

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 2477 (Chen)

As Amended June 30, 2026

Majority vote

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.

Senate Amendments

- 1) Establish specific content that must be included in the required training for prospective unlicensed applicators.
- 2) Require the registered company employing the individual, before the unlicensed individual performs work, to notify the board and the county agricultural commissioner in each county in which the individual will perform work.
- 3) Require the registered company employing the unlicensed individual, and the supervising licensee, to maintain documentation related to training for at least three years.
- 4) Make other technical and conforming changes.

COMMENTS

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:

- 1) *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.
- 2) *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.
- 3) *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 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.

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

¹ 3 CCR Div. 6 § 6406(c)

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

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

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."

Arguments in Opposition

There is no opposition on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations:

- 1) Unknown costs, likely ranging from the low tens of thousands to low hundreds of thousands of dollars, for the Structural Pest Control Board to implement the provisional supervision allowance. Actual costs will depend on applicant volume, the staff time required to review Live Scan documentation, and whether regulations or formal guidance are necessary to clarify operational ambiguities.
- 2) Assuming roughly 645 provisional supervision applications annually, the Board estimates total costs of \$32,000 in Fiscal Year 2026-27 and \$27,000 ongoing annually (Structural Pest Control Fund). This estimate accounts for the workload to promulgate regulations, though initial costs could increase if the Board needs to convene an advisory committee during the rulemaking process. While the Board expects these costs to be absorbable, staff notes the bill lacks a cost recovery mechanism to offset the administrative workload of reviewing provisional supervision applications.
- 3) The Office of Information Services estimates IT costs of \$50,000 to make several BreEZe system updates to support the provisional supervision process.

VOTES:

ASM BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS: 19-0-0

YES: Berman, Johnson, Addis, Ahrens, Alanis, Bains, Aguiar-Curry, Caloza, Chen, Elhawary, Hadwick, Haney, Hart, Irwin, Jackson, Lowenthal, Macedo, Nguyen, Pellerin

ASM ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AND TOXIC MATERIALS: 7-0-0

YES: Connolly, Ellis, Bauer-Kahan, Castillo, Lee, McKinnor, Papan

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 14-0-1

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

ABS, ABST OR NV: Muratsuchi

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 66-0-14

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Ward, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Arambula, Bonta, Chen, Flora, Gallagher, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Papan, Petrie-Norris, Celeste Rodriguez, Valencia, Wallis, Wicks

UPDATED

VERSION: June 30, 2026

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FN: 0003821