

Date of Hearing: April 14, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AND TOXIC MATERIALS

Damon Connolly, Chair

AB 2477 (Chen) – As Amended April 8, 2026

SUBJECT: Structural pest control

SUMMARY: Authorizes, on and after January 1, 2028, an unlicensed individual employed by a registered structural pest control company who has applied for a structural pest control applicator examination, as specified, to apply specified pesticides under the supervision of a licensed operator or field representative for a period of up to 60 days. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Makes legislative findings and declarations about delays for hiring, examination, and license issuance for structural pest control applicators caused by factors including examination scheduling, application processing, and post examination requirements such as Live Scan fingerprint clearance, all of which may take several weeks to complete.
- 2) Defines "direct supervision" as the direction of actions authorized by this bill by a licensed operator or field representative who shall be physically present on location and immediately available to intervene.
- 3) Defines "supervision" as either direct supervision or the direction of actions authorized by this bill 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 audio and video communication with access to the customer's relevant information and the ability to intervene by directing onsite personnel.
- 4) Authorizes, on and after January 1, 2028, an unlicensed individual employed by a registered structural pest control company who has applied for a structural pest control applicator examination in Branch 2 or Branch 3 to apply pesticides included in Branch 2 or Branch 3 under the supervision of a licensed operator or field representative for a period of up to 60 days, commencing upon Live Scan approval, if all of the following conditions are met:
 - a) The unlicensed individual has submitted a complete structural pest control applicator examination application to the Structural Pest Control Board (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 in pesticide application under the direct supervision of a licensed operator or field representative; and,
 - c) The unlicensed individual has submitted fingerprint identification to, and completed a background investigation with, the SPCB.
- 5) Requires the supervising licensee to maintain documentation demonstrating compliance with this bill, including proof of completion of the required training, applicator examination application submission, and fingerprint identification to, and completed background investigation with, the SPCB.

- 6) Provides that the authorization period provided by this section shall:
 - a) Be granted once per individual;
 - b) Commence upon Live Scan approval;
 - c) Not be renewed or granted again, including after failure of the examination, submission of a subsequent application, or change in employment; and,
 - d) Terminate upon license issuance, application denial, or expiration of the 60-day period, whichever occurs first.
- 7) Prohibits the authorization period provided by this section from overlapping with or extending any training or supervision period authorized under current law (90 days, as specified).
- 8) Authorizes an unlicensed individual to begin operating under the provisions of this bill prior to completing the 90-day period authorized by statute; however, upon commencement of the authorization under this bill, the unlicensed individual shall no longer be eligible to operate pursuant to current statutory authorization and any remaining time is forfeited and shall not be reinstated.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Authorizes the state's pesticide regulatory program and mandates the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) to, among other things, provide for the proper, safe, and efficient use of pesticides essential for the production of food and fiber, for the protection of public health and safety, for the protection of the environment from environmentally harmful pesticides, and to assure agricultural and pest control workers safe working conditions where pesticides are present by prohibiting, regulating, or otherwise ensuring proper stewardship of those pesticides. (Food and Agriculture Code (FAC) § 11401, et seq.)
- 2) Establishes within the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) the SPCB, which is vested with the power to, and is required to, administer structural pest control. Establishes as the intent of the Legislature that the primary mission of the SPCB is consumer protection. (Business and Professions Code (BPC) § 8520)
- 3) Defines "structural 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;
 - 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;
 - c) The making of inspection reports, recommendations, estimates, and bids, whether oral or written, with respect to those infestations or infections; and,

