

The Pesticide Periodical

Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit

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EXTENSION

Welcome, Spring. What's the latest?

Mr. Jake Wightman, Extension Program Specialist, Editor

Yes, spring has sprung! Take a break, a breather, and read through this month's edition of The Pesticide Periodical while you enjoy another beautiful Texas spring among the wildflowers. Our student workers have put together some relevant, timely pieces on current events in government and pop-culture, and the Unit has plenty to announce in terms of upcoming events.

TDA CEU Audits

Something that I would like to call attention to is recordkeeping and continuing education. Recently, the unit has been aware of audits taking place on Texas agricultural pesticide applicators. The department routinely scours its database to ensure the state's licensed applicators are remaining compliant with recertification requirements. In the event of missing and/or incomplete, or incorrect, continuing education units (CEUs), the department reserves the right to suspend, cancel, or revoke licenses.

It is in the best interest of every licensed applicator and CEU course provider to make certain that they are timely, coordinated, and organized. Course providers must make sure that their course numbers are accurate and up to date, and applicators must be sure that they are retaining their record of CEU reception for at least two years after attendance. My advice: get your CEUs early, and make copies of your certificates.

Remember TDA licenses renew annually or every five years (private applicators only), based on the date of issuance. Therefore CEUs must be obtained within the renewal period after the date printed on the license. Structural license CEUs run on a calendar-year basis and are due within the twelve month period between 1/1/25 and 12/31/25. The Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit is more than happy to answer any, and all, questions you may have about CEUs and licensing.

Inside this Issue

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- CEU Audits
- Upcoming Programs
- Laws and Regulations Updates
- Hantavirus?
- Announcements



April Programs

8-Hour General Standards Technician Training

- April 15th (Austin, TX)
- April 30th (Rosenberg, TX)

8-Hour Pest Control Category Training

- April 7th (Rosenberg, TX)
- April 23rd (Austin, TX)

8-Hour Termite Category Training

- April 17th (Virtual)

8-Hour Landscape Maintenance Category Training

- April 2nd (Forth Worth, TX)
- April 9th (Austin, TX)
- April 30th (Richmond, TX)

From the Desk of the AES Unit's Student Workers

Have You Heard the Scoop on Texas House Bill 2998?

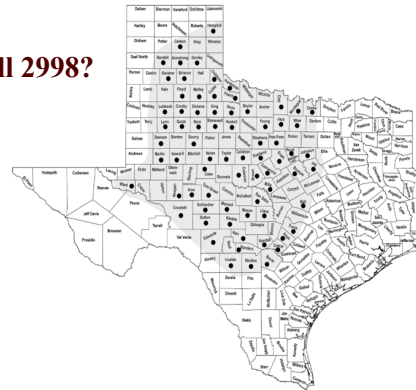
Brooke Wanjura, AES Student Worker

[Texas House Bill 2998](#) is a bill that would require voter approval for area-wide pesticide application by municipalities or counties, meaning that the mass application of pesticides must be voted on and approved by residents for any motor vehicle or device to apply the pesticides. On February 18, 2025, Texas House Bill 2998 was filed by Representative David Lowe, and as of March 20, 2025, the bill has been referred to the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee.

Pre-existing legislation allows for emergency mosquito control by certain municipal and county employees in situations where such treatments are deemed necessary due to potentially harmful public health conditions. By filing a waiver with the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), county and municipal employees are allowed to engage in area wide mosquito control activities. This is relevant for a multitude of coastal counties that have severe problems with mosquitoes. Additionally, the Texas Structural Pesticide Law, "prevents a municipality or political subdivision from adopting a rule regarding pesticide sale or use."

Texas House Bill 2998 has potential public health implications on residents living in areas with high mosquito populations, the potential to affect the county and municipal employees charged with public health pest management to conduct mosquito management programs, and the larger realm of pesticide legislation in Texas, especially the possibility of conflicting with existing regulations.

The mission and purpose of the Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit is to provide updates on the important issues that are happening in our state, including in the legislature, that can have an impact on all Texans.



Distribution of deer mice in Texas, [Texas Tech University](#)

Actor Gene Hackman and the Hantavirus

Avery Brooks, AES Student Worker

The recent high-profile death of Betsy Arakawa, wife of Oscar-winning actor Gene Hackman, has raised many questions and has highlighted the importance of pest management and its impact on public health. Betsy Arakawa died from a rare rodent borne respiratory disease known as hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, which is transmitted through the inhalation of airborne virus particles from rodent droppings, urine, or saliva. Dr. Kathy Heinsohn, who is a technical and training entomologist at American Pest, [states that "pest management professionals \(PMPs\) in the desert Southwest should be particularly aware of hantavirus, which is primarily linked to the deer mouse."](#)

It is important to know the difference between a deer mouse and a house mouse when treating an area or home to determine if there is a risk of hantavirus exposure to you or your customer. Deer mice have tan or brown backs with a white belly underline, which is a similar coloring found in pet hamsters. House mice are usually fully gray. Deer mice and house mice have similar droppings, but the deer mice have droppings that are larger and more pointed than those of the house mouse.

