

## Licensing of Aquatic Herbicide Applicators in Florida<sup>1</sup>

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*This document explains the reasons for recommending that anyone who uses herbicides for management of aquatic plants be certified/licensed.*

### Background

The Florida Pesticide Law administered by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) requires all persons who apply or supervise the application of pesticides classified as restricted use to be certified and licensed by the Department. FDACS has established a certification and licensing category for persons who apply herbicides for the management of aquatic plants. According to the rule, the category, called Aquatic Pest Control is "applicable to individuals using or supervising the use of restricted use pesticides used or applied to any standing or running water, including banks or shorelines."

Although no aquatic herbicides are currently classified as restricted-use, it is recommended that anyone who uses herbicides for management of aquatic plants be certified. Aquatic Pest Control is one of FDACS largest applicator categories with over 1,400 applicators licensed. Many agencies or

individuals who contract with applicators for the control of aquatic plants specify that the applicator be certified/licensed. Many employers require applicators who use herbicides for the control of aquatic plants to be certified/licensed. A license is issued to an individual who has met the certification requirements of FDACS. These certification requirements are met by successfully completing testing to assure that the individual is knowledgeable and competent in the use and supervision of restricted-use pesticide application.

### License Classification

Certified aquatic herbicide applicators may be licensed as either public applicators or commercial applicators. These are the major differences:

**A public applicator** is a licensed applicator employed by a public or governmental agency.

**A public applicator** license is only valid when performing work for the public or governmental agency.

**The public applicator fee** for a four-year license is \$60.

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A **commercial applicator** is a licensed applicator who is licensed to apply restricted-use pesticides on any property provided they are certified in the category for which the applications are made.

A **commercial applicator** is usually a contract applicator.

The **commercial applicator** fee for a four-year license is \$160.

### Certification Requirements

Although the fees are different for public licensing and commercial licensing, certification requirements are the same for both. Two examinations must be passed, a general standards (core) examination, which tests general knowledge of proper pesticide use and safety; and the Aquatic Pest Control category examination, which tests specific knowledge of applying herbicides in aquatic environments.

A passing score on both examinations is required before the license can be issued.

### Examination Locations

Examinations are administered at University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, County Cooperative Extension Offices. The general standards (Core) examination can be taken by appointment at any Extension Office. The Aquatic Pest Control category examination is offered in 41 counties.

If the Extension office in your county does not administer the exam, they should be able to help you locate the nearest county that does. If they cannot, contact one of the numbers provided at the end of this fact sheet.

The FDACS Certification and Licensing Office will notify you if you passed or failed the examination. If you passed, you will receive a license application. If you have failed, you will need to retake the examination.

### Preparing for Examinations

Prior to taking examinations, the following training materials should be studied:

**General Standards (Core) Exam:** All questions are based on information contained in: Applying Pesticides Correctly - A Guide for Pesticide Applicators, IFAS Publication SM-1 (Figure 1).

**Aquatic Pest Control Category Exam:** All questions are based on information contained in: Aquatic Pest Control Applicator Training Manual, IFAS Publication SM-3 (Figure 2).

Information contained in SM-3--except plant identification information--is available on videotape:

"Aquatic Pest Control Applicator Training; Part I," IFAS Catalog No. VT-1068.

"Aquatic Pest Control Applicator Training; Part II," IFAS Catalog No. VT-1069.

