

# THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



## Department of Agricultural Resources

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## Consumer Information Bulletin

### INDOOR APPLICATIONS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Q&A)

#### Commercial Application of Pesticides to Indoor Settings

MDAR Pesticide Regulations 333 CMR13.08 require that you receive this notice prior to pesticide applications

**Q. Are indoor pesticide applications safe?**

**A.** All pesticides must be treated with caution. Pesticides are intended to be toxic to target pests; such as, rats, mice, insects, weeds, mold, fungus, etc. When used improperly pesticides may also be harmful to other living things, including humans and pets.

Some people such as children, elderly citizens, pregnant women and those with health problems may be sensitive to low levels of chemicals and should avoid or minimize exposure to pesticides. Medical questions should be referred to your physician or one of the contacts listed at the end of this sheet.

**Q. How can I minimize my exposure to pesticides?**

**A.** Some pesticide labels specify precautions, which, by law, must be taken before the pesticide can be applied. Your pest management professional should take steps to minimize or eliminate pesticide exposure. It is important that you follow all recommendations that the pest management professional prescribes.

In addition to keeping adults and children out of the area during pesticide treatment, the following are some additional precautionary measures that could be taken are:

- Know the location where the pesticide will be applied.
- Cover or refrigerate edible products.
- Remove articles; such as, a child's toys, blankets, etc. from the area that is to be treated.
- Remove pets, pet food and water bowls, and pet toys away from the area that is to be treated.
- Plan application times when premises will not be occupied. If possible plan to stay away for a few hours afterward—a minimum of four hours is a good general rule.
- Ventilate the treated area as much as possible during and following the pesticide application.
- Do not walk on or touch the treated area until it is dry.
- Ask the applicator where rodent bait stations and other rodenticides have been placed.

**Q. Are there methods for controlling pests without having to use pesticides?**

**A.** Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques may be available for the pest problem that you have. Discuss your options with your pest management professional or look on the Department's website [www.mass.gov/agr/pesticides](http://www.mass.gov/agr/pesticides) for further information regarding IPM. A reputable and experienced pest management professional will be able to recommend IPM methods for your particular pest problem.

**Q. If I live in an apartment, how do I know when a pesticide application will be made?**

**A.** Under State Pesticide Regulations it is required that you receive notification between seven (7) days and forty-eight (48) hours BEFORE any routine commercial application of pesticides that includes the following information:

- Name and phone number of the pest control company
- Purpose of application
- Name of potential pesticides, active ingredient and EPA Registration Number
- Locations to be treated
- Proposed date and approximate time of application
- Address and phone number of the MDAR Pesticide Program and Poison Control

**Q. What do I have a right to know regarding an application of pesticides?**

**A.** If you ask to be pre-notified about any future pesticide applications, the applicator or employer must provide pre-notification to you. This pre-notification will include the following:

- Date of next treatment
- Locations to be treated
- Potential pesticide(s) including active ingredient that may be used

If you are the contracting entity or if you request it, the following information must be left with you:

- Name and phone number of the pest control company
- Name and license number of person making the application
- Target pests of the applications
- Names and EPA Registration Number of pesticides used
- Date and approximate time of applications

**Q. What if I have a question or a problem?**

**A.** The Department of Agricultural Resources regulates the use of pesticides in Massachusetts. It is a violation of the law to use a pesticide inconsistent with the label directions. All commercial pesticide applicators must have a valid Pesticide Applicator License issued by the Department. Consumers should check to ensure that the applicator is licensed or certified. If you suspect that your applicator is unlicensed or a misuse has occurred please contact the MDAR. If you have any further questions or concerns about pesticides or the application of pesticides you should contact your pest control applicator or you may also contact the following agencies and organizations:

- MDAR Pesticide Program Enforcement: (617) 626-1781
- National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC): (800) 858-7378
- Massachusetts Poison Information Center: (617) 232-2120
- Massachusetts Department of Public Health: (617) 624-5757

If you have a contractual problem with a pest control company, please contact the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office of Consumer Affairs at (617) 727-8400 or the Better Business Bureau in Massachusetts; Marlborough Office - (508) 652-4800 or Worcester Office (508) 755-2548.

**Informational Resources on the Web**

MDAR Pesticide Enforcement	<a href="http://www.mass.gov/agr/pesticides/enforcement.htm">www.mass.gov/agr/pesticides/enforcement.htm</a>
MDAR Pesticide Regulations	<a href="http://www.mass.gov/agr/legal/regs/index.htm">www.mass.gov/agr/legal/regs/index.htm</a>
U.S. EPA Office of Pesticide Programs	<a href="http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/index.htm">www.epa.gov/pesticides/index.htm</a>
National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC) – health and safety information about pesticides	<a href="http://www.npic.orst.edu">www.npic.orst.edu</a>