



## TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

### **Ag Pesticide Applicator and Course Provider Update 2021 Covid 19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic**

During the Covid 19 pandemic and the rise of positive cases across the state, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) is extending this exemption of agriculture Continuing Education Unit (CEU) requirements. To address the CEU's and licensure requirements for Ag Pesticide applicators, the TDA will work with the ag pesticide applicators and CEU course providers of Texas during this critical time. Licensed applicators with expiring licenses or needing CEU's will be allowed to renew their license even if they have not met their CEU requirement for their current licensing period through December 31, 2021. Due to the restrictions of meetings in place by the Governor and many cities, many CEU events have been canceled. The TDA will work to insure all the state's pesticide applicators are able to acquire their licenses and required continuing education courses in a safe and effective manner during this time frame. Once the restrictions have been lifted and courses are scheduled again, **applicators will be required to obtain their required CEUs for their respective license classification for each licensing period.** By allowing a CEU exemption, this will allow the applicators to maintain their ability to perform pesticide applications for pests, weeds, insects etc., without disrupting daily business functions. Applicators are encouraged to complete online courses even if online courses were completed the previous licensing period.

#### **COMMERCIAL, NON-COMMERCIAL AND NON-COMMERCIAL POLITICAL APPLICATORS**

**For licenses expiring in 2021 ONLY:** TDA will exempt commercial, non-commercial and non-commercial political applicators who have taken online or correspondence courses within the last year. The TDA Rule 7.24 (t) (2) does not allow for online or correspondence courses to be taken 2 years consecutively. In light of the unusual circumstances due to Covid 19 (coronavirus), the TDA will allow online or correspondence courses to be taken in consecutive years. This exemption will be for the current 2021 licensing period. Commercial, non-commercial and non-commercial political pesticide applicators are required to obtain 5 CEUs per licensing period.

#### **PRIVATE APPLICATORS**

**For licenses expiring in 2021 ONLY:** The TDA will also exempt private applicators from the TDA Rule 7.24 (v) (5). This rule does not allow a private applicator to acquire more than 10 CEUs through correspondence courses. During this quarantine time frame, private applicators will be allowed to acquire **ALL** of their CEUs through correspondence courses (online). Private applicators are required to obtain 15 CEUs per 5-year licensing period.

#### **CEU COURSE PROVIDERS**

For CEU course providers, live courses that have already received TDA approval may continue to be offered via-live web-based courses. These courses must have the capability for the audience to ask questions and/or interact with the speaker. Course providers are asked to notify TDA of interactive course dates so that applicators can attend available courses during this period. TDA will update their website with course dates. Course providers are asked to continue to offer courses and may submit new CEU

courses for approval by emailing a completed [PA-409](#) to [recertcourses@TexasAgriculture.gov](mailto:recertcourses@TexasAgriculture.gov). The TDA request that providers contact TDA prior to any course given via a live, web-based program (Zoom, Facebook Live, etc.) so that staff can monitor/participate in the course. All courses will be posted on the [TDA website](#).

**TESTING**

Testing is currently offered by the TDA's third party testing company, PSI, LLC. The testing centers have been modified to safely accommodate in person testing with Covid 19 safety protocols in place.

**IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE:**

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