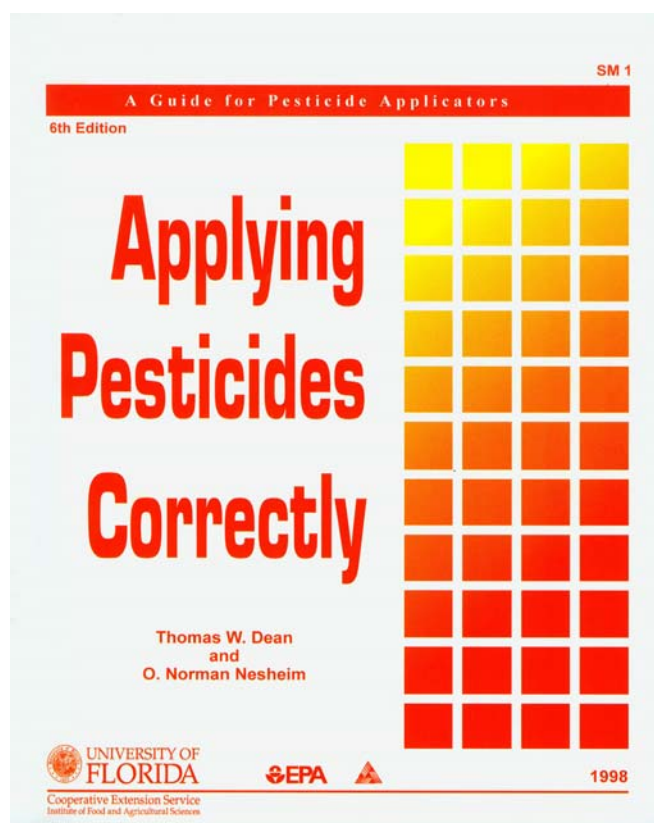
"How to Determine Areas and Amount of Aquatic Herbicide to Use," IFAS Catalog No. VT-310.

All publications and videotapes may be bought from:

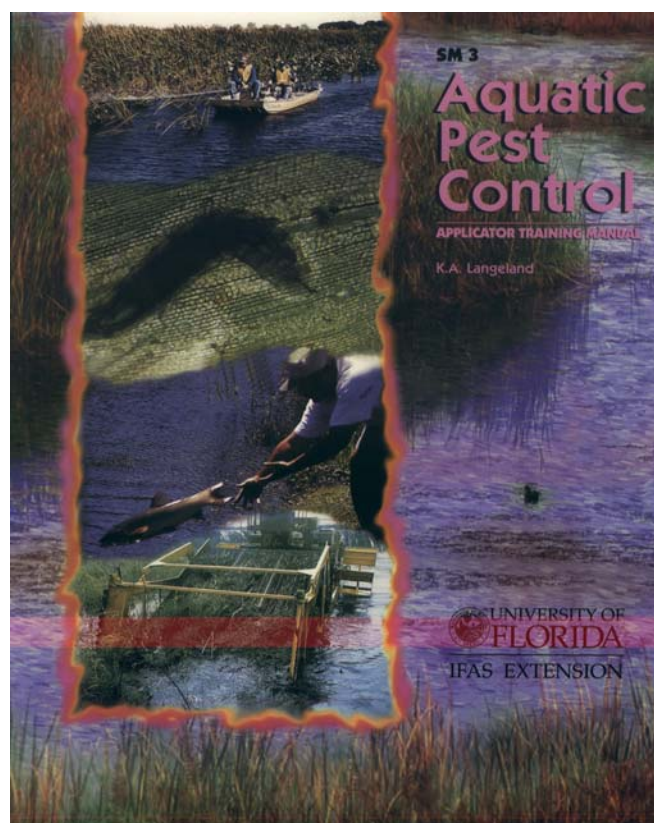
IFAS Extension Bookstore  
University of Florida  
IFAS Building 440  
Gainesville, FL 32611  
Phone: (352)392-1764 Fax: (352)392-2628  
Email: mlha@ufl.edu  
Web Site:  
<http://www.ifasbooks.ufl.edu/merchant2/>

Videotape programs may be borrowed--free--from:

Center for Aquatic Plants, Information Office  
University of Florida  
7922 NW 71st Street  
Gainesville, FL 32611  
Phone:(352)392-9613 Fax: (352)392-3462



**Figure 1.** SM-1: Applying Pesticides Correctly.



**Figure 2.** SM-3: Aquatic Pest Control Applicator Training Manual.

## Additional Information

For license and license renewal information contact:

FDACS Certification and Licensing Office,  
Tallahassee FL. Phone:(850)488-3314 Fax:  
(850)922-6961

For examination locations, training programs and materials information contact:

IFAS Pesticide Information Office,  
Gainesville, FL. Phone:(352)392-4721 Fax:  
(352)846-0206

IFAS Fort Lauderdale REC. Phone:  
(954)577-6300 Fax: (954)475-4125 , or

IFAS Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants,  
Gainesville, FL. Phone: (352)392-1799 Fax:  
(352)392-3462