

Date of Hearing: April 7, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS

Marc Berman, Chair

AB 2477 (Chen) – As Amended March 20, 2026

NOTE: This bill is double referred and if passed by this Committee will be re-referred to the Assembly Committee on Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials.

SUBJECT: Structural pest control.

SUMMARY: Beginning January 1, 2028, authorizes an unlicensed individual who is employed by a registered pest control company and who has met specified training requirements and has applied for an applicator license in Branch 2 or Branch 3 to apply such pesticides under a provisional supervisory period, as defined, for up to 60 days.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Licenses and regulates structural pest control applicators, field representatives, operators, and structural pest control companies, and establishes the Structural Pest Control Board (SPCB) within the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) to administer and enforce the licensing program until January 1, 2028. (Business and Professions Code (BPC) §§ 8500-8697.4)
- 2) Defines, for purposes of licensure, “structural pest control” and “pest control,” with respect to household pests and wood-destroying pests or organisms, or other pests that may invade households or other structures, including railroad cars, ships, docks, trucks, airplanes, or the contents thereof, the engaging in, offering to engage in, advertising for, soliciting, or the performance of, any of the following:
 - a) Identification of infestations or infections. (BPC § 8505(a)(1))
 - b) The making of an inspection or inspections for the purpose of identifying or attempting to identify infestations or infections of household or other structures by those pests or organisms. (BPC § 8505(a)(2))
 - c) The making of inspection reports, recommendations, estimates, and bids, whether oral or written, with respect to those infestations or infections. (BPC § 8505(a)(3))
 - d) The making of contracts, or the submitting of bids for, or the performance of any work including the making of structural repairs or replacements, or the use of pesticides, or mechanical devices for the purpose of eliminating, exterminating, controlling, or preventing infestations or infections of those pests, or organisms. (BPC § 8505(a)(4))
- 3) Defines a “structural pest control applicator” as any individual who is licensed by the SPCB to apply pesticides in Branch 2 or Branch 3 on behalf of a registered company. (BPC § 8507.1(a)(1))
- 4) Specifies that a structural pest control applicator shall not contract for pest control work, or perform pest control work in their own behalf. (BPC § 8507.1(a)(2))

- 5) Makes it unlawful for any person to advertise, to engage in, or offer to engage in the business or practice of structural pest control unless they possess a license issued by the SPCB. (BPC § 8550(a))
- 6) Authorizes an unlicensed person to solicit pest control work on behalf of a structural pest control company, so long as the company is registered with the SPCB and that person does not perform any licensed structural pest control activities. (BPC § 8550(b))
- 7) Authorizes an unlicensed person, for a 90-day, nonrenewable period from the date of employment with a registered company, to apply pesticides for purposes of training under the direct supervision of a licensed field representative or operator employed by the same company, and mandates that supervision means the unlicensed person is always in the presence of the licensee. (BPC § 8551.5)
- 8) Establishes the following three classifications for purposes of delimiting the type and character of structural pest control work authorized by licensure:
 - a) “Branch 1 – Fumigation”, defined as the practice relating to the control of household and wood-destroying pests or organisms by fumigation with poisonous or lethal gases.
 - b) “Branch 2 – General pest”, defined as the practice relating to the control of household pests, excluding fumigation with poisonous or lethal gases, and
 - c) “Branch 3 – Termite”, defined as the practice relating to the control of wood-destroying pests or organisms by the use of insecticides, or structural repairs and corrections, excluding fumigation with poisonous or lethal gases.(BPC § 8560(b))
- 9) Establishes that any individual 18 years of age or older may apply for licensure as a structural pest control applicator, subject to passage of a written examination that tests sufficient knowledge in pesticide equipment, pesticide mixing and formulation, pesticide application procedures and pesticide label directions for purposes of Branch 2 and Branch 3 services. (BPC § 8564.5)

THIS BILL:

- 1) Establishes a provisional, 60-day period whereby an unlicensed individual employed by a registered pest control company, and who has applied for a structural pest control applicator license in Branch 2 or Branch 3, to apply such pesticides under the supervision of a licensed operator or field representative subject to the following conditions:
 - a) The unlicensed individual has submitted a complete structural pest control applicator license application to the SPCB, as evidenced by written or electronic confirmation of receipt;
 - b) The unlicensed individual has completed a minimum of 80 hours of documented, in-person training under the direct supervision of a licensed operator or field representative;
 - c) The unlicensed individual has submitted fingerprint identification to, and completed a background investigation with, the SPCB;

