

The Pesticide Periodical

FIRST THINGS FIRST...

Welcome to the first issue of the AES Unit newsletter *Pesticide Periodical*. This monthly newsletter will keep you up-to-date with the latest news and announcements coming out of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service's Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit. Topics covered will be program announcements regarding structural and agricultural pesticide applicator trainings and continuing education events, news relevant to pesticide applicators in Texas, and the latest relevant information in the agricultural and structural pest control industries. Each issue is a collaborative piece authored by AES staff and experienced industry professionals.

MEET THE AES SPECIALISTS

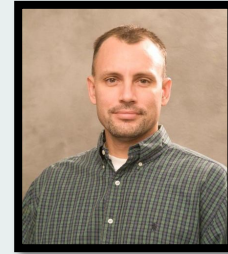
A fifth generation native of Bryan, Texas, Dr. Don Renchie grew up in Brazos County 4-H programs. He holds a BS in Animal Science and MS in Ag Ed. from Prairie View A&M University and a Ph.D. in Ag. Ed. from Texas A&M University. Don worked in the agricultural chemical supply industry and for the Texas Department of Agriculture. Since 1993, Don has been a member of the Texas Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit. He is the program leader of the Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit, an Extension Specialist and Coordinator for the Pesticide Safety Education Training.

Dr. Mark Matocha has been with the Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit since 2001. He holds a Ph.D. from Texas A&M University in Agronomy, specializing in Weed Science. He has more than 20 years experience in the pest management field specializing in herbicides and weed control. He has conducted weed control research in turfgrass, pasture, peanut, corn, sorghum, cotton, vegetables, citrus, and sugarcane. He has authored several extension publications and conducts educational meetings dealing with pesticide safety and education, agronomy, and weed control. Dr. Matocha also serves as the IR-4 Liaison for Texas— coordinating a multi-state pesticide advisory committee which is responsible for identifying and prioritizing minor use pesticide needs for Texas and surrounding states. Mark has been a licensed Texas Department of Agriculture pesticide applicator since 1997.

Mr. Jacob 'Jake' Wightman is an Extension Program Specialist with the Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. As a pesticide program specialist he provides programs for Texas pesticide applicators in the structural pest control industry as well as agriculture. These programs include apprentice/technician training seminars as well as CEUs and training in structural pest license categories. Jake's background is in Horticultural Science, with interests in integrated pest management, community food systems, and agroecology. Jake has professional experience in the Texas structural pest control industry as well as with agricultural and landscape pesticide applications. He has a degree in Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems— Urban Horticulture from North Carolina State University (B.S. 2022), and is currently working on a Masters degree in Agricultural Education with Texas Tech University.



Dr. Don Renchie



Dr. Mark Matocha



Mr. Jake Wightman

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Meet AES Specialists.....	1
Meet AES Support Staff	2
General Standards Programs ..	2
Pesticide News.....	3
Structural Category Programs	4
Agricultural Programs.....	5
Online Programs	6

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Learn about the unit
- Structural pest control
- Agricultural pest control
- Pertinent pesticide information
- Continuing education



MEET THE AES SUPPORT STAFF

Tina VanHorn is the Business Coordinator and Office Manager for the Agricultural and Environmental Safety (AES) Unit with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. She has been with the AES Unit since 2015. Tina is originally from DeRidder, Louisiana.

Shelby Smith is the Administrative Associate for the Agricultural and Environmental Safety (AES) Unit with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. She has been with the AES Unit since 2019. She is originally from Normangee, Texas.

Avery Brooks is a Student Worker for the Agricultural and Environmental Safety (AES) Unit with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. She has been with the AES Unit since 2023. She is originally from Gladewater, Texas. She is working on Bachelor's Degree in Animal Science and is expected to graduate December 2025.

(Pictured: top left, Tina VanHorn, top right, Shelby Smith, and bottom, Avery Brooks)

A unique education agency, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service teaches Texans wherever they live, extending research-based knowledge to benefit their families and communities.

