

Licensing of Structural Pesticide Applicators in Florida¹

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This document explains the licensing and regulation of persons who apply pesticides to structures in Florida, as regulated by the Florida Structural Pest Control Law (Chapter 482), and administered by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement.

The Florida Structural Pest Control Law (Chapter 482) requires any person or business performing structural pest control to be licensed by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement. Chapter 482 defines structural pest control as:

1. The use of any method or device or the application of any substance to prevent, destroy, repel, mitigate, curb, control, or eradicate a pest in, on, or under a structure. Lawn and ornamental licensing requirements are covered in EDIS publication PI-7, *Licensing of Lawn and Ornamental Pesticide Applicators in Florida* (<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pi006>).
2. The identification of or inspection for infestations in, on, or under a structure.
3. The use of any pesticide, economic poison, or mechanical device for preventing, controlling, eradicating, identifying, inspecting for, mitigating, diminishing, or curtailing insects, vermin, rodents, pest birds, bats, or other pests in, on, or under a structure.
4. All phases of fumigation, including:
 - The treatment of products by vault fumigation; and
 - The fumigation of boxcars, trucks, ships, airplanes, docks, warehouses, and common carriers; and
5. The advertisement of, the solicitation of, or the acceptance of remuneration for work described in 1 through 4.

The licensing requirement applies to all persons and businesses who apply any pesticide, including restricted-use and unclassified (general-use) pesticides, for structural pest control. Persons who perform pest control on their own residential property do not have to be licensed unless they use fumigants or restricted-use pesticides. Businesses that perform structural pest control on a contract or for-hire basis must have a Pest Control Business License. Government employees and the owners (or their employees) of private business property who apply pesticides for structural pest control on government or private business property must have a Limited Certification—Structural Category license.

Commercial Pest Control Operator

A business that performs structural pest control on a contract or for-hire basis must be licensed.

Each licensed business must have a person (called a certified operator-in-charge) who is certified in the category(s) of pest control performed at each business location. The certified operator-in-charge may supervise one or more

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uncertified employees. The certified operator-in-charge must be certified in one or more of the following structural pest control categories:

- **General household pest control**—Pest control performed in any structure, with the exception of fumigation and the control of termites and other wood-destroying organisms. Examples of general household pest control include the control of cockroaches, fleas, spiders, rats, mice, etc., inside buildings.
- **Termites and other wood-destroying organisms pest control**—The control of termites or other wood-destroying organisms, including fungi, by chemical or mechanical methods, including moisture control for the prevention or control of fungus in existing structures. It does not include fumigation or general household pest control.
- **Fumigation control**—The use of a fumigant within an enclosed space, or in or under a structure or tarpaulin in concentrations that may be hazardous to people.

Examinations

To become a certified operator, one must pass an examination in the category(s) of pest control to be performed.

Persons who want to become certified operators must apply to the FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement to take the examination(s). The applicant must possess one of the following qualifications in order to take the examination(s):

QUALIFYING BY EXPERIENCE

- Three years' employment as a service employee of a licensed business that performs pest control in the category(s) in which the applicant is seeking certification. One year of the employment must be in Florida within the year immediately preceding the application for the examination.
- Each applicant must complete an "Employment Service" form, DACS 13627, to document the required employment experience for ALL pest control employers (within or outside of Florida) and submit this with their application.

QUALIFYING BY EDUCATION

- A degree with advanced training or a major in entomology, botany, or horticulture from a recognized college or university, which includes the completion of at least 20 semester hours or 30 quarter hours of college credits in these subjects, plus one year of employment as a service employee of a licensed pest control business that performs pest control in the category(s) in which

the applicant seeks certification. An applicant may also qualify by the successful completion of a 1-year entomology program at a public university in this state that specializes in urban pest management and includes practical pest management experience. If such advanced training or major is in entomology, the applicant is qualified for examination in all categories; but if such advanced training or major is in botany, agronomy, or horticulture, the applicant is qualified for examination only in the category of lawn and ornamental pest control.