- d) The unlicensed individual has submitted the applicable examination application to the SPCB; and
 - e) All direct supervision must comply with applicable direct supervision requirements of the Department of Pesticide Regulation.
- 2) Requires the supervising licensee to maintain documentation demonstrating proof of completion of training, and proof of application submission, by the unlicensed individual.
 - 3) Mandates that the 60-day provisional period shall:
 - a) Only apply once per individual, per applicator license;
 - b) Commence upon satisfaction of the above conditions; and
 - c) Terminate upon issuance of a license, denial of an application, or expiration of the 60-day period, whichever occurs first.
 - 4) Specifies that the 60-day provisional period shall not overlap with, or extend, the optional 90-day supervised training period authorized under current law.
 - 5) Defines “direct supervision” for purposes of the bill as “the direction of actions ... by a licensed operator or field representative who shall be physically present on location and immediately available to intervene.”
 - 6) Defines “supervision” for purposes of the bill as “either direct supervision or the direction of actions ... by a licensed operator or field representative who is immediately available via audio and video communication with access to the customer’s relevant information and the ability to intervene by directing onsite personnel.”
 - 7) Makes various legislative findings and declarations.
 - 8) Delays implementation until January 1, 2028.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown; this bill is keyed fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

COMMENTS:

Purpose. This bill is sponsored by the *California Pest Management Association*. According to the author:

AB 2477 provides targeted, practical relief for California’s small pest control businesses while maintaining strong consumer and safety protections. The bill addresses a gap between hiring and licensure, during which new employees—despite completing training and initiating the licensing process—are unable to fully contribute to routine operations. By establishing a narrow, one-time provisional supervision period of up to 60 days, AB 2477 allows qualified applicants who have completed at least 80 hours of supervised training, submitted to background checks, and applied for licensure to perform work under enhanced supervision, including real-time audio and video oversight. This measured approach preserves regulatory integrity while reducing unnecessary workforce bottlenecks, lowering

operational costs, and supporting the viability of small, often family-run pest control businesses across the state.

Background. Structural pest control is the practice of inspecting, identifying, and eradicating pests like insects, rodents, termites, and other creatures that infest human dwellings or other structural premises. Pest control professionals use a variety of methods to identify and eliminate pests, such as structural modifications, baits, traps, and in many cases, chemical pesticides. Often, pest control professionals will also work with clients to sanitize and maintain dwellings to protect from future infestation, or provide consultation regarding lifestyle changes that can prevent further pests. Structural pest control is distinct from other types of regulated pest control, such as agricultural pest control (which is largely regulated by the Department of Pesticide Regulation), or vector pest control (which is regulated by the State Water Resources Control Board).

Structural Pest Control Board. The regulation of structural pest control in California dates back to the establishment of the Structural Pest Control Act under AB 2382 (Chapter 823, Statutes of 1935). Under this act, the profession of pest control was originally administered by the California Pest Control Association and set minimum standards for the industry including mandating practitioners' experience and continuing education requirements. In 1941, the Act was codified and Structural Pest Control Board (SPCB) was formed and then began the oversight of the profession. In 2009, the SPCB was transferred from the DCA to the Department of Pesticide Regulation, and then back again to the DCA, under former Governor Brown's 2011-2012 Reorganization Plan No. 2 and AB 1317 (Frazier, Chapter 352, Statutes of 2013).

The SPCB divides different types of structural pest control work into three distinct practice areas, or "branches." "Branch 1 - Fumigation", the most stringent branch, encompasses the practice of controlling household or wood-destroying pests through the use of fumigation with poisonous or lethal gases. "Branch 2 - General Pests" encompasses the other practices relating to the control of household pests, excluding fumigation. Finally, "Branch 3 - Wood Destroying Organisms" encompasses the practices related to the control of wood-destroying pests, like termites, through the use of insecticides or structural repairs.

There are three distinct license types issued by the SPCB, separated according to ability to perform work pursuant to the different branches. While each license must be issued according to the specific branch that the applicant has demonstrated qualifications for, the SPCB may issue a license for a combination of two or more branches so long as the applicant demonstrates competency in each branch. SPCB licenses are categorized as follows:

- *Applicator* - An entry-level license category issued for Branch 2 and 3 only. An Applicator is an individual licensed by the SPCB to apply a pesticide, or any other medium to eliminate, exterminate, control, or prevent infestations or infections. Applicators cannot inject lethal gases used in fumigation.
- *Field Representative* - A full journey-level license issued in all three branches. A Field Representative secures work, makes identifications, makes inspections, submits bids, and contracts for work on behalf of a registered company.
- *Operator* - The highest level of licensure issued in all three branches. Depending on the license category, an Operator must have at least two years, or as many as four years, qualifying experience. Only a licensed Operator may qualify a company for registration

by assuming responsibility for the company and its employees as the company Qualifying Manager.

