

# Pest control newsletter

Number 35

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This newsletter informs licensed pest control operators about current events and issues that affect the industry. It is published by the pest control team of the Department of Health & Human Services.

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## New information line number

The department has consolidated the legionella, pest control and radiation phone lines. The number for the pest control team is now 1300 767 469. Our phone lines are open from 9am to 12pm, Monday to Friday. Please email us at [pestcontrol@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:pestcontrol@dhhs.vic.gov.au) for enquiries outside these hours.

## Update your contact details

Please take the time to update your contact details held by the department. You can do this by completing the form included with this newsletter and returning it to the department in the reply paid envelope provided.

To help the department improve our services and streamline processing times, we are moving towards a 'paperless office'. We therefore request that you provide us with your email address for easier communications.

It is important to ensure that your contact details are up to date so that you don't miss out on important correspondence such as your licence renewal letter.

## Communications survey

We are currently seeking feedback from licence holders regarding the usefulness of the information provided by the department. We are also interested in how you would prefer to communicate with us.

Please take a minute to complete the attached survey and return it to the department in the reply paid envelope provided.

The information you provide will ensure the pest control team will be better able to tailor our information to support the pest control industry.

## Emergency telephone numbers stickers

The pest control team keeps a surplus of emergency telephone number stickers. Please contact us on 1300 767 469 if yours is damaged or faded and we will send you a replacement.



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## Licence expiry conditions explained

It is important to remember that once your pest control licence reaches its expiry date you become unlicensed and can no longer apply pesticides for fee or reward. You have 30 days from the expiry date to pay for your licence renewal but you do not hold a valid licence until payment is received by the department. After the 30 days, your licence will be cancelled and if you wish to continue to apply pesticides in the business of pest control, you will need to apply for a new licence.

## Pest control technical note number 21 – European wasps

Pest control technical note number 21 – European wasps, has been published and is available on the pest control licensing in Victoria website. This technical note outlines European wasp appearance, life cycle, identification, treatment and symptoms of wasp stings.

[www.health.vic.gov.au/pestcontrol](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/pestcontrol)

## Inspections

An officer of the department, authorised under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, may at any time contact you to arrange an inspection.

The inspection involves an assessment of your pest control records and pesticide storage (on your vehicle or at your storage facility) and of your skills and knowledge to apply pesticides safely.

Inspections may be conducted for the purpose of routine compliance monitoring or as a result of a complaint. The inspection time and location can be negotiated for convenience.

## Infringement notices

The department can issue infringements to pest control operators for failure to comply with the requirements set out in the *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009*.

The infringeable offences are:

- Unlicensed use of pesticides in the course of the business of a pest control operator (4 penalty units – \$606.68)
- Failure of a natural person to keep prescribed pest control records (2 penalty units - \$303.34)
- Failure of a body corporate to keep prescribed pest control records (4 penalty units – \$606.68)

Based on inspections conducted over the past few years, approximately 90% of all pest control operators do not record all the required information prescribed by the legislation!

You should remember that even if you work for another person, or business, it is still you who is responsible for complying with your licensing requirements.

Please refer to technical note number 3 - record keeping, on the pest control website, to refresh yourself with mandatory record keeping requirements.

## Pest control website

It is timely to remind all our licence holders about the department's pest control website.

[www.health.vic.gov.au/pestcontrol](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/pestcontrol)

The website has been specifically developed to help Victorian pest control operators comply with their legislative obligations as well as providing templates and a suite of information for the industry.

The specific topics and tools available on the website are:

- Legislation and licenses
- Safe use of pesticides
- Forms
- Common pests – Information on morphology and control of specific pests
- A searchable database of licensed pest control operators in Victoria
- Client information – Brochures about pest control and health that you can give to your clients
- Current pest control newsletter

## Pest control and food safety

Victoria's *Food Act 1984* requires that many food premises have a Food Safety Program. This program documents food safety risks and how risks can be reduced and controlled, including pest control.

To ensure that support programs are effective at controlling hazards, risks must be monitored, preventive actions must be put in place to control risks, and documented corrective actions must be taken if food safety issues occur. Council Environmental Health Officers may check that directions in Food Safety

Programs are being followed and that food safety risks are being reduced to an acceptable level.

Pest control operators should work together with food premises to meet the requirements of their pest control support programs. This is a continuous process involving monitoring, corrective action, review and record keeping.

## Automated pesticide dispensers

Some businesses are installing automated pesticide sprayers in their premises to help control flying insects. These sprayers are on a timer and automatically spray chemicals such as pyrethrum into the air (some companies are marketing these products as being safe to use in cafes and restaurants). These sprayers may be found installed in kitchens, dry stores, over coffee service areas and more commonly in dining areas.

In some cases the active ingredient of these sprayers (pyrethrum) is marketed as being 'natural', this can mislead consumers into thinking this translates into 'safe'.

Individuals installing devices which apply pesticides to control pests for fee or reward are considered to be in the business of pest control, an activity for which a licence under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* is required.

Under the *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Act 1992*, administered by the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, chemical products must comply with 'DO NOT' statements on the product label.

DO NOT statements on automatic pesticide sprayers include:

- **DO NOT** install near or next to an open window or extractor fan.
- **DO NOT** install dispenser where Insect Killer will spray directly on human, pets, exposed food, food preparation areas or food utensils.

Additionally, under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* Worksafe requires that an MSDS for a hazardous substance must be accessible to employees.

The important things to remember with these automated pesticide sprayers is that 'DO NOT' statements on the aerosol can must not be contravened, that an MSDS must be available for

employees and that the installation is conducted by a licensed pest control operator.

## Submissions to the newsletter

The department will consider articles submitted for inclusion in this newsletter. These articles must be of a non-commercial nature and limited to 150 words.

The department reserves the right of refusal and the right to edit articles submitted. The information and views expressed in such articles represent those of the author and do not in any way reflect the views of the department.

To receive this publication in an accessible format email [pestcontrol@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:pestcontrol@dhhs.vic.gov.au)

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