3-DAY AND GENERAL STANDARDS PROGRAM DATES

3-Day Apprentice Training

March 18-20, 2025 (Bryan, TX)

June 24-26, 2025 (Bryan, TX)

General Standards Training

February 19, 2025 (Austin, TX)

March 5, 2025 (Virtual)

April 15, 2025 (Austin, TX)

April 30, 2025 (Corpus Christi, TX)

May 14, 2025 (Tyler, TX)

May 21, 2025 (Virtual)

June 11, 2025 (Plano, TX)

July 9, 2025 (Austin, TX)

August 13, 2025 (Plano, TX)

August 20, 2025 (Humble, TX)

September 3, 2025 (Virtual)

September 17, 2025 (Austin, TX)

October 2, 2025 (Plano, TX)

November 6, 2025 (Katy, TX)

December 10, 2025 (Virtual)

GENERAL STANDARDS PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

3-Day Apprentice Training

You can now provide your technician apprentices and other employees with an opportunity to receive 20 hours of in-depth, hands-on training relating to the 20 hours of "classroom" training required by the Texas Structural Pest Control Service, effective September 1st, 2000. This program will exceed the minimum 20 hours required to satisfy the apprenticeship classroom training as established by Rule § 7.132 (i) (1) of the Texas Structural Pest Control Act. In addition, untrained personnel from local and state governments, industry, and institutions (such as school districts) will benefit greatly from participation in this training program. This program costs \$400 per participant and includes: study materials, AES-6135 Laws and Regulations, Apprentice manual, and breakfast and lunch served each day. The 3-day program is held at Texas A&M University's RELIS campus.

General Standards Training

The Technician Training Course is one of the prerequisites for an apprentice to take the technician examination [Section 7.132 (m)(2)]. As required by Section 7.133 (c) the Technician Training Course will also satisfy the Structural Pest Control Service's requirement for recertification of commercial/noncommercial technician licenses (condition of renewal, 8 hours of verifiable training). An exercise including an examination will be provided to course participants which must be completed and submitted within 5 business days before a certificate of completion will be distributed. You will need to document attendance on your verifiable training record and attach the completion certificate. This is the Technician Training Course, which covers general standards and not a category training. This 8 hour program costs \$150 per participant and includes: study materials, General Standards AES-5073 manual, and Structural Laws & Regulations AES-6135 manual.

AGRICULTURAL &
ENVIRONMENTAL
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EPA PROPOSES BAN ON ACEPHATE FOR AGRICULTURAL USE

Dr. Mark Matocha

On April 30, 2024, EPA released a proposed interim decision to cancel all but one use of the insecticide acephate, the active ingredient in the popular insecticide Orthene. The decision was based on EPA's updated human health draft risk assessment and drinking water assessment that was released last year. EPA proposes to maintain the use of acephate for tree injection because it does not pose risk to workers or the environment. By all accounts, the use of acephate for tree injection does not seem to be of any importance whatsoever. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, along with thousands of others, submitted comments during the public comment period that communicated the value of acephate to Texas producers, particularly cotton growers. EPA is currently reviewing the public comments.

EPA ADOPTS NEW REGULATORY PRACTICES TO ADDRESS ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT LITIGATION

Dr. Don Renchie

Over the past twenty years, special interest groups have filed numerous lawsuits against the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) alleging these agencies have failed to enforce the Endangered Species Act (ESA). To address the issues regarding ESA enforcement, EPA along with the USFWS and the NMFS are adopting "Pesticide Management Strategies", including a recently published "Final Herbicide Strategy", a draft "Insecticide Strategy", a pending draft "Fungicide Strategy" and a "Rodenticide Strategy", including a "Rodenticide Biological Opinion." The EPA worked cooperatively with the other three federal agencies to draft the documents, each of which provides measures agricultural applicators will have to adopt and implement if pesticides from each group are going to be used in crop production programs nationwide. Each strategy has some similarities, including the requirement to satisfy a quantifiable number of points before the applicator will be allowed to use the pesticide. The State Departments of Agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) will work with agricultural producers to verify their compliance with the new label requirements, as well as their verification of identifying the presence of ESA protected species (plants and animals) by having logged on the EPA Bulletins Live! Two website. As we move forward into the 2025 crop production season, agricultural producers whose operations meet the ESA habitat boundary thresholds of 1,000 feet will have to adopt, implement, and demonstrate their compliance via utilization of the measures specified on the product label. More importantly, as each of the pesticide management strategies becomes finalized, EPA will publish "Federal Register Notices" allowing the regulated and non-regulated communities to submit comments on the impacts (financial, pest resistance management, as well as non agricultural users groups). The AES Unit team will provide timely updates to facilitate producer educational outreach activities, thereby ensuring accessibility to the production tools and compliance with the regulations.

