

Licensing of Aquatic Herbicide Applicators in Florida¹

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This document explains the reasons for recommending that anyone who uses herbicides for management of aquatic plants be certified/licensed.

Background

The Florida Pesticide Law administered by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) requires all persons who apply or supervise the application of pesticides classified as restricted use to be certified and licensed by the Department. FDACS has established a certification and licensing category for persons who apply herbicides for the management of aquatic plants. According to the rule, the category, called Aquatic Pest Control is “applicable to individuals using or supervising the use of restricted use pesticides used or applied to any standing or running water, including banks or shorelines.”

Although no aquatic herbicides are currently classified as restricted-use, it is recommended that anyone who uses herbicides for management of aquatic plants be certified. Aquatic Pest Control is one of FDACS largest applicator categories with over 2,000 applicators licensed. Many agencies or individuals who contract with applicators for the control of aquatic plants specify that the applicator be certified/licensed. Many employers require applicators who use herbicides for the control of aquatic plants to be certified/licensed. A license is issued to an individual who has met the certification requirements of FDACS. These certification requirements are met by successfully completing testing to

assure that the individual is knowledgeable and competent in the use and supervision of restricted-use pesticide application.

License Classification

Certified aquatic herbicide applicators may be licensed as either public applicators or commercial applicators. These are the major differences:

A public applicator is a licensed applicator employed by a public or governmental agency.

A public applicator license is only valid when performing work for the public or governmental agency.

The public applicator fee for a four-year license is \$100.

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 \$250.

1. This document is PI-26, one of a series of the Food Science and Human Nutrition Department, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date October 1998. Revised September 2006, August 2009, August 2012, and September 2015. Visit the EDIS website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>. For additional information, contact the UF/IFAS Pesticide Information Office, PO Box 110710, Gainesville, FL 326222-0720, phone (352) 392-4721.

2. Ken Langeland, former professor, Agronomy Department and Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants; and Frederick M. Fishel, professor, Agronomy Department and Pesticide Information Office; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611. Original authors included O. Norman Nesheim, professor emeritus, UF/IFAS Food Science Human Nutrition Department.

Certification Requirements

Although the fees are different for public licensing and commercial licensing, certification requirements are the same for both. Two examinations must be passed, a general standards (core) examination, which tests general knowledge of proper pesticide use and safety; and the Aquatic Pest Control category examination, which tests specific knowledge of applying herbicides in aquatic environments.

A passing score on both examinations is required before the license can be issued.

Examination Locations

Examinations are administered at University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences County Cooperative Extension Offices. The general standards (core) examination can be taken by appointment at any Extension office. The Aquatic Pest Control category examination is offered in most Florida counties.

If the Extension office in your county does not administer the exam, they should be able to help you locate the nearest county that does. If they cannot, contact one of the numbers provided at the end of this fact sheet.

The FDACS Certification and Licensing Office will notify you if you passed or failed the examination. If you passed, you will receive a license application. If you have failed, you will need to retake the examination.

Preparing for Examinations

Prior to taking examinations, the following training materials should be studied:

General Standards (Core) Exam: All questions are based on information contained in *Applying Pesticides Correctly*, IFAS Publication SM-1 (Figure 1).

Aquatic Pest Control Category Exam: All questions are based on information contained in *Aquatic Pest Control Applicator Training Manual*, IFAS Publication SM-3 (Figure 2).

Delete statement and replace with: The contents of SM-1 and SM-3 are also available in audio-narrated PowerPoint DVDs. Each DVD also contains a pdf of its respective written manual. Supplemental videos, although not required, are available to enhance learning:

“Aquatic Pest Control Applicator Training; Part I,” IFAS Catalog No. VT-1068.

“Aquatic Pest Control Applicator Training; Part II,” IFAS Catalog No. VT-1069.

“How to Determine Areas and Amount of Aquatic Herbicide to Use,” IFAS Catalog No. VT-310.

