

Pesticide Safety eNewsletter

Department of Health

Edition 1, May 2021

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Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of the Pesticide Safety eNewsletter for 2021.

Through this newsletter we will provide updates and useful information to keep licensed pest control operators informed about events that affect their industry. The newsletter is published by the Pesticide Safety Team of the Department of Health.

Feel free to forward the eNewsletter to anyone interested.

To receive the eNewsletter directly, provide your contact details to pestcontrol@dhhs.vic.gov.au

Machinery of Government

On 30 November 2020, the Premier announced a major Machinery of Government (MoG) change which resulted in the Department of Health and Human Services becoming two departments.

From 1 February 2021, the Department of Health and Human Services became the Department of Health (DH) and the Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH).

The Pesticide Safety Team will form a part of the Department of Health.

Email addresses



Department
of Health

OFFICIAL

Our current email addresses will remain the same for some time. Any emails you receive from the Pesticide Safety Team may still have the 'dhhs' domain but will eventually migrate across to the new 'health' domain. Emails you send to the 'dhhs' domain will continue to be received until we advise you that the changes to the email addresses have been made.

In the coming months we will begin issuing pest control licences in the name of the 'Department of Health'. Please note that licences already issued in the name of the 'Department of Health and Human Services' will not be impacted by the change in the department's name and will remain valid until the current expiry date.

Coronavirus COVID-Safe Plans

Businesses in Victoria can slow the spread of Coronavirus COVID-19 by developing a COVID-Safe Plan and adhering to other workplace requirements. Information and advice for the [business industry](#) is available on the Department of Health website.

A COVID-Safe Plan supports a business to protect its staff, customers, visitors, and the community. It also prepares a business for a suspected or confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the workplace. The Department of Health provides information and resources to help your business [prepare a COVID-Safe Plan](#).

Stay updated on Coronavirus COVID-19, for the latest updates, follow www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au.

It is important to be [WorkSafe](#) in preventing exposure in the workplace.

Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 – changes that may affect your pest control licence

As previously advised, the revised Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 commenced on 14 December 2019. These new regulations adopt nationally harmonised minimum training and licensing requirements and include the removal of the Grandfather Clause exemption.

National harmonisation provides consistency for licence holders, particularly those operating across jurisdictional boundaries, and reduces regulatory burden. Furthermore, the introduction of an additional licence authorisation and associated units of competency for the application of pesticides to control timber pests reflects the complexity and specialist knowledge required for pesticide applications of this nature.

Under the previous regulations, operators who held a licence on 26 October 2002 were exempt from the qualification requirements. In line with efforts to harmonise competency across jurisdictions in Australia, this exemption has been removed and operators previously licensed under the Grandfather Clause will be required to demonstrate formally that they meet the prescribed competency requirements.

This means that you may need to provide the department with proof that you have completed additional units of competency in order to retain your current licence authorisations. This will apply for subsequent renewals following the conclusion of the transitional period in effect from the commencement of the new regulations until 31 December 2021.

Transitional arrangements allow operators time and opportunity to undergo a process of recognition of prior learning or undertake further training as necessary (see Institute of Pest Risk Management and PestLearn articles to follow). During the transition period, pest control licences can continue to be held until their expiry date, be issued based on the current licensing requirements, and will be valid for the full licence term (three years for technicians). This also effectively extends the time available for transition on an individual basis.

The regulations also provide for the Secretary, by notice published in the Government Gazette, to approve units of competency to be equivalent units of competency for the purposes of the new licensing requirements. This allows for minor changes in the course codes and descriptions that may occur over time and will be implemented by the end of the transitional period.

We will communicate with pest control operators licensed under the Grandfather Clause directly to advise them of their individual requirements. For a table outlining the transition of licence authorisations and units of competency please visit the [Public Health & Wellbeing Regulations 2019](#) page on our website.

As stated above some pest control operators may need to undergo a process of recognition of prior learning or undertake further training. The information contained in the following sections regarding funding for older workers and specifically designed 'gap' training options has been supplied by external providers. They have been deemed fit for the purpose of this newsletter as they relate to the recent changes to the qualification requirements under the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019. Any queries should be directed to the contact details listed within the relevant article.

Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program and Skills and Training Incentives

The Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program (Skills Checkpoint) and Skills and Training Incentive (the Incentive) are new initiatives to help older Australians through career advice and guidance and investment in training to adopt a life-long approach to skills development to stay employed longer. VERTO delivers the Skills Checkpoint in Victoria. See below and the attached Skills Checkpoint Participants Factsheet for further details. (*The Skills Checkpoint Program* is an initiative of the Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business. *Skills Checkpoint* is available through VERTO in New South Wales, Victoria, and the Australian Capital Territory).

