



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
No. _____

SUBJECT: Guidelines on the Regulation of Operators of Pest Control, Certification of Pesticide Handlers, and Accreditation of Their Training Providers

I. RATIONALE

Pursuant with the provisions of Republic Act (RA) No. 9711, otherwise known as the “Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Act of 2009”, and its implementing rules and regulations, the FDA hereby set the guidelines on the regulation of pest control operators, certification of pesticide handlers, and accreditation of their training providers.

The human health problems caused by pests, mostly insects and rodents, are very significant in the Philippines. Public health pesticides have a huge role to play in the prevention and control of vector-borne diseases that it is important that household pesticide products used in public health programs must be cost effective, efficacious and operationally acceptable. Pesticides are toxic compounds, and long term sustainability of public health programs is threatened by the development of insecticide resistance and the depleting supply of less hazardous and cost effective household pesticide products.

Licensing commercial pesticide control operators contributes to the protection of public health and safety, by instituting mechanisms and standards that reduce the human and animal health risks due to the improper and uncontrolled application of household pesticide products. This policy includes guidelines on the proper handling, application, storage, transport, and disposal of pesticides, as part of sound management of pesticide products.

II. OBJECTIVES

1. To establish standard regulatory procedures in the regulation of pest control operators, certification of pesticide handlers, and accreditation of their training providers.
2. To provide guidelines in the licensing of establishments as pest control operators, certification of pesticide handlers, and accreditation of their training providers.
3. To establish health and safety provisions in the conduct of pest control to protect the pesticide handlers, and the public.

III. SCOPE

These guidelines shall apply to all government and private establishments engaged in the business, service, or commercial application of household pesticide products for purposes of non-agricultural pest control, all government and private individuals employed or seeking employment as pesticide handlers to be employed by operators for pest control, and all providers of training programs for pesticide handlers.

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Accreditation – means a third party attestation related to conformity assessment body conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out specific conformity tasks.
2. Certification – means third party attestation related to products, processes, systems or persons.
3. Fumigation – means a process where a fumigant can exist in gaseous state in sufficient concentration which will be lethal to given pest organism.
4. Fumigant – refers to a chemical compound used in its gaseous state as a pesticide.
5. Health Certificate – refers to a certification in writing using the prescribed form issued by the city/municipal health office or any government health facility to a person after passing the FDA required physical, medical and laboratory examinations.
6. Household Pesticide – also known as “household/urban pesticide”, refers to a non-agricultural pesticide used for the control of pests in homes, yards and gardens, domestic and/or commercial establishments such as schools, malls, condominiums, hospitals, buildings, manufacturing sites, warehouses, golf courses, among others, but shall exclude chemicals used in commercial agricultural production. The term also refers to a product used for the control of insect pests, rodents, and weeds that are found in places of human habitation, work and recreation. Examples of insect pests are flies, mosquitoes, cockroaches, ants, termites, bedbugs, and others.

Household pesticides shall include products such as, but not limited to, insecticides, rodenticides, herbicides, larvicides, termiticides, wood preservative, baits, and repellents.

For the purpose of this AO, the term household pesticide shall not include disinfectants.

Household pesticides can be classified as follows:

- a. For Professional Use – refer to household pesticide products used in the control of pests of public health significance and intended to be used or applied by a trained FDA-certified pesticide handler under the supervision of a FDA-licensed Pest Control Operator to institutions such as but not limited to schools, malls, condominiums, hospitals, buildings, manufacturing sites, warehouses, golf courses, etc. because of its higher risk/probability to cause unreasonable adverse effects to man.
- b. For General Use – refers to household pesticide products intended to control pests in the household and its surroundings which when applied in accordance with its direction for use, will generally not cause unreasonable adverse effects to man.

7. Licensing – means the process of approval of an application to operate or establish an establishment prior to engaging in any activity involving commercial application of pesticides for extermination and/or fumigation work.
8. Pesticide Handlers – refer to individuals including but not limited to drivers, warehousemen, mixers, applicators, who have completed the basic training course on household pesticides conducted by an FDA-accredited pesticide training provider.
9. Pesticide Management – refers to the regulatory control, proper handling, import, supply, transport, storage, application, and disposal of pesticides to minimize adverse environmental effects and human exposure.
10. Pest Control – refers to pest control activities in all habitable areas but not to include agricultural pest control activities.
11. Pest Control Operator – refers to establishments or entities engaged in the application of pesticides or any other methods or services for pest control or implementation of a vermin abatement program.
12. Supervising Pesticide Handler –refers to an individual who, after completion of the training course and passing the examination provided by an FDA-accredited training provider, is authorized to use or supervise the use of pesticides or any methods or services for pest control or implementation of a vermin abatement program.

V. GENERAL GUIDELINES

All applicable provisions of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Chapter XVI - “Vermin Control” of the Code on Sanitation of the Philippines (Presidential Decree 856), and other related laws and issuances are hereby adopted for compliance by all covered establishments, entities and individuals.