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Hands-on termite training at the IPM House Experience at the AgriLife Center in Dallas, TX

STRUCTURAL CATEGORY TRAINING PROGRAMS

Pest Category Training

This 8 hour course is designed to satisfy the apprentice training requirements as specified by Rule § 7.132 (i)(2) “8 hours of classroom training in each category in which the apprentice is to provide pest control services.” In addition, the course can be used to prepare for the structural pest control “pest” category examination. This course will cover common structural invertebrate and vertebrate pests of the United States, particularly the state of Texas. Invertebrate pests are classified as insect and other arthropods, while vertebrate pests cover rodents, reptiles, opossums, etc. This program is led by experienced Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service trainer Mr. Jake Wightman and costs \$150 per participant and includes: study materials and the AES-5074 pest category manual.

Termite Category Training

This 8 hour course is designed to satisfy the apprentice training requirements as specified by Rule § 7.132 (i)(2) “8 hours of classroom training in each category in which the apprentice is to provide pest control services.” In addition, the course can be used to prepare for the structural pest control “termite” category examination. This course will cover commonly encountered termites and other wood-destroying organisms in the southern United States, particularly Texas. Along with pest identification, participants will learn the latest treatment methods, techniques, and technology. This program is led by experienced Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service trainer Mr. Jake Wightman and costs \$150 per participant and includes: study materials and the AES-5075 termite category manual.

STRUCTURAL CATEGORY TRAINING DATES

Pest Category Training

March 12, 2025 (Plano, TX)

March 20-21, 2025 (Bryan, TX)*
Immediately following 3-day program

April 23, 2025 (Austin, TX)

May 7, 2025 (Plano, TX)

June 4, 2025 (Austin, TX)

July 16, 2025 (Austin, TX)

August 19, 2025 (Humble, TX)

October 1, 2025 (Plano, TX)

Termite Category Training

February 12, 2025 (Austin, TX)

May 13, 2025 (Tyler, TX)

May 28, 2025 (Katy, TX)

June 18, 2025 (Plano, TX)

June 26-27, 2025 (Bryan, TX)*
Immediately following 3-day program

November 5, 2025 (Katy, TX)

December 3, 2025 (Plano, TX)



Pest category training at the RELLIS campus in Bryan, TX

TRAINING DATES

Practical Training (All practicals are at the AgriLife Dallas Center)

March 13, 2025* Immediately follows Pest Category course

May 8, 2025* Immediately follows Pest Category course

December 4, 2025* Immediately follows Termite Category course

Landscape Maintenance

January 29, 2025 (Ft. Worth, TX)

February 5, 2025 (Austin, TX)

February 26, 2025 (Rosenberg, TX)

April 2, 2025 (Ft. Worth, TX)

April 9, 2025 (Austin, TX)

April 30, 2025 (Richmond, TX)

June 4, 2025 (Virtual)

August 27, 2025 (Ft. Worth, TX)

September 17, 2025 (Humble, TX)

October 15, 2025 (Austin, TX)

November 12, 2025 (Ft. Worth, TX)

Vegetation Management

March 26, 2025 (Austin, TX)

May 7, 2025 (Katy, TX)

October 8, 2025 (Austin, TX)



PRACTICAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

The AES unit, in collaboration with AgriLife Extension entomology, is offering the 8 hour hands-on, practical training courses in general household pest and termite management.

These hands-on training days will be taught by Mr. Jake Wightman (Extension Program Specialist– Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit) and Ms. Janet Hurley (Senior Extension Program Specialist– Integrated Pest Management, Entomology) as well as industry professionals, and they will cover topics such as pesticide and tool selection, pest identification, and real-world pest management and application scenarios.

Classes will be held at the Texas A&M AgriLife Dallas Center on days immediately following the 8 hour category training courses, and will make full use of the IPM House Experience laboratory.

Students registered for 8 hour category trainings at the Dallas center are strongly encouraged to consider attending the hands-on ses-

sions the following day to remain up-to-date on the latest information, technology, treatment methods, and pest problems as they are relevant to Texas structural pest control providers.