VERTO SKILL TO TRANSFORM

SKILLS CHECKPOINT OLDER WORKERS FUNDING TO ASSIST TOWARDS FUTURE STUDY (5 units)

- **Must be:** 45 to 70 year old, Australian Citizen or Permanent Resident and if unemployed up to 9 months only. Can be on Job Keeper.
- **You cannot be on Centrelink or Govt. schemes** including Job Active Agencies.

VERTO helps eligible participants source up to \$2,200 (inc.GST) in government funding to put towards their study, a co-contributor. For further information please email your enquiry to: **Ronece Dobrowolski** – Career Advisor Email address: rdobrowolski@verto.org.au TO CHECK ELIGIBILITY please email.

Urban Pest Management Training and Recognition of Prior Learning – The Institute of Pest Risk Management and TME Trade Training

The Institute of Pest Risk Management has partnered with TME Trade Training, a long-established RTO, to deliver a completely new Cert III course in Urban Pest Management with the latest pest competencies. To remain COVID-safe as far as possible, the lessons will be online plus live tutorials that will either be face-to-face or online.

Competent licensed pest managers needing to update training will be well catered for through a specific Recognition of Prior Learning program – current skills and knowledge will be determined, and gap training provided.

Email tiprm@tme.edu.au with any queries.

Urban Pest Management Training and upgrade of qualifications – PestLearn

Upgrade your current pest management qualifications to the latest nationally harmonised minimum training and licensing requirements - Urban Pest Management Training Package (CPP30119) on PestLearn.com.au. PestLearn.com.au has been specifically developed to help candidates complete the upgrade online, at any time or day, offering total flexibility with a user-friendly interface.

Simply go PestLearn.com.au or create an account by [clicking here](#). You will be then sent a Time Training electronic PDF enrolment form, which you can either fill out electronically or print out, complete, scan and send back to mjwagner@pestlearn.com.

You will then be given access to the training material and complete a series of on-line tutorials, industry activities and assessments. You will need to supply portfolio of evidence. An onsite assessment is also required on completion of the learning for units 5, 6, 18, 8 and 10. Video instructions have been developed. Personal assistance is also available, however assistance times must be scheduled.

PestLearn and Time Training also deliver Cert III in Urban Pest Management for all new trainees to the pest control industry.

For more information please contact Mark Wagner on 0488177099 or email mjwagner@pestlearn.com.

Trainee Licence Renewal – Trainee/Supervisor Declaration required

In order to renew your annual trainee pest control licence, you and your current supervisor will be required to complete a Trainee/Supervisor declaration. This document is provided by the department with the application to renew and must be returned prior to the expiry date of your current trainee licence. Failure to submit the completed declaration in a timely manner will delay the issue of your new trainee licence and may result in becoming unlicensed.

For more information and to download a copy of the declaration form visit the [pest control trainee licences and conditions](#) page on our website.

You are reminded that, in Victoria a person must not, in the course of the business of a pest control operator, use any pesticide or class of pesticides unless he or she holds a pest control licence as an authorised user of that pesticide or class of pesticide in accordance with Section 99 of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*.

Section 109(2) states that a pest control operator must take all reasonable steps to ensure that persons employed in the course of the business of pest control operator by the pest control operator must comply with the provisions of the Act and the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009.

Update your contact details

Whether you are an individual operator or business, 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 or this newsletter. We have also moved to a 'paperless office' to improve our services and streamline processing times. We therefore request that you provide us with your email address for more efficient communication.

Please take the time to update your contact details held by the department. You can do this by sending an [email](#) to the Pesticide Safety Team.

New phone hours

We have recently extended our phone hours and are now available from 9.00am to 1.00pm, Monday to Friday. This allows our Registration and Licensing Team dedicated time in the afternoons to process licence applications and respond to email enquiries.

Contact us

Direct all enquiries to the Pesticide Safety Team:

GPO Box 4057, Melbourne VIC 3001

Phone: 1300 767 469

Fax: 1300 769 274

Email: pestcontrol@dhhs.vic.gov.au

Website: [Pesticide use and Pest Control](#)

Further information

For further information [email](#) or visit our [website](#).

The website has been 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.

Feedback

Has this newsletter been useful to you? Please share your comments with us or make any [suggestions](#) as to what you would like to see in future newsletters.

Submission to the eNewsletter

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.