

The Pesticide Periodical

Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit

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Howdy! Mr. Jake Wightman, Extension Program Specialist, Editor

Ah yes, May! It is without a doubt one of my favorite times of year in Texas. Not too hot, plenty of rain, and our ornamental shrubs and lawns still have that bright green luster that comes with the newness of spring. I have to remind myself every time a wild and wet storm rolls through that we'll all be wishing for weather like that when July and August come around.

As producers and pest control operators continue their hard work I just want to ask everybody to prioritize safe, weather-wise applications. This does not just mean taking precautions regarding pesticide drift and volatilization, but thinking about human health and safety. Remember to stay hydrated, take regular breaks, wear the appropriate personal protective equipment for the job/application, and if something does not feel right get some help. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension has some more tips for avoiding heat-related illness [here](#).

This month's issue of The Pesticide Periodical has some important news to share that you will not want to miss. The Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit thanks you for your continued support of our newsletter and wishes our readers safe, productive summers.



New Testing Partner for Pesticide Licensing Exams

Miss Brooke Wanjura, AES Student Worker

The Texas Department of Agriculture will begin using a new testing partner for pesticide applicator licensing examinations beginning May 19th, 2025. With this change PSI, the current provider, will no longer be administering pesticide licensing exams, and Metro Institute will be taking over. This change will affect both agricultural and structural exam takers. The process to be approved to take exams and add categories remains unchanged, only the testing locations and provider will change. Metro has 31 exam sites in Texas, with all regions in the state being covered. After the change takes place, testing must be done at one of the Metro locations in Texas for Texas pesticide applicator licenses.

Those who wish to schedule exams or learn more about Metro Institute can do so [here](#). The last day of testing with PSI will be May 19th. Scheduling for seats, starting May 21st and after, will not be available until May 19th. The Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit will continue to provide updates on pesticide license examinations and testing procedures as information continues to become publicly available.



Upcoming Programs



General Standards Technician Training Course

- May 14th (Tyler, TX)
- May 21st (Virtual)
- May 28th (Plano, TX)

Termite Category Training

- May 13th (Tyler, TX)
- May 19th (Virtual)
- June 18th (Plano, TX)
- June 26th-27th (Bryan, TX)

Pest Category Training

- June 4th (Austin, TX)

3-Day SPCS Apprentice Training

- June 24th-26th (Bryan, TX)

Landscape Maintenance Category Training

- June 18th (Virtual)

Mosquitoes: Uninvited Guests Miss Avery Brooks, AES Student Worker

The State of Texas has received multiple rounds of heavy rainfall over the past few weeks. [According to KBTX](#), College Station has received 8.38 inches in just the first six days of May. Although the rain is much needed in the area, it also brings out some not-so-friendly critters with it: mosquitoes. Mosquitoes can leave you with an annoying and itchy bite, but worse than that they pose a major threat to the public's health with the viruses that they can carry. These pests carry diseases such as Zika, West Nile, dengue fever, encephalitis, and canine heartworm. [According to the Texas Department of State Health Services \(DSHS\), 101 mosquito pools tested positive for West Nile in 2024. An investigation showed 33 West Nile virus cases, which included two deaths, in Travis County \(Austin, Texas\).](#)

When considering mosquito control as an applicator, you should follow an [integrated mosquito management \(IMM\) approach](#). The homeowner can help the efficacy of a mosquito abatement program by engaging in the Four D's, which include "Dusk and Dawn," "Dress," "DEET/Defend" and "Drain." Mosquitos that carry dangerous diseases/viruses are most active between dusk and dawn, so outdoor activities should be avoided/reduced during those times. If outside, it is recommended to wear loose-fitting, bright-colored pants and long sleeves as mosquitoes tend to be attracted to the color black. If necessary, recommend the application of insect repellents that contain DEET. To eliminate breeding sites for mosquitoes, areas of standing water around homes and neighborhoods should be minimized. Standing water can be found in areas such as old tires, flowerpots, clogged rain gutters, and birdbaths. Mechanical management methods include the addition of window screens to homes, mosquito/bug zappers, and source reduction such as grading and leveling yards and lawns. Ensuring homeowners are doing their part in mosquito control can help to reduce call-backs after treatments and minimizes the use of pesticides.

Generally, the most effective and least costly way to control mosquitoes is in their aquatic, larval stage before they are able to harm humans, pets, or animals. Larvicides are commonly used by pest management professionals (PMPs) to target the immature stages of mosquitoes preventing them from reaching the mature blood-feeding stage of their lives. Intervention can also be taken once mosquitoes reach the adult stage with the use of adulticides that are applied using either aerial applications or ground-based truck-mounted sprayers. Adulticides are applied via ultra-low-volume (ULV) sprays, and ULV sprayers dispense extremely small droplets that minimize risks to people and the environment when used according to the directions on the label.

A good integrated mosquito management program takes advantage of all the facets comprising integrated pest management: cultural practices, mechanical management methods, biological products, and a minimized amount of pesticides.

AES Welcomes New Student Worker!

Howdy, my name is Ava Fenton and I have recently started as a student worker for the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit. I am from Gilmer, Texas where I was raised on a cattle and hay farm. I have been heavily involved in agriculture since I was young and participated in many livestock shows across the state and numerous other agricultural competitions. I am a sophomore studying Agriculture Economics at Texas A&M University and am expected to graduate in May 2028. At Texas A&M, I am involved in Aggie Sisters for Christ and volunteer at a local church's childcare program. I enjoy meeting new people, attending Aggie sporting events, and learning more about agriculture. I am excited to begin expanding my knowledge about pesticide safety and use, and looking forward to creating connections throughout the industry.





Announcements



Want to announce something?

Programs

Events

Trainings

Email jacob.wightman@ag.tamu.edu

AES Wants to Hear from You!

Know someone who needs a pesticide applicator license?

- TDA Private Applicator
- TDA Commercial Applicator
- TDA Noncommercial Applicator
- SPCS Certified Commercial Applicator
- SPCS Certified Noncommercial Applicator
- SPCS Commercial Technician
- SPCS Apprentice

The majority of AES certification training courses are held in and around Dallas/Fort Worth, Austin, and Houston. **If you are located in an area outside of our current regions we would like to hear from you for potential class offerings near you!**

Email jacob.wightman@ag.tamu.edu with interest



Latest from School IPM...

Ms. Janet Hurley, Senior Extension Program Specialist

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In Texas, the School IPM rules require that schools set thresholds and have action steps to take depending on the specific pest problem. Management plans help schools and their applicators avoid routinely spraying or applying the same product repeatedly over a period of time. Management plans also help serve as guidance documents to engage other departments, staff, and teachers on their roles in pest problems. Another requirement of the Texas School IPM rules is that school districts also have a written IPM program.

The written IPM program is a separate document from the IPM Policy statement adopted by the school board. The program document should be designed to assign more roles for the IPM program and assist with communication between departments.

Check out Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's Pest Management Plans for IPM in schools [here](#).

**“Above all shadows rides the sun.”
-J.R.R. Tolkien**

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