- 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)
- 4) Defines "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)
- 5) 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))
- 6) Establishes that protection of the public shall be the highest priority for the SPCB in exercising its licensing, regulatory, and disciplinary functions. Establishes that whenever the protection of the public is inconsistent with other interests sought to be promoted, the protection of the public shall be paramount. (BPC § 8520.1)
- 7) Provides that it is unlawful for any person to advertise, to engage in, or offer to engage in the business or practice of structural pest control unless he or she is licensed under structural pest control operator law. (BPC § 8550)
- 8) Prohibits, except as provided, an unlicensed individual in the employ of a registered company from applying any pesticides included in Branch 2 or Branch 3. Specifies that an individual may, for 90 days from the date of employment, apply pesticides for the purposes of training under the direct supervision of a licensed field representative or operator employed by the company. Specifies that this direct supervision means in the presence of the licensed field representative or operator at all times. Prohibits the 90-day time period from being extended. (BPC § 8551.5)
- 9) Exempts specific individuals performing structural pest control from SPCB licensure requirements, in specific situations, including, among others, persons engaged only in agricultural pest control work under permit or license by DPR or a county agricultural commissioner (CAC); pest control performed by persons upon property that they own, lease or rent; governmental agencies, state, federal, city, or county officials, and their employees while officially engaged. (BPC § 8555)
- 10) 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))
- 11) 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)

- 12) Requires every company that engages in the practice of structural pest control, as a sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, or other organization or any combination thereof, to be registered with the SPCB. (BPC § 8610)
- 13) Requires the SPCB to designate DPR as its agent to oversee the CAC structural pesticide use regulatory work. Requires the SPCB and DPR to jointly develop a training program specifically relating to the various aspects of structural pest control and train all CACs and other personnel involved in structural pest control investigations and enforcement. (BPC § 8616)
- 14) Provides that the Legislature finds and declares that it is the joint responsibility of the Department of Food and Agriculture, the CAC under the direction and supervision of the director of DPR, and the SPCB to regulate the activities of structural pest control licensees. Provides that the SPCB has responsibility for licensing persons and companies engaged in structural pest control work. Provides that DPR has primary responsibility for enforcing pesticide laws and regulations. (FAC § 5201)
- 15) Authorizes the director of DPR to adopt regulations to carry out the structural pest control provisions of the FAC. Requires the director to consult with the SPCB when developing regulations that pertain to the use of pesticides by structural pest control licensees. (FAC § 15203)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown.

COMMENTS:

Need for this bill: According to the author, "AB 2477 will provide a limited, carefully structured pathway for newly hired pest control employees to perform supervised pest control applications for a narrow provisional period, helping small pest control businesses maintain operations while new employees complete the state licensing process. This bill will ensure that our state's small pest control businesses onboard new workers and maintain service capacity in an efficient manner."

Structural pest control: According to the SPCB, "Structural pest control is the control of household pests (including but not limited to rodents, vermin and insects) and wood-destroying pests and organisms or such other pests which may invade households or structures, including railroad cars, ships, docks, trucks, airplanes, or the contents thereof. The practice of structural pest control includes the engaging in, offering to engage in, advertising for, soliciting, or the performance of any of the following: identification of infestations or infections; the making of an inspection for the purpose of identifying or attempting to identify infestations or infections of household or other structures by such pests or organisms; the making of inspection reports; recommendations, estimates, and bids, whether oral or written, with respect to such infestation or infections; and 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, insecticides, rodenticides, fumigants, or allied chemicals or substances, or mechanical devices

for the purpose of eliminating, exterminating, controlling or preventing infestations or infections of such pests, or organisms."

Structural pest control oversight in California: DPR, which is housed in the California Environmental Protection Agency, is vested with the primary authority to regulate and enforce pesticide laws in California. In this capacity, DPR provides guidance and oversight to counties for planning their local outreach and enforcement programs for pesticide use. DPR is designated under BPC § 8616 as the entity to oversee CAC structural pesticide use regulatory work including inspections, investigations, and related enforcement activities.

The SPCB, which is housed in the Department of Consumer Affairs, administers the licensing of structural pest control applicators, field representatives, structural pest control operators and registered companies; enforces structural fumigation licensing provisions; and, ensures consumer protection relating to structural fumigation.

While the SPCB is the sole licensing authority for commercial structural pest control, BPC § 8555 identifies specific situations in which individuals performing structural pest control are exempt from SPCB licensure requirements. These include certain property owners or employees performing pest control applications on property they own, manage, or are employed by, and governmental agencies and state, federal, city, or county officials. In these statutorily exempt situations, DPR licensing jurisdiction may apply if the pesticide is a restricted use pesticide. DPR licenses qualified applicators for non-structural uses and certain public agency or institutional structural applications of restricted use pesticides.

