WAC 16-228-1545 Pesticide licensing requirements for all certified applicators except private applicators, limited private applicators, and rancher private applicators. (1) All individuals licensed or required to be licensed as commercial pesticide applicators, commercial pesticide operators, private-commercial applicators, demonstration and research applicators, public operators, structural pest inspectors, pest control consultants, and public pest control consultants must be certified, through examination, in all pest control classifications defined in subsection (3)(a) and (b) of this section in which they operate, inspect, or consult. Additionally, commercial pesticide applicators must be licensed in all classifications that the business operates. Licensed applicators may directly supervise unlicensed applicators only in those classifications in which they have a valid certification.

(2) To qualify for any pesticide license listed in subsection (1) of this section, applicants, except the structural pest inspector, must demonstrate practical knowledge of the principles and practices of proper and effective use of pesticides by passing a laws and safety examination that addresses areas of competency described in WAC 16-228-15451(1). Structural pest inspectors conducting complete wood destroying organism inspections must pass a structural pest inspector laws and standards examination or equivalent that includes, but is not limited to, the legal requirements governing structural pest inspectors and the standards for conducting complete wood destroying organism inspections.

(3) Applicator license classifications.

(a) License classifications:

(i) Aerial pest control: The use of a pesticide by fixed or rotary wing aircraft.

(ii) Aquatic antifouling: The use of antifouling paints to control fouling organisms on the bottom of marine vessels.

(iii) Aquatic irrigation: Limited to the control of aquatic pests in irrigation district water delivery systems where the pesticide is applied directly into the water or enters the water due to the application of the pesticide. Pests include, but are not limited to, moss, algae, cattails, pond weeds, and other emersed and submersed aquatic weeds.

(iv) Aquatic pest control: The control of aquatic pests in water areas including, but not limited to, canals, rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, marshes, and pipelines.

(v) Demonstration and research: The application of pesticides by individuals who demonstrate to the public the proper use and techniques of application of experimental or restricted use pesticides or by individuals who conduct field research with experimental or restricted use pesticides.

(vi) Insect and disease control: The control of insects and diseases in agricultural crops including forest environments and in ornamental, turf, and right-of-way situations including, but not limited to, golf courses, parks, schools, lawns, yards, gardens, greenhouses, hospitals, and rest homes. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of insecticides (including mosquito adulticides), miticides, fungicides, bacteriocides, molluscicides, and nematicides. This classification does not include the use of fumigants.

(vii) Livestock pest control: The control of external and internal pests of animals, except viruses, in livestock and livestock premises.

(viii) Pest control operator (PCO) - General: The control of insects, spiders, birds, rodents, and animal pests in and around, but not limited to, the following situations: Residences, public buildings and grounds, commercial buildings and grounds, disposal sites, animal feed lots, and farmsteads, including buildings and transportation equipment. This classification does not include the use of fumigants.

(ix) Pest control operator (PCO) - Structural: The control of structurally destructive pests including, but not limited to, fungus, termites, carpenter ants, carpenter bees, and wood-boring beetles. This classification allows a licensee to perform specific wood destroying organism inspections. This classification does not include the use of fumigants. Licensed applicators with this classification are not required to obtain the structural pest inspector license to conduct specific wood destroying organism inspections.

(x) Public health pest control: Application of pesticides by governmental employees and certain others in government-sponsored public health programs such as, but not limited to, mosquito control, rodent control, and insect control in situations having medical and public health importance.

(xi) Seed treatment: The application of pesticides to seeds to control destructive insects and diseases in the production of treated seed as a commodity.

(xii) Soil fumigation: The use of soil fumigants to control pests including weeds, insects, and diseases.

(xiii) Space (nonsoil) fumigation: The use of fumigants to control pests including, but not limited to, insects, weeds, pathogens, rodents, or any other pest in anything other than soil.

(xiv) Structural pest inspector: Allows for the commercial inspection of buildings for structurally destructive pests, their damage, and conditions conducive to their development. This classification is required to perform complete wood destroying organism inspections.

(xv) Vertebrate pest control: The outdoor control of vertebrate pests in situations including agricultural and residential areas. This classification does not include the use of fumigants.

(xvi) Weed control: The control of weeds in all agricultural crops including forest environments and in former agricultural lands now in a noncrop status, terrestrial right-of-way locations, and in ornamental and turf situations. Right-of-way locations include, but are not limited to, roads, highways, railroads, power lines, and irrigation ditches, and industrial sites including, but not limited to, airports, industrial parks, and large parking areas. Ornamental and turf situations include, but are not limited to, golf courses, parks, schools, lawns, yards, gardens, hospitals, vacant lots, and open noncrop waste areas. This classification does not include the use of fumigants.

(xvii) Wood treatment: The use of wood preservatives for the control of wood damaging pests.

(b) Limited specialty: Pest control classification made available by the department for certain pest control activities not included in one of the defined license classifications specified in (a) of this subsection. Limited specialty classifications are limited to the use of general use pesticides. The department may maintain a list of currently available limited specialty subclassifications on the department website. The department at its discretion may, by rule, recategorize a limited specialty subclassification under (b) of this subsection as a license classification under (a) of this subsection.

(4) All examinations required under this section shall be written and taken without the aid of any materials that contain information relevant to the exam content. Individuals must be capable of independently reading and interpreting exam content.

(5) A passing score of 70 percent is established for all the examinations required under this section. The department may establish separate passing scores for the examinations if a validated process is used. Passing scores are valid for obtaining a license in the calendar year in which the examination is taken plus the following calendar year.

(6) The department may waive any of the examination requirements contained in this section for any person holding a valid certification with similar classifications from an EPA or Canadian approved federal, state, or provincial certification program with comparable examination and recertification standards.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 17.21.030(2) and 15.58.040(2). WSR 25-22-065, s 16-228-1545, filed 10/31/25, effective 1/1/26. Statutory Authority: RCW 15.58.040, 17.21.030, and chapter 34.05 RCW. WSR 16-24-052, § 16-228-1545, filed 12/2/16, effective 1/2/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 17.21.060, 15.58.040, chapter 34.05 RCW and 2012 2nd sp.s. c 7. WSR 13-02-024, § 16-228-1545, filed 12/20/12, effective 1/20/13. Statutory Authority: Chapters 17.21, 15.58, 34.05 RCW. WSR 03-22-029, § 16-228-1545, filed 10/28/03, effective 11/28/03. Statutory Authority: Chapters 15.58 and 17.21 RCW. WSR 00-24-013, § 16-228-1545, filed 11/27/00, effective 12/28/00.]