

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs



Department of Agricultural Resources

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www.mass.gov/agr



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Consumer Information Bulletin

INDOOR APPLICATIONS

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Ask your Pest Management Professional (PMP) about IPM and non-chemical steps that may be available to you as part of the services provided. Regardless of which control measures are used, ask your PMP what actions you can take to avoid or reduce the pest problem. For more information on IPM, please [visit: https://www.epa.gov/safepestcontrol/integrated-pest-management-ipm-principles](https://www.epa.gov/safepestcontrol/integrated-pest-management-ipm-principles).

Q. Are indoor pesticide applications safe?

All pesticides must be treated with caution. Pesticides are intended to be specifically poisonous to a target pest (insects, weeds, mold, fungus, etc) but if used improperly may also be harmful to other living things, including humans and pets. If used according to the label directions, which is required by state and federal law, the product should pose the least amount of risk to the environment and public health.

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?

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

Additional precautionary measures that could be taken are:

- Know the location where the pesticide will be applied.
- Cover or refrigerate edible products.
- Remove pets, their food and water bowls, and toys away from the area that is to be treated.
- Plan applications times when premises won't be occupied. If possible plan to stay away for a few hours afterward (minimum of four hours is a good general rule).
- Move items away from the area being treated.
- Ventilate as much as possible during and following a pesticide application.
- Do not walk on or touch the treated area until it is dry.
- Ask the applicator where bait stations and rodenticides have been placed.

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

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 Pesticide Enforcement and Poison Control

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

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

- Date of next treatment
- Locations to be treated
- Potential pesticide(s) including active ingredients 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 the applicator
- Target pests
- Names and EPA Registration Number of pesticides used
- Date and approximate time of application

Q. What If I have a Problem Or A Question?

MDAR 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 MDAR. Consumers should check the applicators' license to ensure that the applicator is licensed or certified. If you suspect that the applicator is unlicensed or that there was a misuse of a pesticide, please complete the complaint form [here: https://www.mass.gov/forms/pesticide-enforcement-complaint-form](https://www.mass.gov/forms/pesticide-enforcement-complaint-form)

- [Massachusetts Pesticide Enforcement Program](https://www.mass.gov/forms/pesticide-enforcement-complaint-form): (617) 626-1782
- [EPA National Pesticide Information Center](https://www.epa.gov/national-pesticide-information-center): (800) 858-7378
- [Massachusetts/Rhode Island Poison Center](https://www.mass.gov/forms/pesticide-enforcement-complaint-form): (800) 222-1222
- [Department of Public Health/Bureau of Environmental Health Assessment](https://www.mass.gov/forms/pesticide-enforcement-complaint-form): (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 at (617) 426-9000 and (413) 734-3114.

*Massachusetts regulations (333 CMR 13.08) require you to receive this notice prior to a pesticide application. *