Both the SPCB and DPR contract with CACs to monitor, at the local level, pesticide use and structural pest control activities under each entity's jurisdiction. CACs conduct local enforcement of pesticide laws and perform inspections and investigations related to pesticide use (including structural applications). CACs also support SPCB through cooperative enforcement agreements.

The SPCB states, "The Structural Pest Control Board's highest priority is to protect and benefit the public by regulating the pest control industry."

Three branches of structural pest control in California: The SPCB categorizes structural pest control licenses into three branches based on the type of work performed:

- Branch 1 (fumigation)- the practice relating to the control of household and wood-destroying pests or organisms by fumigation with poisonous or lethal gases;
- Branch 2 (general pest)- the practice relating to the control of household pests excluding fumigation with poisonous or lethal gases; and,
- Branch 3 (wood destroying organisms)- 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.

Structural pest control licenses: The SPCB administers three types of licenses: structural pest control applicator licenses; structural pest control field representative licenses; and, structural pest control operator licenses. Structural pest control applicators are individuals who are licensed by the SPCB to apply a pesticide, rodenticide, or allied chemicals or substances for the purpose of eliminating, exterminating, controlling, or preventing infestation or infections of pests or organisms included in Branch 2 or Branch 3 on behalf of a registered structural pest control

company. Structural pest control field representatives are individuals who are licensed by the SPCB to secure structural pest control work, identify infestations or infections, make inspections, apply pesticides, and submit bids for or otherwise contract, on behalf of a registered structural pest control company. Structural pest control operators are individuals who are licensed by the SPCB to secure structural pest control work, identify infestations or infections, make inspections, and submit bids for or otherwise contract, on behalf of a registered company. AB 2477 focuses on structural pest control applicators.

Structural pest control applicators: The applicator license is the SPCB's entry level license. As mentioned above, structural pest control applicators are licensed by the SPCB to apply a pesticide, rodenticide, or allied chemicals or substances for the purpose of eliminating, exterminating, controlling, or preventing infestation or infections of pests or organisms included in Branch 2 or Branch 3 on behalf of a registered structural pest control company. Many people begin working in the structural pest control industry as an applicator, although it is not required to hold an applicator license before becoming licensed as a field representative. Structural pest control applicators are prohibited by law from contracting for pest control work or from performing pest control work on their own behalf.

Structural pest control applicator license process: To become a licensed applicator, prospective licensees must apply through the SPCB online licensing system to take the examination, pay a \$60 application fee, and, once approved by the SPCB, schedule and take the applicator examination directly with PSI Exams within six months of submitting their application to the SPCB. The SPCB contracts with PSI Exams, to administer the licensure examination. Through the examination, applicants must demonstrate sufficient knowledge of pesticide equipment, pesticide mixing and formulation, pesticide application procedures, and pesticide label directions.

Once they pass the exam, applicants must complete a Live Scan fingerprinting and background check (Live Scan results can take 2 weeks to 2 months or more to arrive), fill out the applicator license application using the SPCB online licensing system, upload a copy of the completed Live Scan, and submit 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 as soon as their license number is issued, while physical licenses typically arrive in 2 to 4 weeks.

Supervision of unlicensed applicators: Current statute, BPC § 8551.5, prohibits, except as provided, an unlicensed individual employed by a registered structural pest control company from applying any pesticides included in Branch 2 or Branch 3 structural pest control. However, BPC § 8551.5 authorizes an individual to, for 90 days, not to be extended, from the date of employment, apply pesticides for the purposes of training under the direct supervision of a licensed field representative or operator employed by the company. Direct supervision means applying pesticides for the purposes of training in the presence of the licensed field representative or operator at all times.

This bill: This bill authorizes, on and after January 1, 2028, an unlicensed individual employed by a registered company who has applied for a structural pest control applicator examination in Branch 2 or Branch 3 to apply pesticides included in Branch 2 or Branch 3 under the supervision of a licensed operator or field representative for a period of up to 60 days, commencing upon Live Scan approval, if certain conditions are met. This bill defines "supervision" as either direct

supervision or supervision 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 audio and video communication with access to the customer's relevant information and the ability to intervene by directing onsite personnel. The authorization for remote supervision in this bill is a departure from current statutory requirements.

