

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs



Department of Agricultural Resources

225 Turnpike Road, Southborough, MA 01772

www.mass.gov/agr



Maura T. Healey
Governor

Kimberley Driscoll
Lieutenant Governor

Rebecca L. Tepper
Secretary

Ashley E. Randle
Commissioner

CONSUMER INFORMATION BULLETIN

LAWN CARE

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Ask your Pest Management Professional (PMP)/Lawn Care Provider 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>.

Are commercial applications to lawns safe?

When a pesticide application is performed properly and carefully the degree of risk is greatly reduced, however all pesticides are intended to be specifically poisonous to a target pest (insects, weeds, mold, fungus, etc). Toxicity can vary from one pesticide product to another, and individuals may be affected differently from the same level of exposure. 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. Although there is usually minimal risk, you should take steps to minimize your exposure to avoid potential problems.

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.

Can I minimize exposure to pesticide applications?

Yes. To minimize exposure and the potential for health related problems from pesticide applications, there are logical steps that can be taken such as closing windows and removing all lawn furniture and toys from the yard. During and immediately after an application it is also important to keep other people, especially children and pets away from areas where pesticides are being applied.

May I be notified by the company prior to the pesticide application?

Yes. The pesticide applicator/company you hire must provide you with the opportunity to request per-notification before each application. This notification would allow you time to prepare for the application(s). You can also use this notification option to contact neighbors that might have concerns/questions.

Does the applicator have to put the yellow signs on my lawn?

Yes. The applicator is required to post standardized signs on pesticide treated lawns. The signs provide notice to you that a pesticide application has been made to your lawn. This will allow you and other persons to avoid the treated areas. Children should be made aware that the signs mean that a pesticide application has recently taken place and that they should avoid using those areas.

You may remove the signs after 24 hours.

What information must be left with me after the application?

After each application, you should receive the following information:

- Name and Pesticide applicator license number
- Date and time of the application
- Name and EPA Registration number of pesticides applied to your property
- Directions/Precautions on what you should do after the application

Why is my lawn being treated mosquito/ticks?

Mosquito and tick applications may be applied to the lawn. They are often applied in a manner so that the product either comes into direct contact with mosquito/ticks or the product remains on foliage for a period of time so that it will kill the mosquito/tick when they rest on the foliage or come into contact with it.

What if I have a question or a problem?

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 fill out a 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/nepic): (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. *

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