



Licensing of Natural Areas Pesticide Applicators in Florida¹

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This document explains licensing and regulation of persons who apply restricted use herbicides to natural areas in Florida, as regulated by the Florida Pesticide Law (Chapter 487), and administered by the Florida Department of Consumer Services.

Natural Areas Weed Management

All persons who apply or supervise the application of restricted use herbicides to natural areas must have a pesticide applicator license issued by the Bureau of Compliance Monitoring/Pesticide Certification Section. The Natural Areas Weed Management category is regulated by the Florida Pesticide Law (Florida Statutes, Chapter 487).

Category Certification Standards

Applicators seeking a license in this category must demonstrate practical knowledge of:

- pest plants that invade natural communities in Florida;

- the chemical control measures that pertain to such pests;
- the equipment or methodologies used to safely implement such measures;
- special techniques and proper herbicide selection to effectively control target species and minimize adverse effects to the natural community;
- herbicide characteristics including toxicity to wildlife, behavior in plants; behavior in soil, persistence, and environmental fate; and
- methods for herbicide dilution and rate calculations.

License Classification

Certified natural areas weed management applicators may be licensed as either public applicators or commercial applicators. These are the major differences:

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The use of trade names in this publication is solely for the purpose of providing specific information. UF/IFAS does not guarantee or warranty the products named, and references to them in this publication does not signify our approval to the exclusion of other products of suitable composition. Use pesticides safely. Read and follow directions on the manufacturer's label.

- **A public applicator** is a licensed applicator employed by a public or governmental agency. The license is only valid when performing work for the public or governmental agency. The public applicator fee for a four-year license is \$60.
- **A commercial applicator** is a licensed applicator who is licensed to apply restricted-use pesticides on any property provided they are certified in the category for which the applications are made. A commercial applicator is usually a contract applicator. The commercial applicator fee for a four-year license is \$160.

Examinations

Persons must successfully complete two examinations before they can apply to the Department for a license. These examinations are a Core examination and a Natural Areas Weed Management category examination. The Core examination may be taken at any University of Florida IFAS County Extension Office. The Natural Areas Weed Management examination may be taken at a University of Florida IFAS County Extension Office that offers category examinations. No special qualifications must be met to take the examination. There is no fee to take the examinations.

Study Materials

Manuals and study materials for Core and Natural Areas Weed Management applicators who will be taking exams may be obtained from the UF/IFAS Extension Bookstore by calling 1-800-226-1764 or on-line at <http://www.ifasbooks.ufl.edu/merchant2/>. The content of the Core exam is based upon the manual, *Applying Pesticides Correctly* (Figure 1). The content of the Natural Areas Weed Management exam is based upon two manuals: *Natural Area Weed Management* (Figure 2), and *Identification & Biology of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas* (Figure 3). Sample labels may be obtained from suppliers of pesticide products or on-line at Crop Data Management Systems by going to <http://www.cdms.net/manuf/manuf.asp>.

Recertification

Applicators must recertify every four years. To recertify, applicators may take the examinations again or attend training and obtain 16 continuing education units (CEUs) approved for the Natural Areas Weed Management category and 4 CEUs approved for the Core category. Core CEUs can't be used to meet the required Natural Areas Weed Management CEUs. No substitutions of other types of CEUs are allowed. Opportunities to earn CEUs may be found at <http://www.flaes.org/>.

Restricted Use Pesticides Applied in the Natural Areas Category

Restricted use pesticides are seldom applied to natural areas. A complete listing of all restricted use pesticides in placeStateFlorida may be viewed at: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/PI073>.

Additional information

Fishel, F.M. 2005. Restricted use pesticides. UF/IFAS EDIS Fact Sheet PI-36, <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/PI073>.

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Bureau of Compliance Monitoring, Pesticide Licensing Section, 3125 Conner Drive, Bldg. 8, L-29, Tallahassee, FL 32399-1650, Phone: 850-488-3314, <http://www.flaes.org/complimonitoring/index.html> (accessed June 20, 2006).

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