This bill includes additional conditions that must be met in order for an unlicensed individual to be authorized to apply pesticides during the 60-day provisional period authorized by this bill, including that the unlicensed individual has submitted a complete structural pest control applicator examination application to the SPCB, as evidenced by written or electronic confirmation of receipt; 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; and, the unlicensed individual has submitted fingerprint identification to, and completed a background investigation with, the SPCB.

This bill additionally requires the supervising licensee of an unlicensed individual to maintain documentation demonstrating compliance with this bill, including proof of completion of the required training, applicator examination application submission, and fingerprint identification to, and completed background investigation with, the SPCB.

Enforcement: The SPCB explained that currently the SPCB receives verification that an unlicensed individual has submitted a complete structural pest control applicator examination application and has received fingerprint identification clearance through an electronic confirmation system. Per the provisions of this bill, the licensee supervising the unlicensed individual will also be required to maintain documentation demonstrating that 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 and proof that the unlicensed individual has submitted an applicator examination application. Should this bill be signed into law, it is anticipated that during the course of an investigation (such as an on-site visit, or a result of a complaint), CAC or SPCB investigators would be able to determine compliance with the provisions of the bill by reviewing documentation from the unlicensed individual or the supervising licensee, or by contacting the SPCB to confirm the status of the individual. Any violations would then be forwarded to the SPCB's Enforcement Unit for further investigation.

Arguments in support: According to the sponsor of the bill, the California Pest Management Association (CAPMA),

"AB 2477 provides a practical, balanced solution to a challenge facing both workers and California's licensed pest control businesses. Under the current framework, individuals entering the pest management profession can complete training and begin the licensing process, yet there is often a period where they are limited in their ability to fully participate in day-to-day operations while awaiting the completion of that process.

For pest control businesses, particularly small and locally owned companies, this dynamic can create real operational constraints. At the same time, employees who are ready and trained to continue developing their skills are limited in their ability to work and earn income. In practice, the current process can unintentionally hinder both the business and the employee.

AB 2477 addresses this issue by creating a narrow, time-limited pathway that allows individuals who are already progressing through the licensing process to continue gaining practical experience within a structured and supervised environment as they complete the remaining steps toward licensure.

...Importantly, AB 2477 is carefully structured. It applies only to individuals who have completed training, initiated the licensing process, and met background check requirements. It is limited in duration and operates fully within the existing regulatory framework overseen by the Structural Pest Control Board.

...At its core, this bill is about aligning policy with real-world conditions. It recognizes that the pathway into a licensed profession should support both strong protections and meaningful opportunity for workers, while ensuring that pest control businesses can continue to serve their communities effectively."

Arguments in opposition: None received.

Related legislation:

- 1) AB 307 (Chen, Chapter 82, Statutes of 2023). Extended the sunset on the Structural Fumigation Enforcement Program (SFEP) fumigation in Los Angeles, Orange, and Santa Clara Counties from January 1, 2024, to January 1, 2029. This bill was the most recent of many over the previous 30 years that extended and updated the SFEP.
- 2) SB 813 (Roth, Chapter 507, Statutes of 2023). extended the sunset date for the SPCB to January 1, 2028, and enacted various changes based on the SPCB's sunset review process.
- 3) 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.
- 4) AB 1053 (Tucker, Chapter 393, Statutes of 1993). Established the SFEP, including establishing a two-year pilot project in Los Angeles County to perform structural fumigation inspections and enforcement activities; requiring DPR to contract with Los Angeles County for this purpose; establishing a \$5 fee on each fumigation in the county to fund enforcement activities; and, authorizing up to five percent of the revenue to be used for DPR or CAC administrative expenses.

Double referral: This bill was double referred to the Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee and the Assembly Business and Professions Committee, where it passed on a 19 – 0 vote on April 7, 2026.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Pest Management Association

Opposition

None on file.

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