New MDARD emergency rule extends pesticide applicator credentials until December 2020

For immediate release: November 9, 2020
Program contact: Brian Verhougstraete, 517-582-4573
Media contact: Jennifer Holton, 517-284-5724

LANSING, Mich. – An emergency rule filed by Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) Director Gary McDowell extends pesticide applicator credentials with an expiration date of December 31, 2019 to December 31, 2020. MDARD filed this emergency rule in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Extending applicator credentials allows MDARD inspectors to focus on our regulatory activities that protect human health and the environment from mis-applications of pesticides,” said Brian Verhougstraete, MDARD’s Pesticide Section Manager. “It also provides certified applicators and businesses some regulatory clarity and ensures they can continue their work protecting public health by facilitating applications against mosquitos, ticks, and other pests.”

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, P.A. 451 of 1994, Part 83, requires individuals to be either a certified pesticide applicator or a registered applicator to apply a pesticide for a commercial purpose. The Act also requires certification for anyone wishing to purchase a restricted use pesticide. Michigan’s certified pesticide applicators must pass written examinations to ensure they have the knowledge and skills necessary to properly apply pesticides in a manner that protects themselves, the public, and the environment. Once certified, applicators must renew their credentials every three years by either retesting or participating in continuing education events.

MDARD has resumed in-person pesticide certification exams on a limited basis. Stringent safety protocols have been implemented at the exam sessions including temperature screenings, requiring the proper wearing face coverings, and strict social distancing. To register, visit the website at https://www2.mda.state.mi.us/OPES/Welcome.aspx. Metro Institute also continues to offer computer-based certification exams at testing centers across the state.

For more information on MDARD’s Pesticide and Plant Pesticide Management Division, visit Michigan.gov/MDARD.

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