This hands-on practical training is intended for applicators of all license levels and is pending approval for certified applicator SPCS CEUs.



LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE CATEGORY TRAINING

This 8 hour course can be used to prepare individuals licensing with the Texas Department of Agriculture in the Landscape Maintenance category. It is a one day course from 8:00am-5:00pm with a one hour break for lunch. This program, provided by experienced Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service trainer Dr. Mark Matocha, costs \$170 per participant and includes: study materials, AES-5066 landscape maintenance category manual, AES-5073 General Standards manual, and the AES-5056 Laws & Regulations manual.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT CATEGORY TRAINING

This 8 hour course is designed for vegetation managers, road and bridge maintenance personnel, and others involved in Right-of-Way vegetation management, and it will prepare individuals for the Texas Department of Agriculture Vegetation Management category, and General Standards examinations. This program, provided by experienced Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service trainer Dr. Mark Matocha, costs \$170 per participant and includes: study materials, AES-5068 category manual, AES-5073 General Standards manual, and the AES-5056 Laws & Regulations manual.

ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAMS

AES hosts a number of asynchronous, online training courses designed to serve the same purposes as their in-person counterparts. Online trainings include:

- Private Applicator Training
- Pest Category Training
- Termite Category Training
- Public Health Pest Control (Vector) Training
- Weed Category Training
- Lawn & Ornamental Category Training (SPCS)
- 3-Day, 20 hour, Apprentice Training

These courses can be accessed via AES website at agrilife.org/aes. (Prices vary.)



“Helping Texans Help Themselves”

ONLINE CEU TRAININGS

A number of asynchronous, online continuing education units are hosted by AES. These courses are approved for licenses issued by the Texas Department of Agriculture. Online CEUs include:

- Pesticide Online “Drift Minimization” CEU (1 Drift Minimization CEU) \$15
- Pesticide Online “Aerial Applicator” CEU (1 Drift Minimization and 1 Safety CEU) \$30
- Pesticide Online “Herbicide– Mode of Action” CEU (1 General CEU) \$15
- Pesticide Online “Picolinic Acid Chemistry Training” CEU (1 Laws & Regulations CEU) \$15

These courses can be accessed by visiting agrilife.org/aes



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is an equal opportunity employer and program provider.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

Virtual Structural Pest Category Training

Held via Microsoft Teams meeting

March 3rd, 2025 April 7th, 2025 July 14th,
November 12th, 2025

Call AES Unit Office to register!
(979)845-3849

Course Provided by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service,
Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit, Mr. Jake Wightman

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

The \$150 course includes the required category training manual (AES-5074), a \$35 value, and online instruction. The manual will be mailed separately.



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hqt"lj kr r kpi 0

This 8 hour course, taught by experienced Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service trainer Mr. Jake Wightman, is designed to satisfy the Apprentice Training Requirements as specified in Rule 7.132 (i) (2) “8 hours of classroom training in each category in which the Apprentice is to provide pest control services”. **This course will cover common structural invertebrate and vertebrate pests of the United States, particularly the state of Texas. Invertebrate pests are classified as insects and other arthropods, while vertebrate pests cover rodents, reptiles, opossums, etc..** In addition, the course can be used to prepare for the Structural Pest Control Pest category examination. This course, while held virtually, is considered an “in-person,” classroom training event.

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Virtual Structural Termite Category Training

Held via Microsoft Teams meeting

April 17th, 2025

May 19th, 2025

July 7th, 2025

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Call AES Unit Office to register!
(979)845-3849

The \$150 course includes the required category training manual (AES-5075), a \$30 value, and online instruction. The manual will be mailed separately.



* An additional minimum fee of \$10 will be charged for shipping.

Course Provided by
Texas A&M
AgriLife Extension
Service, Agricultural
& Environmental
Safety Unit, Mr.
Jake Wightman

This 8-hour course, taught by experienced Texas A&M AgriLife Extension service trainer Mr. Jake Wightman, is designed to satisfy the Apprentice Training Requirements as specified in Rule 7.132 (i) (2) “8 hours of classroom training in each category in which the Apprentice is to provide pest control services.” **This course will cover common termites in Texas along with other wood-destroying insects.** In addition, the course can be used to prepare for the Structural Pest Control Termite category examination. This course, while held virtually, is considered an “in-person,” classroom training event.

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