Applicator License Process. To become a licensed applicator, individuals must pass an examination that demonstrates sufficient knowledge in pesticide equipment, pesticide mixing and formulation, pesticide application procedures and pesticide label directions. The SPCB contracts with PSI Exams, a subsidiary of Professional Services, Inc., to administer the licensure examination. Prospective applicator licensees must apply for examination, pay a \$60 application fee, and schedule and take the applicator examination directly with PSI Exams within six months of submitting their application to the SPCB.

Once passed, individuals then must complete a live scan fingerprinting and background check, and upload a copy of the completed live scan, alongside a license application and a \$35 license fee. In order to apply for licensure, applicants must list the name, address, and telephone number of the company the applicant will be employed by. Applicators can begin working unsupervised as soon as their license number is issued, while physical licenses typically arrive in 2 to 4 weeks.

Regulated Pesticide Supervision. Unlike the other two branches of pest control licensure, applicators are not mandated to complete specific on-the-job training prior to applying for licensure. However, current law does allow an unlicensed individual that is under the direct employ of a registered pest control company to apply pesticides under the direct supervision of a licensed field representative or operator for up to 90 days from the start date of their employment. While many employers and prospective applicators take advantage of this 90-day period for purposes of training, it is not a requirement.

Pertaining to agricultural pest control, the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) regulates “pest control businesses”, which are businesses that primarily deal in directly providing agricultural pest control or consult other agricultural businesses on pest control methods, and “pest control dealers”, who sell pesticides for agricultural use. Further, each pest control business must maintain at least one “qualified applicator” licensee that demonstrates competency in the applications and use of pesticides, and the laws and regulations concerning pesticides in California. Only qualified applicators can provide supervision (where supervision is required in regulation), and they are authorized to provide training to agricultural employees regarding pesticide handling.

Notably, though, not every individual that applies pesticides in an agricultural setting is required to be licensed, nor does law necessarily require that they be supervised. While DPR regulations require that a qualified applicator be physically present to supervise unlicensed applicators *specifically when directed by the pesticide label*¹, DPR otherwise only requires that employees assigned to handle pesticides are “adequately trained in general pesticide safety and correct pesticide handling procedures before they are allowed to handle pesticides.”²

Examination Bottlenecks. The author and sponsors of this bill, the California Pest Control Management Association, contend that the largest bottleneck in recruiting and retaining entry-level applicators in the structural pest control field is due to exam availability and administrative

¹ 3 CCR Div. 6 § 6406(c)

² Department of Pesticide Regulation. “Pesticide Safety Training for Employees Handling Pesticides – Employer Responsibilities.” September 2018.

timelines in processing licenses. In communication with the Committee, SPCB staff corroborate that, while processing timelines once examinations are passed are generally quick, applicants are indeed waiting long stretches of time to actually book an exam with the vendor, PSI Exams. In the most egregious cases, individuals who receive an approved exam application from the SPCB risk falling outside of the required six-month window to schedule an exam.

As such, the author has put forward this measure to provide a one-time, 60-day provisional period by which a prospective applicator licensee may provide Branch 2 and Branch 3 pest control services under the indirect supervision of a licensed field representative or operator. In order to do so, the unlicensed individual must submit a completed examination application to the SPCB, alongside the fingerprinting and background check that is required of the license application, as well as complete a minimum of 80 hours of documented, in-person training under the direct, on-site supervision of a licensed field representative or operator. The supervising licensee would still need to be immediately available via audio and video communication and have the ability to direct on-site personal, and would be required to maintain proof of completion of the required training. Finally, the bill specifies that the 60-day provisional period shall not overlap or extend the optional 90-day, directly supervised training period under current law.

Prior Related Legislation. AB 307 (Chen), Chapter 82, Statutes of 2023, extended the sunset date for the Structural Fumigation Enforcement Program under the Department of Pesticide Regulation to January 1, 2029.

SB 813 (Roth), Chapter 507, Statutes of 2023, extended the sunset date for the Structural Pest Control Board to January 1, 2028, and enacted various changes based on the SPCB's sunset review process.

AB 1480 (Quirk), Chapter 152, Statutes of 2017, authorized the Director of the DPR to levy a civil penalty against a person who commits fraudulent activity related to the pesticide applicator licensing process.

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT:

This bill is sponsored by the *California Pest Management Association*, who write: “[AB 2477] benefits both pest control businesses and the workforce they rely on. It supports continuity of service and operational efficiency for companies, while allowing employees to remain engaged, build experience, and earn income during the licensing process. In doing so, it helps strengthen workforce development and supports access to stable, good-paying jobs within the industry.”

POLICY ISSUE(S) FOR CONSIDERATION:

Consumer awareness. The provisional license period established by this bill will allow an unlicensed, albeit trained and live scanned, individual to perform Branch 2 and Branch 3 pest control services without the direct oversight of an SPCB licensee. While the mandated training, background check requirements, and limited duration of this provisional period satisfy Committee staff's concerns related to consumer protection, a provisional licensee under this bill would not be discernable by the public from fully licensed applicator.

