

2002 Update

Certification & Training Assessment Group (CTAG)

Who We Are

The Certification & Training Assessment Group (CTAG) is a consortium of professionals to promote the safe and effective use of pesticides through education, testing and licensing, and enforcement. CTAG was formed in 1996 to undertake an in-depth study of the pesticide applicator certification and training (C&T) program. The mission of CTAG is to facilitate change in the national pesticide applicator certification and training program.

How We Operate

CTAG is managed by a Board whose members serve overlapping two and three year terms. The Board is directed by two co-chairs and a vice chair. Under the CTAG charter, the Board will determine the current status and future direction of CTAG, create and coordinate workgroups, provide updates on accomplishments, and maintain a communications network with partners.

Two workgroups have been formed to focus activities on specific projects. The charge of the first workgroup is to develop a standardized electronic template, based on FIFRA and the current 40 CFR regulations, for use in updating C&T Plans. Such a template will both simplify and standardize the updating and review process for the States, Tribes and EPA Regional Offices. The second workgroup is tasked with determining how best to fold the pesticide handler portion of the Worker Protection Standard program into the current C&T program, as well as to provide EPA with a plan for a comprehensive pesticide safety program, for all persons who sell, mix, load, apply or recommend the use of pesticides. The program will provide a framework for those involved to demonstrate competency, mitigate risk and improve pesticide security through appropriate education, training and testing.

What We Do

- i To provide a road map for change, CTAG issued a January 1999 draft report entitled "Pesticide Safety for the 21st Century — The Findings and Proposals of the Certification & Training Assessment Group" which was distributed for stakeholder review and comment. In this report, CTAG proposed major changes to the national C&T program including changes to FIFRA, the 40 CFR 171 regulations, EPA and USDA activities, and activities in conjunction with states, tribes and territories.
- ii A CTAG Technical Review Committee provided their evaluation of commercially available Certification Exam Development Software to the states, tribes and territories.
- ii EPA sponsored two workshops for SLA and CES partners on "Creating a Professionally Sound and Legally Defensible Pesticide Credentialing Exam."
- ii EPA and Canada's PMRA are in the process of collaborating on a pesticide applicator core exam project which will result in a professionally developed exam of core knowledge principles for all first time candidates to become pesticide applicators.

- ï In 2001, two pilot Pesticide Safety Education Center (PSEC) courses were held for county agents and field inspectors. The courses focused mainly on how to engage the audience and use hands-on education tools. Additional courses are planned for March and October 2002.
- ï During 2001, a new web site was launched as a sharing platform for educators and regulators. The web site lists materials developed or being drafted, format, dates and contact information (<http://pep.wsu.edu/psp>).
- ï EPA/OPP's decisions on the classification or reclassification of pesticide uses impact pesticide safety education and regulatory programs. To improve EPA's understanding of these ramifications, state lead agencies and pesticide safety educators have voluntarily provided their time to interact with OPP staff. Workshops were held in 2000, 2001 and are expected to be held again in 2002.
- ï Pesticide Regulatory Education Programs (PREP) are courses designed to provide practical, up-to-date information on technical, policy and management related issues for state, tribal, territorial and federal partners. The goals of this national program are to strengthen partner capabilities to address current and evolving issues and continue to improve cooperation among partners. A PREP course on CTAG activities will be conducted in April 2002.
- ï The CTAG C&T Plan workgroup has made substantial progress on the development of a draft C&T plan template which will facilitate the collection, maintenance and review of required plan components, applicator number reporting requirements, reciprocity agreements and access to additional program information.
- ï The CTAG Workgroup on Pesticide Safety is now drafting proposals to integrate the Worker Protection Standard program into the C&T program and on measures that could be taken throughout the lifetime of a pesticide product that would increase security of pesticides and application equipment.

Learn More About CTAG

For more information, including Board members, meeting schedules and a document archive, refer to the CTAG web page (<http://pep.wsu.edu/ctag>).

Current CTAG Board Members

- ï Kevin Keaney, EPA - OPP (Co-Chair)
- ï Gina Davis, Michigan Dept. of Agriculture (Co-Chair)
- ï Carol Ramsay, Washington State University (Vice-Chair)
- ï Jeanne Heying, EPA - OPP
- ï Richard Pont, EPA - OPP
- ï Al Muench, EPA Assistant
- ï Win Hock, AAPSE President
- ï Monte Johnson, USDA CSREES
- ï Jack Peterson, Arizona Dept. of Agriculture
- ï Carl Martin, Arizona Structural Pest Control Commission
- ï Debbie Danford, Texas Dept. of Agriculture
- ï Donnie Dippel, AAPCO President, Texas Dept. of Agriculture
- ï Pat O'Connor-Marer, University of California
- ï Bill Tozer, Armed Forces Pest Management Board

Please feel free to contact any board member with inquiries or suggestions. Go to <http://pep.wsu.edu/ctag/board.html> and click on a Board member's name for the member's e-mail address.

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