

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6108

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture, January 22, 2004

Title: An act relating to applying pesticides.

Brief Description: Applying pesticides.

Sponsors: Senators Sheahan, Swecker, Rasmussen and Eide; by request of Department of Agriculture.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture: 1/15/04, 1/22/04 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6108 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Swecker, Chair; Brandland, Vice Chair; Jacobsen, Rasmussen and Sheahan.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: To apply restricted use pesticides to agricultural and associated lands, a person must be licensed with the Department of Agriculture as a private applicator. To receive a license, the person must pass a test that demonstrates knowledge of the proper use of pesticides and pay the required fees. A manual is produced by Washington State University Cooperative Extension as a guide to prepare for the test. A license is valid for five years. To renew the license, the applicator must have accumulated at least 20 re-certification credits. A licensed private applicator may apply pest control products for four types of crop pests: weeds, insects, diseases, and rodents.

In 1999, legislation was enacted that established a pilot project for a four-county region for the utilization of a "limited" private applicator license and geared the education and testing requirements to a limited scope of activities. This pilot project legislation expires on December 31, 2004. A report on the results of the pilot project was prepared by the Department of Agriculture.

Summary of Substitute Bill: In addition to the licensed private applicator category, two additional categories of licensed applicators are established for a limited scope of activities.

A person licensed as a limited private applicator may apply restricted use pesticides limited to the control of weeds on non-productive agricultural lands which are defined as pastures, rangeland, fence rows, around farm buildings, and those specific timber areas designated for control by local noxious weed control boards.

A person licensed as a rancher private applicator may apply restricted use pesticides limited to the control of weeds and rodents. The areas that this license may be used are non-productive agricultural lands (defined above), those specific timber areas designated for control by local noxious weed control boards, and limited production agricultural lands. Limited production agricultural lands are those lands that grow hay or grain crops which are consumed by livestock on the farm where produced. Not more than 10 percent of these crops may be sold.

The testing and re-certification requirements are geared to the scope of activities that the licensee is allowed to conduct. These two limited license categories are available in areas east of the crest of the Cascade Mountains. These licenses do not permit applications to aquatic sites.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The changes were technical in nature.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2005.

Testimony For: The benefit of the limited licensing program is so a person who only wants to control weeds on rangelands does not have to learn how to control insects in orchards. People are more willing to attend training when it is focused on topics targeted to their specific needs.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Leslie Emerick, Ted Maxwell, Margaret Tucker, WSDA; Steve McGonigal, WA State Noxious Weed Control Board; Sheilah Kennedy, Okanogan County Noxious Weed Board; Heather Hansen; WFFF (w/amend.).