

Pesticide Use Has Potential Health and Environmental Concerns

- Federal and state pesticide laws and regulations continue to change due to pressure on regulatory agencies and pesticide applicators stemming from environmental and public health concerns.

AgriLife Extension's Response

- Established in 1965, the Pesticide Safety Education Program (PSEP) is coordinated by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and provides training and educational materials for 27 licensing categories for pesticide applicators as required by federal and state law. These include general standards for licensing, pest control, termites, ornamental and turf, rights-of-way, and public health and vector control.
- Each PSEP training course teaches a variety of topics, such as ecology, toxicology, emergency response, proper storage, transport, and disposal of pesticides. In addition, all training programs meet the educational requirements administered by the Environmental Protection Agency, the Texas Department of Agriculture, and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to obtain classroom credit hours necessary for pesticide applicator licenses.



- In addition to conducting applicator certification and recertification trainings, PSEP develops, maintains, and distributes all federally and state-required study materials for applicator training and licensing in Texas.
- In 2017, PSEP specialists, county extension agents, and extension specialists in collaboration with other partners conducted certification (initial licensing training) and continuing education programs (CEUs) in all 254 Texas counties for 26,975 commercial and noncommercial applicators, and 38,442 private applicators.

Economic Impacts

- Average annual wages for pest-management professionals were used to estimate the salary base of these trained participants to sustain jobs and businesses in the state. Private applicators' time was valued at \$54.62 per hour for eight hours per year. (The structural commercial and non-commercial applicators' average annual salary of \$39,630, and the agricultural commercial and non-commercial applicators' average annual salary of \$39,360 were used in estimating their salary base.)
- As the federally designated pesticide-safety education entity in Texas, PSEP directly supports 26,975 commercial and noncommercial pest-management jobs with an estimated annual salary base of \$938.3 million (BLS structural and agricultural applicator average annual salary), and 38,442 private applicators valued at \$16.8 million. In total, the PSEP supports 65,417 pesticide applicators in Texas, with a salary and time value of \$955.1 million (BLS average annual salary for structural, agricultural and private applicators).