All publications and videotapes may be bought from:

IFAS Extension Bookstore
University of Florida
PO Box 110011
Gainesville, FL 32611
Phone: (352) 392-1764 Fax: (352) 392-2628
Email: pub@ifas.ufl.edu
Website: <https://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Videotape programs may be borrowed–free–from:

Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants, Information Office
University of Florida
7922 NW 71st Street

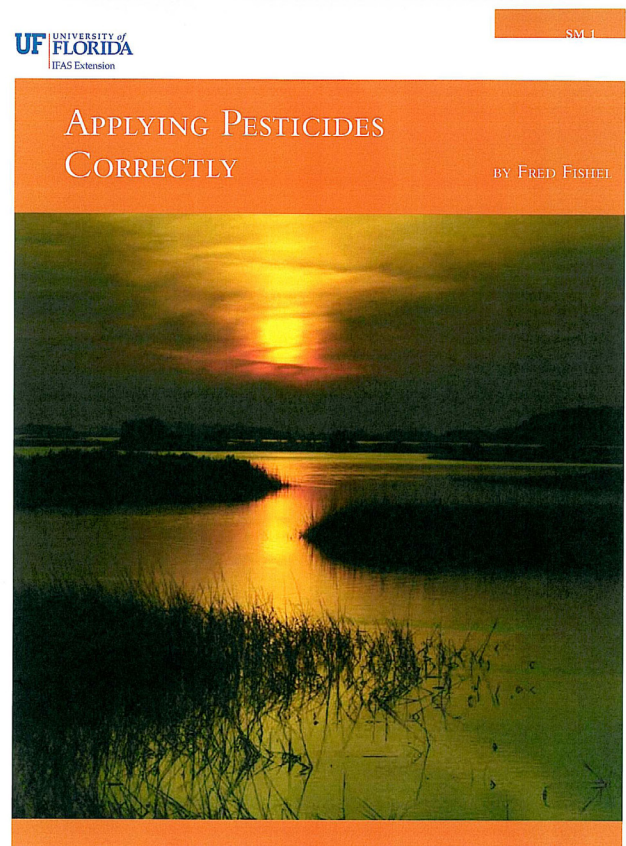
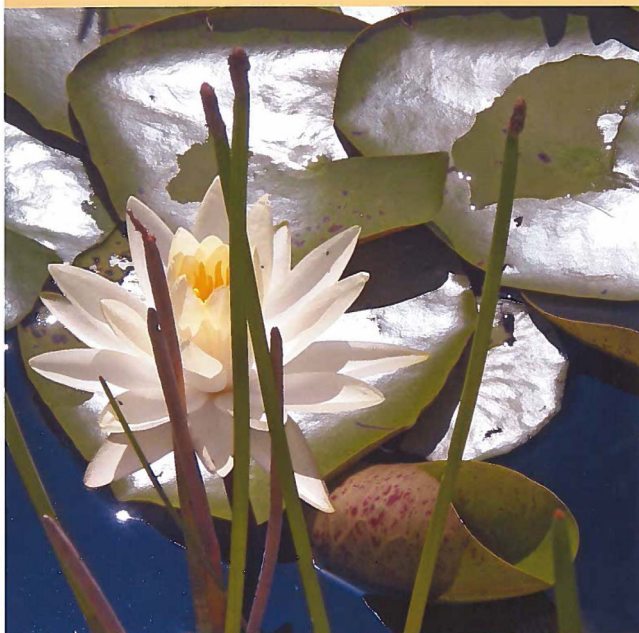


Figure 1. SM-1: *Applying Pesticides Correctly*.

AQUATIC PEST CONTROL

2nd Edition

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Additional Information

For license and license renewal information contact:

FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement, Tallahassee
FL. Phone: (850) 617-7997 Fax: (850) 617-7892

For examination locations, training programs, and materials information contact your local UF/IFAS Extension office or:

IFAS Pesticide Information Office, Gainesville, FL. Phone:
(352) 392-4721 Fax: (352) 846-0206

IFAS Fort Lauderdale REC. Phone: (954) 577-6300 Fax:
(954) 475-4125, or

IFAS Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants, Gainesville,
FL. Phone: (352) 392-9613 Fax: (352) 392-3462

Figure 2. SM-3: *Aquatic Pest Control Applicator Training Manual*.

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