- A two-year degree in general pest control technology, or the equivalent, from a college or university, with advanced training of 20 or more semester hours or 30 or more quarter hours of credit in entomology, plus one year of employment as a service employee of a licensed pest control business that performs pest control in any category.
- Twenty-four semester hours or 36 quarter hours of courses in entomology, pest control technology, and related subjects, plus one year of employment as a service employee of a licensed pest control business in the categories of general household pest control and termite and other wood-destroying organisms pest control and fumigation.
- Three years' full-time employment as a service employee of the United States Department of Defense, who has been certified to perform pest control in the category(s) in which the applicant seeks certification. One year of the employment must have been completed in Florida during the year immediately preceding application for examination. Additionally, the application for certification must be submitted to the FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement within 12 months after the date of termination of employment from the Department of Defense.
- In addition, each applicant must have knowledge of practical and scientific facts of pest control and be a graduate of an accredited high school or submit to the department satisfactory evidence of equivalent education.

PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT

- Applicants must have performed as an identification cardholder in this state and under the direction of a certified operator, a minimum of 45 jobs (for General Household Pest control, Lawn and Ornamental Pest control, and Termite and Other Wood-Destroying Organisms categories) and a minimum of 15 jobs for Fumigation and Special Identification Cardholder exams. This documentation must be submitted on a "Documented Pesticide Application for Certification Exam Qualification" form, DACS 13653, and included with their application.

An examination packet of information provided by DACS can be located at <http://www.flaes.org/pdf/exmpckt.pdf>.

The Certified Operator examinations in all structural categories are administered by the FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement and selected UF/IFAS Extension offices.

Fees

An examination fee of \$300 is charged for each commercial structural category examination. The initial fee for the certified operator's certificate is \$150, and the annual renewal fee is \$150. The initial fee for a pest control business license is \$300. The license is renewed annually at a cost of \$300. (All fees current as of March 2019 can be found at: <http://www.flaes.org/aes-ent/faq-fees.html>.) Each pest control business, when making an initial application or a renewal for a pest control business license, must furnish a certificate of insurance that meets the requirements for minimum financial responsibility for bodily injury and property damage. Presently those limits are set at \$250,000 per person and \$500,000 per occurrence for bodily injury, \$250,000 per occurrence and \$500,000 in the aggregate for property damage, or a combined single limit coverage of \$500,000 in the aggregate.

Recertification

Prior to the expiration of their annual certificate, certified operators must complete two hours of approved continuing education on legislation, safety, pesticide labeling, and integrated pest management, and two hours of approved continuing education in each category in which they are certified, or pass an examination.

Limited Certification—Structural

Limited certification has been established for:

- Government employees who apply pesticides in, on, or under structures belonging to governmental agencies;
- Persons who apply pesticides in, on, or under structures on their own private (business) property; and
- Employees who apply pesticides in, on, or under structures on private (business) property owned by their employers.

Examples of government property include public buildings and schools. Examples of private property include hospitals (unless government owned), nursing homes, stores, restaurants, apartments and common areas of condominiums, and any other private properties where the public may be exposed to pesticide applications. Limited certification is

not required for the application of disinfectants, sanitizers, or ready-to-use pesticide products sold over the counter at retail.

Each person who applies the pesticide must have the limited certification. There is no provision for application by uncertified persons working under the supervision of a certified applicator. Persons with a Limited Certification—Structural license may not operate a pest control business.

In lieu of obtaining limited certification, a governmental employee or private property applicator may apply pesticides if he or she is trained and supervised by a certified operator who is certified under Chapter 482 as Pest Control Operator in the category of pest control being performed. The certified operator must be employed full-time by the government agency or private property owner.

Examinations

A person seeking limited certification in the Structural category must pass an examination. The examinations are offered at UF/IFAS Extension offices. An application to take the examination must be made to the FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement. Upon submitting the application and paying the required fee, an authorization will be given to take the examination. The authorization must be presented to the person administering the examination before it may be taken.