Other licensed professions under the DCA have similar “provisional” or “trainee” subcategories of licensure with distinct, separate public titles. For example, prospective professional engineering licensees can apply for a specific “engineer-in-training” certification under the

Board of Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists. Similar to the intent of this bill, this “in training” designation means the individual has satisfied background check requirements, received specific training, and is on track toward completing the required professional examinations. “Engineers-in-training” have many of the same freedoms and supervisory requirements respective to their profession as provisional applicators would under this bill.

As such, the author and sponsors may wish to specify a title or specific designation for this prospective license category as the bill moves through the process.

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES:

Supervision requirements. As written, the bill currently defines “direct supervision” and “supervision” as separate degrees of supervision for purposes of the training and provisional licensure provisions, respectfully. However, paragraph (b)(5) of the bill further requires that “all direct supervision complies with applicable direct supervision requirements of the Department of Pesticide Regulation”. This additional reference to DPR requirements is confusing, as the DPR’s standards for “direct” supervision deviate from the definition established under this bill, as well as the author’s intent. Additionally, the SPCB has no authority to regulate requirements set forth by the DPR (and vice versa), so the enforceability of this provision is impractical. As such, the author should strike paragraph (b)(5) from the language.

Application terminology. As drafted, the bill requires a prospective applicator licensee who wants to take advantage of the 60-day provisional period to submit both a complete structural pest control applicator license (paragraph (b)(1)) and to submit an examination application (paragraph (b)(4)) to the SPCB prior to commencement. However, this is practically impossible: a completed structural pest control applicator license *cannot* be submitted without first passing the examination, which is the specific bottleneck this bill seeks to remedy. As such, this bill should strike references to the license application and clarify that only the examination application must be submitted to the SPCB in order to commence the provisional period.

AMENDMENTS:

In order to address implementation concerns raised in the analysis, and in response to technical feedback sent to the Committee from SPCB staff, amend the bill as follows:

On page 2, after line 26:

(2) “Supervision” means either direct supervision or the direction of actions authorized by this section by a licensed operator or field representative who is immediately available *to the unlicensed individual during pesticide application, either by being physically present at the site or through ~~via~~ audio and video communication with access to the customer’s relevant information and the ability to intervene by directing onsite personnel.*

(b) Notwithstanding any other law, an unlicensed individual employed by a registered company who has applied for a structural pest control applicator *examination license* in Branch 2 or Branch 3 may apply pesticides included in Branch 2 or Branch 3 under the supervision of a licensed operator or field representative *for a during a provisional supervision* period of up to 60 days, *commencing upon Live Scan approval pursuant to paragraph (3)*, if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The unlicensed individual has submitted a complete structural pest control applicator *examination license* application to the board, as evidenced by written or electronic confirmation of receipt.

(2) The unlicensed individual has completed a minimum of 80 hours of documented, in-person training *in pesticide application* under the direct supervision of a licensed operator or field representative.

(3) The unlicensed individual has submitted fingerprint identification to, and completed a background investigation with, the board.

~~(4) The unlicensed individual has submitted the applicable examination application to the board.~~

~~(5) All direct supervision complies with applicable direct supervision requirements of the Department of Pesticide Regulation.~~

(c) The supervising licensee shall maintain documentation demonstrating *compliance with completion of the training required by paragraph (2) of* subdivision (b), *including and* proof of *completion of the required training*, applicator *examination license* application submission, *and fingerprint identification to, and completed background investigation with, the board.*

(d) The *authorization period provided by this section* ~~provisional supervision period authorized by this section~~ shall:

(1) Be granted ~~apply~~ only once per individual, ~~per applicator license application, shall~~

(2) Commence upon Live Scan approval pursuant to ~~confirmation of the satisfaction of the conditions described in paragraphs (1) to (4), inclusive, of~~ subdivision (b),

(3) Not be renewed or granted again, including after failure of the examination, submission of a subsequent application, or change in employment.

~~and shall~~ *(4) terminate upon license issuance, application denial, or expiration of the 60-day period, whichever occurs first.*

(e) The *authorization period provided by this section* ~~provisional supervision period authorized by this section~~ shall not overlap with or extend any training or supervision ~~period~~ authorized under Section 8551.5. *An unlicensed individual may begin operating under subdivision (b) prior to completing the 90-day period described in Section 8551.5. However, upon commencement of the authorization under subdivision (b), the unlicensed individual shall no longer be eligible to pursuant to Section 8551.5, and any remaining time under Section 8551.5 is forfeited and shall not be reinstated.*

REGISTERED SUPPORT:

California Pest Management Association (*Sponsor*)

REGISTERED OPPOSITION:

None on file

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