act and other Montana laws and regulations.
- MPDES
- Federal Recordkeeping Requirements: What key elements you need to record, How to use calibration formulas to help you keep accurate records.

F. Calibration of Backpack, Boom and Broadjet Sprayers (minimum of 60 minutes):

- Determining output of sprayers (GPA).
- Determining Nozzle Output.
- How to read a nozzle specification sheet.
- Understanding the effects of speed and pressure.
- How many acres can you spray with a given volume.
- How much pesticide product do you add to the tank.
- How much pesticide solution do you add to the tank.
- Useful conversions...pints to ounces, gallons to ounces, etc.
- Using calibration formulas to help you keep pesticide records.
- Calibration Exercises

G. Pesticides in the Environment: Movement & Degradation (minimum of 60 minutes):

- Pesticide Properties in regards to environmental contamination
- Solubility.
- Soil binding capabilities (Adsorption)
- How pesticides behave in the soil; leaching, runoff, groundwater contamination.
- Drift.
- Volatilization

- How nozzles and pressure contribute to drift
- Degradation.

5. Programs Qualifying for Private Applicator Recertification Credits.

The guiding principle towards assigning private applicator credits to a program is if the topic(s) will contribute to the competence in the use and handling of pesticides by a private applicator([40 CFR 171](#)). Continuing education units (CEU) are credits granted for the attendance and successful completion of an approved training or educational workshop or seminar held for the recertification of private pesticide applicator license. The term "credits" and "points" is used synonymously with CEU. In general, 45 minutes to one hour of instruction equals one CEU.

Private applicator CEUs are awarded based on the following guidelines:

Product sales and chemical update meetings may be awarded 0.5 CEU for every hour of contact time. These meetings may receive more CEUs if the agenda can show that the information being conveyed will contribute to the competence in the use and handling of pesticides by a private applicator. If a meeting agenda is incomplete or vague, there may be no CEUs given.

In order to receive four (4) CEUs, a program must contain three hours of anything pesticide related and one hour on one of the following 7 core topics: private applicator license, reading the product label, IPM, pesticide laws, pesticide safety, environmental concerns, or calibration.

For five (5) CEUs, a program must contain three hours of anything pesticide related and two hours on two of the following 7 core topics: private applicator license, reading the product label, IPM, pesticide laws, pesticide safety, environmental concerns, or calibration.

For six (6) CEUs, a program must contain three hours of anything pesticide related and three hours of information on three of the following 7 core topics: private applicator license, reading the product label, IPM, pesticide laws, pesticide safety, environmental concerns, or calibration.

Recertification programs DO NOT need to contain material from the pesticide training areas but should strive to be relevant to the interest of the target audience. More credits will be offered when related to pesticide core training areas. Applicators do not need to accrue credits in each of the subject areas in order to qualify for recertification.

*It is a private applicator's responsibility to attend only programs that are approved for Montana private applicator credits. Montana commercial pesticide credits or pesticide credits from another state won't constitute a Montana private applicator credit award.

6. Submitting a Pesticide Program Recertification Credit Request.

Extension Program Coordinators (PAT Coordinators)

A completed [EPASS](#) 'Course Credit Request' must be submitted at **least 2 weeks** in advance of the scheduled program. The Private Applicator 'Course Credit Request' can be submitted within days of a program but will be reviewed on a time-available basis and may not receive credits if the program needs to be changed in order to better address pesticide education areas. This is critical if program sponsors wish to advertise credits for events submitted days before a program. A training program must be approved for credits before the program can be advertised as qualifying for pesticide recertification credits.

When submitting a program credit request remember that credits will be awarded for each program credit submittal on EPASS. If separate credit awards are desired for a morning and afternoon session a coordinator must submit each session as a separate program request. For example, a three day conference would need to have a program credit request for each day that credits are desired.

Resources for approved trainings are diverse including Extension agents, Extension specialists, Department of Agriculture specialists, MSU Ag Research Station faculty, MSU faculty, industry personnel, weed district personnel, and other non-biased personnel from other government institutions. Non-Extension sponsored meetings can include producer organizational meetings, pesticide product updates, weed district meetings, etc.

Accredited programs will be assigned a private applicator program number by the MSU Extension Montana Pesticide Education Program, or a commercial program number by the Montana Department of Agriculture. Agents requesting the program will be emailed verification of accreditation within 14 days of a completed course credit request. Sponsors are responsible for tracking separate sign in sheets for programs approved for commercial and private applicator credits.

UPON PROGRAM COMPLETION: Forward a copy of your sign in sheets to the MSU Pesticide Education Office within 10 days of program completion. Once the program is finished all course attendees can be entered into the [EPASS system](#) by selecting 'Completed Course Information' and selecting the appropriate program from drop down list. Only the individual that submitted the program credit request on EPASS will be able to post attendees online.