Fees

The fee for the limited certification structural examination and four-year license is \$150. The fee must be submitted with the application for the examination. A recertification fee of \$25 is charged every four years. (All fees current as of March 2019.)

Recertification

Recertification is required every four years. Applications for recertification must be accompanied by proof of having completed four classroom hours of acceptable continuing education.

Additional Information

For additional information on certification and licensing of structural pest control businesses and applicators contact:

Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement

FDACS

3125 Conner Blvd., Bldg. 8 (L-29)

Tallahassee, FL 32399-1650

850-617-7997

<http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Agricultural-Environmental-Services/Bureaus-and-Sections2/Bureau-of-Licensing-and-Enforcement>

Table 1. Summary of exams, study materials (and sources of study materials) for certification in the structural categories.

Category	Exams Required	Study Materials	Study Material Source
Pest Control Operator General Household Pests (GHP)	General Household Pest Control	Chapter 482 F.S. The Structural Pest Control Act	FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement www.flaes.org
		Chapter 5E-14, F.A.C. Rules of the Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services	FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement www.flaes.org
		Applying Pesticides Correctly SM-1	UF/IFAS Extension Bookstore 1-800-226-1764 http://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu/default.aspx
		General Household Pest Control SM-47	UF/IFAS Extension Bookstore 1-800-226-1764 http://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu/default.aspx
		Pests in and Around the Florida Home, 2.0 CD	UF/IFAS Extension Bookstore 1-800-226-1764 http://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu/default.aspx
Pest Control Operator Termites & Other Wood-Destroying Organisms (WDO)	Termites & Other Wood-Destroying Organisms Control	Chapter 482 F.S. The Structural Pest Control Act	FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement www.flaes.org
		Chapter 5E-14, F.A.C. Rules of the Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services	FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement www.flaes.org
		Applying Pesticides Correctly SM-1	UF/IFAS Extension Bookstore 1-800-226-1764 http://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu/default.aspx
		Wood-Destroying Organisms (SM 80)	UF/IFAS Extension Bookstore 1-800-226-1764 http://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu/default.aspx
		Construction Terms	FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement www.flaes.org
Pest Control Operator Structural Fumigation	Fumigation	Chapter 482 F.S. The Structural Pest Control Act	FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement www.flaes.org
		Chapter 5E-14, F.A.C. Rules of the Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services	FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement www.flaes.org
		2005 Florida Fumigation Manual SP-340	May be downloaded at: http://freshfromflorida.s3.amazonaws.com/Media%2FFiles%2FAgricultural-Environmental-Services-Files%2FSP340+13OCT04.pdf

Category	Exams Required	Study Materials	Study Material Source
		Applying Pesticides Correctly SM-1	UF/IFAS Extension Bookstore 1-800-226-1764 http://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu/default.aspx
Special Identification Card Fumigation	Special Identification Card Fumigation	Chapter 482 F.S. The Structural Pest Control Act	FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement www.flaes.org
		Chapter 5E-14, F.A.C. Rules of the Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services	FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement www.flaes.org
		2005 Florida Fumigation Manual SP-340	May be downloaded at: http://freshfromflorida.s3.amazonaws.com/Media%2FFiles%2FAgricultural-Environmental-Services-Files%2FSP340+13OCT04.pdf
		Applying Pesticides Correctly SM-1	UF/IFAS Extension Bookstore 1-800-226-1764 http://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu/default.aspx
Limited Structural Pest Control	Limited Certification Structural Pest Control	Chapter 482 F.S. The Structural Pest Control Act	FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement www.flaes.org
		Chapter 5E-14, F.A.C. Rules of the Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services	FDACS Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement www.flaes.org
		Applying Pesticides Correctly SM-1	UF/IFAS Extension Bookstore 1-800-226-1764 http://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu/default.aspx
		General Household Pest Control SM-47	UF/IFAS Extension Bookstore 1-800-226-1764 http://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu/default.aspx
		A label will be included to reference for questions during the exam.	Contact suppliers of pesticide products for sample labels