A. Licensing of Pest Control Operators

1. All establishments which are engaged in the business, service, or commercial application of household pesticide products for purposes of pest control shall secure the appropriate License to Operate (LTO) as Pest Control Operator from FDA.
2. All establishments, institutions or entities with in-house capability for pest control services as well as national and local government agencies providing such services as part of their functions, programs or strategies shall secure the appropriate License to Operate (LTO) as Pest Control Operator from FDA.
3. Pest control operators shall maintain a pesticide handling and application management system such that they are able to demonstrate their capacity to assure the safety of the pesticide handler and the public.
4. Pest control operators shall only use FDA-registered household pesticides in their pest control activities.
5. Pest control operators shall have at least one (1) regularly employed FDA-certified supervising pesticide handler in the main office and one (1) in every branch office, if any.

6. The pest control operator shall have the sole responsibility to inform the FDA of any changes in its supervising pesticide handler or pesticide handler.
7. Pest Control Operators shall be subject to the authority of the FDA which shall include but not limited to the (1) inspection of the establishment prior to or after the issuance of the LTO and/or (2) the verification of documents submitted to FDA in support of its application for license.
8. Pest control operators shall continuously comply with the existing requirements, regulations and standards of the FDA, otherwise, they shall be ordered closed and/or their licenses suspended or revoked *motu proprio*, or upon petition by any affected person. A confirmed violation with any of the terms and conditions of the LTO shall result in the suspension, revocation or cancellation of the LTO, or disapproval of its application for renewal.

B. Certification of Supervising Pesticide Handler and Pesticide Handler

1. Supervising pesticide handlers and pesticide handlers shall be certified by FDA upon completion of the FDA-accredited training course and passing the examination to be given by a third party training provider.
2. The supervising pesticide handler and pesticide handler who shall be certified by the FDA shall be issued an identification card (ID).
3. The certified supervising pesticide handler shall be required in the main office and every branch, if any, of all licensed pest control operators.
4. The certified supervising pesticide handler shall have direct supervision over the certified pesticide handlers. The actual presence of the certified supervising pesticide handler shall be required throughout the pest control activity.
5. The certified supervising pesticide handler shall have sole responsibility over any household pesticide-related incidents, issues and concerns.

C. Accreditation of Training Providers for Pest Control Operators, Supervising Pesticide Handlers, and/or Pesticide Handlers

1. The FDA shall prescribe the required training programs for pest control operators, supervising pesticide handlers and/or pesticide handlers, in coordination with technical experts in the field of pesticide management, which shall contain the latest trends, practices and technology in the proper handling, application, transport, storage, and/or disposal of household pesticides.
2. Training providers shall apply for FDA accreditation before conducting continuing training programs for supervising pesticide handlers and pesticide handlers.

D. Health and Safety Provisions

1. The pest control operator shall be required to provide the following:

- 1.1 Pre- and post-employment medical examination of its supervising pesticide handler, pesticide handlers and other personnel (see Annex A).
- 1.2 Annual medical check-up and regular health monitoring for its supervising pesticide handler, pesticide handlers and other personnel.
- 1.3 Appropriate personnel protective equipment (PPE) for personnel engaged in pest control services.
- 1.4 First aid, Basic Life Support (BLS), emergency procedures, and pesticides safety training at the beginning of employment followed by training programs at regular intervals.
- 1.5 Advanced plans and procedures for handling or referral of accidents and casualties.
- 1.6 An area for first aid procedures, emergency facilities, equipment and supplies.
- 1.7 Separate secure storage facilities for pesticides in all its branches.
- 1.8 Adequate water supply and washing facilities for cleaning the premises and equipment as well as enough lavatories and bathrooms for the workers.
2. The pest control operator shall be required to provide appropriate waste disposal plan. Pesticides and their containers shall be disposed in accordance with the existing guidelines of Republic Act (RA) 6969, otherwise known as the “Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Control Act of 1990” and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).
3. No person shall be employed by the pest control operator without first securing a health certificate from the city/municipal health office or any government health facility of the locality where the establishment is located.
4. The supervising pesticide handler employed by the pest control operator shall provide technical supervision to pesticide handlers.
5. Every vehicle or conveyance transporting household pesticide materials shall carry an emergency water supply for washing off corrosive and toxic materials, facilities for washing eyes, such as fixed or portable eyewash fountains, all purpose gas masks, goggles and protective clothing (gloves, boots, coat, etc.) for protection.
6. Every container of pesticide shall be appropriately, permanently and legibly labeled at all times and any transfer from original containers to another shall be prohibited.

VI. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

All covered establishments, individuals or training providers shall submit the applicable licensing, certification or accreditation requirements (see Annexes B to D) as specified by and in accordance with the existing rules of the FDA, accordingly.