If there are recertification courses after December 1st of the final year of the certification cycle, then the local PAT coordinator needs to fill out the [Special Use Permit Form](#) (renewal form) for any individual accumulating 6 or more credits by attending that certification program. These forms are handed out at the end of the recertification program to these qualified individuals. The PAT coordinator circles "yes" under "Recertification Training" in the box in the upper right hand corner. The applicator fills out the application forms and sends with the proper fees to the Montana Department of Agriculture. This is of course provided that the applicant has obtained the minimum 6 credits.

**It is encouraged to have all private applicator programs completed and posted by December 1st of the last year of your certification cycle to avoid this complicated procedure.*

Non-Extension Program Sponsors

To receive private applicator credits non-Extension sponsors may submit their program on EPASS or forward the program agenda to the [local county Extension office PAT coordinator](#) where the program resides. If a program sponsor desires commercial applicator credits they must submit their program on EPASS. The agenda must include: 1) title of program, 2) date of program, 3) speakers, 4) speaker topics, and 5) duration of topics 6) credits requested (private or private/commercial) 7) how you wish credits to be awarded (credits for morning and afternoon session separately; credits once for each day of a conference; credits for only 1 full day session; etc...). Sign in sheets must also be forwarded to the local Extension office within 10 days of program completion if submitted by the local MSU Extension office. Program coordinators have the option to independently submit private applicator program credit requests by registering on the Montana Department of Agriculture's '[EPASS system](#)'. County offices will always be copied regarding private applicator events occurring in their county.

Non-extension sponsored program agendas must be submitted **(14) days** in advance of the scheduled program.

Resources for approved training can be Extension agents, Extension specialist, Department of Agriculture specialists, MSU Ag Research Station faculty, MSU faculty and industry personnel. Non-Extension Sponsored Meetings can include producer organizational meetings, weed district meetings, etc.

Accredited programs will be assigned a private applicator program number by the MSU Extension Montana Pesticide Education Program and/or a commercial applicator program number by the Montana Department of Agriculture. Coordinators requesting the program will be emailed verification of accreditation within 14 days of a completed course credit request.

NOTE: Forward a copy of your sign in sheets to the local Extension office within 10 days of program completion if submitted by the county Extension office. The local Extension office will enter course attendees into the ['EPASS system'](#) by selecting 'Completed Course Information' and selecting appropriate program from drop down list. If submitted on EPASS non-Extension sponsors are required to send a copy of the sign in sheets to the MSU Pesticide Education Program office within 10 days of program completion.

7. Program Attendance.

Extension Coordinators

During the program a [sign-in sheet](#) must be filled out completely. Failure to note the correct license number may result in no credits being assigned to that applicator. Agents may wish to have [certified private applicator lists](#) available at the door for applicators forgetting license information. Agents may also review applicator license information on the [searchable database](#) by entering applicators first and last name.

NOTE: Applicators should be encouraged to keep track of the programs they attend. It is the private applicator's responsibility to correctly assign his/her pesticide license number on a private applicator sign in sheet.

A copy of the sign in sheets should be sent to the Montana Pesticide Education & Safety Program within 10 days of the program.

Once the program is finished all course attendees can be entered into the ['EPASS system'](#) by selecting 'Completed Course Information' and selecting the appropriate program from drop down list. The individual submitting the program for credits on EPASS is the only individual who can post attendees on EPASS. Contact the MSU Pesticide Education Program for additional support.

Non-Extension Coordinators

If the program was submitted by the MSU county office then the program's [sign-in sheet](#) **must** be submitted to the county's extension agent who will then submit an electronic document of all the information from the program's [sign-in sheet](#) to the ['EPASS system'](#). If submitted on EPASS by the non-Extension sponsor then the non-Extension sponsor must post attendees on EPASS while sending a copy of the sign in sheets to MSU Pesticide Education Program.

8. Applicator License Fees

In 1993, legislative changes in the Montana Pesticide Act resulted in increased fees for the private applicator license (farm license). The new fee for each re-certifying applicator during the

five-year recertification period following 1993 is \$50.00. The \$50.00 is distributed in the following manner:

- \$15.00 (30%) to Montana Department of Agriculture for administration.
- \$15.00 (30%) to fund the waste pesticides and pesticide container disposal program.
- \$20.00 (40%) to Montana State University Extension Service broken down as follows:
\$5.00 (10%) to the Pesticide Education Office at MSU
15.00 (30%) to the county extension office in which the private applicator resides. This money is used to support pesticide certification and training programs conducted in those counties.

