



The purpose of this newsletter, produced by Queensland Health's Environmental Health Branch, is to inform licensed pest management technicians (PMTs) primarily about regulatory matters, impacting on their industry.

The industry is regulated by the *Pest Management Act 2001 (the Act)* and *Pest Management Regulation 2003 (the Regulation)* to protect the public and pest management technicians from health risks associated with pest management activities which include pest control and fumigation activities.

## Replacing pesticide in an automated application system

The question is occasionally asked; does the person who replaces the cylinder of gas or liquid used in an automated pesticide dispensing system need to hold a pest management technician licence? The pesticide may be dispersed as an aerosol in a building space or as a liquid in a reticulation system under a building.

Pest control activity includes preparing and measuring a pesticide or using a pesticide to kill or repel a pest and is defined fully in Schedule 3 of the Act.

Replacing or replenishing the pesticide used in automated dispensing or reticulation systems is considered a pest control activity and the person must be licensed. The PMT who replaces the container of pesticide would normally check that the system is operating properly and is dispensing the correct amount of pesticide into the site.

The situation can be thought of as the PMT applying the pesticide through a reticulation system rather than a handheld sprayer.

## Penalty infringement notices (PIN) and prosecution

Over the last 12 months, 26 PINs were issued by Public Health Unit (PHU) inspectors. These PINs related to failure of the responsible person to make a record, false or misleading record, failure to provide advice to the occupier, pesticide container not labelled properly, non-complying pesticide container and un-authorized access to the vehicle.

One prosecution was finalised with a fine of \$2000. The offences related to failure to supervise a trainee and the company allowing the offence to occur.

## Mutual recognition

The Licence Recognition website [www.licencerecognition.gov.au/](http://www.licencerecognition.gov.au/) established by the COAG Skills Recognition Taskforce assists applicants with finding an equivalent licence in another State or Territory.

## Information sheet mixing pesticides

A general information sheet on mixing pesticides has been prepared and is available on the Department's website [www.health.qld.gov.au/industry/poisons\\_pest/default.asp](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/industry/poisons_pest/default.asp)

## Fumigation - Establishing a risk area

The Regulation requires the fumigator before carrying out a fumigation to inspect adjoining areas (risk area) and establish if an escape of fumigant may endanger a person.

The Australian Standard General fumigation procedures AS2476-2008 contains useful information on risk assessment, risk areas and other relevant subjects.

## Notification of a notifiable incident

When an incident has occurred, the Act requires the pest management technician to notify the chief executive of any notifiable incident:

- when carrying out the pest management activity; or
- when supervising a trainee carrying out a pest management activity.

Notification to the Director, Drugs and Poisons Policy and Regulation Unit as delegate of the chief executive is acceptable. This notification can be done through the Environmental Health Service of your local Queensland Health PHU. Listings of PHUs' physical addresses can be found in the State Government section of the Telstra White Pages telephone directory or search for 'public health unit' on the Queensland Health website [www.health.qld.gov.au](http://www.health.qld.gov.au)

A notifiable incident means an exposure, spillage or other release of a pesticide or fumigant that adversely affects, or is likely to affect, a person's

health. An example of this would be exposure of persons to a fumigant as a result of protective equipment failure or a person having an adverse reaction to the pesticide used.

The notice must be given immediately, either verbally or in writing, identifying the incident circumstances relating to the incident and where it happened. A verbal notification must be backed up with a written notification within 7 days of the incident.

There is a maximum penalty of 50 penalty units for not notifying the chief executive or delegate of a notifiable incident. While notification may affect a technician's suitability to hold a licence, the important factor to remember is the protection of the public's or technician's health from risks associated with pest management activities.

### What are 'grandfathered' or transitioned licences?

The current Act and Regulation came into effect in 2003, and replaced the *Pest Control Operators Regulations 1977*. The licensees who held the old un-restricted pest control operators licence were automatically granted a PMT licence. These licences can be described as 'grandfathered licences'. The old restricted licences were not transitioned to a new licence.

Technicians who did not hold the required timber pest competencies were issued a licence (not including timber pests) and may not have held the competency units 5, 6 and 18. The technicians who held timber pest competencies were issued a licence (including timber pests) and may not have held the competency units 5 and 18. If a technician allows a 'grandfathered licence' to expire, there is no mechanism in the Act to re-activate the licence.

The technician will have to make a fresh application and will need to provide a statement of attainment issued by a registered training organisation stating the applicant is competent in the relevant units of competency listed in the Regulation. This has been the case since 2003 and earlier newsletters have referred to this requirement.

Licence renewals are sent to technicians at their current recorded address provided to Queensland Health at least 60 days before the licence is due to expire.

### Contact details and finding information

Enquiries concerning this newsletter can be made to the Environmental Health Branch on [dppr@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:dppr@health.qld.gov.au) The Branch is located at 15 Butterfield Street, Herston.

This and earlier newsletters are available along with other information on pest management including all

licence forms at [www.health.qld.gov.au/industry/poisons\\_pest/default.asp](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/industry/poisons_pest/default.asp)

### Booklet - A guide to what Pest Management Technicians in Queensland need to know

The Guide was published as a booklet in 2003. A copy is posted to new PMTs when their licence is granted. Currently, a loose page is included in the booklet and describes the amendments that have been made to the Act and Regulation.

Once existing copies are exhausted, no more copies will be printed. An electronic version is available on-line at [www.health.qld.gov.au/industry/poisons\\_pest/default.asp](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/industry/poisons_pest/default.asp)

An updated version of the Guide is about to be published on-line. The main revision is the removal of the information about the transition from the old legislation to the current Act and Regulation.

The Act and Regulation can be found at [www.legislation.qld.gov.au](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au)

### Public Health Unit offices enquiries

Brisbane North Ph 3624 1111	Longreach Ph 4652 6000
Brisbane South Ph 3000 9148	Mackay Ph 4911 0400
Bundaberg Ph 4150 2780	Redcliffe Ph 3142 1800
Cairns Ph 4226 5501	Rockhampton Ph 4920 6989
Charleville Ph 4656 8100	Sunshine Coast Ph 5409 6600
Gold Coast Ph 5668 3700	Toowoomba Ph 4631 9888
Hervey Bay Ph 4184 1800	Townsville Ph 4753 9000
Logan Ph 3412 2989	West Moreton Ph 3413 1200
Mount Isa Ph 4744 9100	