Could I encounter Deer Mice in Texas?

Yes. Deer mice in Texas can be found statewide, but are uncommon in the eastern, coastal, and southern parts of the state. They occupy a variety of habitats, but in Texas they tend to inhabit grasslands or areas of open brush. Weed-choked fencerows offer an almost ideal habitat. Their peak breeding seasons are January to April and June to November. Although, the death of Betsy Arakawa occurred in California, hantavirus deaths have been seen in the northwestern region of Texas. Therefore, as PMPs in the state of Texas, you should always emphasize the importance of pest control to customers and how pest control affects public health.





Announcements

Want to put something in our newsletter?

Email jacob.wightman@ag.tamu.edu



Call (979)845-3849

2025 School IPM Trainings

Ms. Janet Hurley, Senior Extension Program Specialist
janet.hurley@ag.tamu.edu

We have the dates and registration page for the TwoDay School IPM Coordinator Training for 2025. Once we have the exact location and registration pages for the fall School IPM classes we will announce those later this year. This year you will have a chance to meet and learn from Mr. Jake Wightman, Extension Program Specialist working with Dr. Renchie's office. He will also be working with me to offer some hands-on training events at the IPM House located in Dallas on general pest and termite categories.

For those of you who need School IPM Coordinator Training our spring registrations have opened. If you are a new to School IPM, the Law requires you to attend a 6- hour School IPM Coordinator Training, at AgriLife Extension we call it Day 1. This training follows the core content of the school IPM rules, covers integrated pest management (IPM) and pesticide safety. This class also offers CEU credit for licensed pesticide applicators for AG and/ or SPCS. If you have been the designated IPM Coordinator or a licensed pesticide applicator our second day covers specific pests and topics that pertain to IPM and pesticide safety. Day 2 offers 5 TDA CEU credits for SPCS and/or AG.

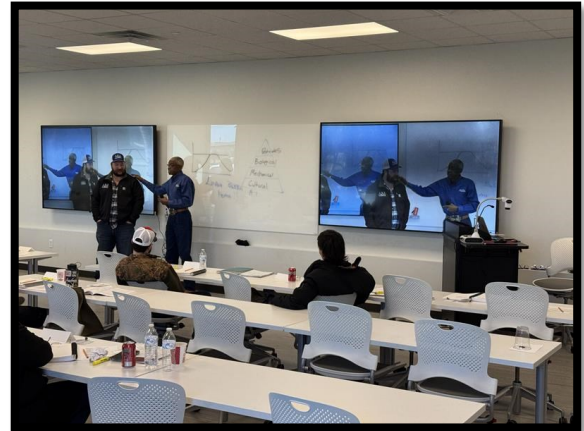
Central Texas Area

April 9 & 10, 2025 Round Rock ISD, Kelly Reeves Athletic Complex, 10211 W Parmer Ln, Austin, TX 78717

Class times are 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, lunch will be provided. Registration Costs \$240 for both days or \$155 for one day, this will include lunch, a spiral bound book with training materials, and CEU credits for those who have a TDA AG or SPCS license. To register follow this link, [School IPM Coordinator Training Central TX - New Registration](#)

AES Unit Staff	Mrs. Tina VanHorn
Dr. Don Renchie	Mrs. Shelby Smith
Dr. Mark Matocha	Miss Avery Brooks
Mr. Jake Wightman	Miss Brooke Wanjura

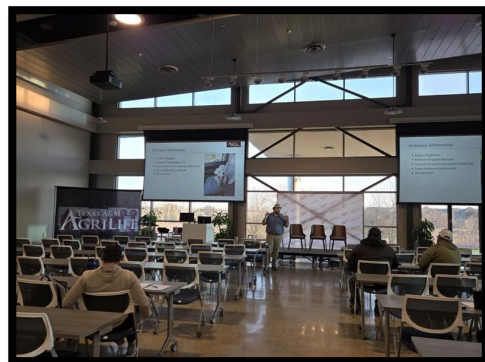
Office Phone (979)845-3849



Practical, Hands-on Training Opportunity

Whether you're an experienced applicator, or brand new to the field, come hone your structural pest control skills with industry and extension professionals at one of our hands-on practical training days! The next one will be in Plano, TX on May 8th. **Call (979)845-3849 for more details, or to sign up!**

3 SPCS CEUs Offered!



"A candle loses nothing of its light by lighting another candle." -James Keller

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