A. Issuance, Validity and Renewal of LTO, Certification ID, or Accreditation

1. Establishment, individual, or training provider intending to secure the necessary license, certification or accreditation, respectively, shall satisfactorily meet all the requirements set forth in this Order.
2. The initial or renewal of license, certification ID, or accreditation shall only be granted after evaluation and/or inspection by the FDA and confirmed compliance to FDA laws, rules and regulations.
3. Initial license, certification and accreditation shall be valid for three (3) years and shall be renewed within ninety (90) days before its expiration.
4. Renewed license, certification, or accreditation, upon compliance to the requirements set forth in this Order, shall be valid for three (3) years.
5. The FDA-certified supervising pesticide handler or pesticide handler shall undergo a refresher course as a requirement for the renewal of his/her certification.

B. Conduct and Completion of Training Course for Supervising Pesticide Handlers and Pesticide Handlers

1. The required training course for supervising pesticide handlers and pesticide handlers shall be conducted by an independent third party training provider duly accredited by FDA.
2. Only those applicants who complete the required training course and pass the examination shall be certified as supervising pesticide handler or pesticide handler accordingly.

C. Accreditation of Training Providers for Supervising Pesticide Handlers, or Pesticide Handlers

1. An FDA-prescribed and/or approved course of study shall be used or followed by all accredited training providers. Any deviation from the prescribed training course must be duly approved and recognized by the FDA.
2. The FDA-accredited training provider shall provide the training facilities, equipment, materials, manuals, modules, and other training resources and/or paraphernalia.

D. Duties and Responsibilities of the FDA-Accredited Training Provider

1. The FDA-accredited training provider shall develop, conduct, monitor and evaluate their training courses for supervising pesticide handlers or pesticide handlers on the proper handling, application, transport, storage, and/or disposal of household pesticides and pesticides for non-agricultural use.
2. The FDA-accredited training provider shall notify the FDA of any topic updates on the training course which shall be subject to review and approval prior to the conduct of the training activity.

3. The FDA-accredited training provider shall submit to FDA the following requirements:
 - a. Annual calendar of training activities;
 - b. Training report to include the directory of attendees, course evaluation, and results of examination after the conduct of every training;
 - c. Any updates on the topics of the training course (if any).

E. Requirements for National or Local Government Agency or Government-Owned and Controlled Corporation Engaged in Pest Control Services for Non-Commercial Purposes

All the requirements set forth in this Order shall be applicable to any national or local government agency or government-owned and controlled corporation engaged in pest control services, with the exception of the requirement for submission of business registration.

In lieu of the business registration, the applicant agency or corporation shall submit the law creating such agency or corporation, if with original charter, or its Certificate of Registration issued by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and Articles of Incorporation, if without original charter.

F. Post-Marketing Sureveillance

All covered establishments, individuals, or entities shall be subject to post-marketing surveillance activities of the FDA.

G. Fees and Charges

The schedule of fees for the issuance of license, certification, and accreditation is provided under Annex E of this Order.

VII. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A technical committee on the regulation of pest control operators, pesticide handlers and their training providers shall be composed of the following:

1. Food and Drug Administration
 - Formulate, develop, establish and enforce policies, guidelines and standards implementing this Order.
2. Disease Prevention and Control Bureau, Department of Health
 - Provide coordination, technical assistance, capability building, consultancy and advisory services related to disease prevention and control and health protection.
3. Health Human Resource Development Bureau, Department of Health
 - Provide technical assistance in the development of relevant training programs for pest control operators, supervising pesticide handlers and pesticide handlers, as may be applicable.

4. Household Pesticide Expert Panel / Academe
 - Provide technical expertise in the review and development of strategic policy direction and guidance on pest control operators, supervising pesticide handlers, and pesticide handlers.

VIII. TRANSITORY PERIOD

A transitory period of not more than three (3) months from the date of effectivity of this Order shall be provided to allow all covered establishments to comply with the new guidelines.

IX. PENALTY CLAUSE

The FDA shall impose sanctions and penalties on pest control operators, pesticide handlers, and their training providers found in violation of the provisions of this Administrative Order, RA 9711 and other applicable laws, rules and regulations implemented by the FDA.

X. REPEALING CLAUSE

This Order effectively repeals AO 2014-0038 entitled “Rules and Regulations Governing Household/Urban Pesticides Licensing of Establishments and Operators, Registration of Their Products and for Other Purposes”. All other administrative issuances, bureau circulars and memoranda and other regulations inconsistent with this Order are hereby withdrawn, repealed and/or revoked accordingly.

XI. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

If any part, term or provision of this Order shall be declared invalid or unenforceable, the validity or enforceability of the remaining portions or provisions shall not be affected and this Order shall be construed as if it did not contain the particular invalid or unenforceable part, term or provision.

XII. EFFECTIVITY

This Administrative Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in two newspapers of general circulation and submission of a copy hereof to the Office of the National Registry of the University of the Philippines Law Center.

FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, MD, MSc.
Secretary of Health

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<i>Keywords</i>	Household pesticide, Pest Control Operator, Pesticide Handler, PCO
<i>Related Issuances, Laws, Directives</i>	RA 9711, AO 2014-0038