The \$50 applicator license fees are prorated over the [5 year private applicator certification cycle](#). Certification cycles are staggered by region. For example, an initial applicator paying their fees during the 2nd year of the cycle would pay \$40.00. The payment in the 3rd year would be \$30.00 and so forth.

9. PAT county funds.

Private applicator funds can be used by PAT coordinators if the equipment purchased is to be used for pesticide-related presentations or for pesticide applicator trainings more than 50% of the time. Anything less than 50% indicates that the pesticide fees may pay for only a portion of the purchase. For example, if the county is going to use a laptop computer 80% of the time for day-to-day office work and 20% of the time for pesticide education uses, the pesticide applicator fund may pay 20% of the costs. Pesticide applicator funds can also be used to rent meeting space, travel to pesticide-related meetings, purchase pesticide-related educational materials, travel and per diem reimbursement for speakers at pesticide-related training events and speaker fees. Pesticide applicator funds:

- CANNOT be used to purchase ATV's or other vehicles unless those vehicles will be used 50% of the time for pesticide TRAINING purposes.
- CANNOT be used to purchase herbicides or pesticide applicator equipment unless that equipment will be used 50% of the time for pesticide TRAINING purposes
- CANNOT be used to fund travel to meetings unless 50% of the presentations attended are related to pesticide use.
- CANNOT be used to purchase alcohol!

Any county Extension office or those working under their delegated authority may utilize private pesticide applicator funds that are available to their respective county or counties. Tribal

extension agents may also qualify to use county PAT funds through cooperation of the coinciding county Extension office.

Only PAT coordinators can request pesticide applicator funds. See complete PAT fund instructions at [PAT FUNDS](#). PAT coordinators must submit a BPA to their regional Extension director only after PAT expenditures are finalized and receipts are in hand. A BPA, receipts and invoice should be forwarded to the MSU Extension regional director for signature. The Regional Extension director will forward the approved document to Sandra Rahn-Gibson, Budget & Fiscal Director. MSU Extension will then reimburse the individual/companies indicated on the BPA.

10. Licensing of out of state pesticide licenses or MT commercial/government applicators as MT private applicators.

A. Commercial/Government applicators that reside in another state and want to spray as commercial/government applicators in Montana

1. Pass our Out of State exam scoring > 80%:

This Out of State test covers the Montana Pesticide Act and Administrative Rules. Study materials are on our web site at

<http://agr.mt.gov/agr/Programs/Pesticides/PDFs/PesticideCoreStateAppendix.pdf>

(Aerial applicators must have also passed the national aerial examination, all other categories reciprocate automatically.)

The tests can be proctored out of state by either an agriculture department or by county extension agents. Have one of these agencies send an e-mail to dreimer2@mt.gov stating that they are willing to proxy the test.

Upon notification, Dan Reimer (MDA) will mail out the testing material to them to administer the test and upon completion they will send all the information back to Dan for scoring.

2. Proof of Financial Responsibility:

Choose one of the three different options for showing financial responsibility, Insurance (\$500 max. deductible), Bond or Certificate of Deposit (\$500 minimum; \$1,500 for Aerial Applicators). Forms for all three options are attached.

3. Service of Process with Montana (unless already established by your employer):

Complete the attached form and send to the Secretary of State with payment. Provide a copy of the Service of Process to this department upon confirmation from the Secretary of State.

Also reference the link listed under Nonresidents at <http://agr.mt.gov/agr/Programs/Pesticides/Licensing/>

4. Letter of Good Standing from your home state:
Request your department of agriculture to send it directly to the MDA.
5. Copy of license, front and back, from your home State.
6. Completed application, signed and returned with appropriate payment
(applications are sent after exam requirements are met).

B. Commercial / Government Applicators from other state moving to Montana and desiring a commercial/government applicator license

Will need to pass the MDA core examination and may need to take a categorical test. Categorical test may be waived if similar to license category in other state. Most nearby states do not yet use the National Aerial exam that MDA started this year so those out of state aerial guys all take the aerial applicator test as well.

C. Private/Commercial/Government applicator from other state moving to Montana and desiring a private applicator license.

Will need to pass the private applicator exam and pay the appropriate fees.

D. MT Government/Commercial/Non-commercial applicators desiring MT Private License

1. Present valid MT license to MSU PAT Coordinator.
2. Fill out farm applicator special use permit that is signed by agents.
3. Purchase or have in possession 1 Montana Private Applicator Addendum.
4. Send the permit in with appropriate fee to MDA.

11. Age Requirements to Hold a Pesticide License in Montana.

A. Private Applicators. An individual must be a minimum of 16 years old to hold a private (farm) applicator license in Montana.

B. Commercial/Government/Noncommercial Applicators. An individual must be a minimum of 18 years old to hold a commercial/government/noncommercial license in Montana.