

THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 2477
Author: Chen (R)
Amended: 8/21/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE BUS., PROF. & ECON. DEV. COMMITTEE: 11-0, 6/15/26
AYES: Wahab, Choi, Archuleta, Arreguín, Caballero, Grayson, Menjivar, Niello,
Smallwood-Cuevas, Strickland, Umberg

SENATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE: 7-0, 6/24/26
AYES: Blakespear, Valladares, Allen, Dahle, Gonzalez, Hurtado, Menjivar

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26
AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 66-0, 5/7/26 (Consent) - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Structural pest control

SOURCE: California Pest Management Association

DIGEST: This bill allows an unlicensed individual, who meets specified criteria, and is employed by a registered company to apply pesticides outdoors under the supervision of a licensed operator or field representative for a period of 60 days if certain conditions are met including specified training beginning January 1, 2028.

Senate Floor Amendments of 8/21/26 remove the requirement for a non-licensed person authorized to provide outdoor pesticides under supervision to have a complete livescan and instead have approval from the Board; delete the requirement for a non-licensed person to complete four hours of continuing education and instead authorize the Board to determine specific coursework topics that may be relevant to training; delete the requirement for a registered company to notify the Board and the agricultural commissioner prior to an unlicensed person

providing outdoor application services; and, make other technical updates for clarity.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Structural Pest Control Board (Board) under the jurisdiction of the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) to license and regulate structural pest control operators, applicators, and field representatives, as specified. (Business and Professions Code (BPC) § 8520 et. seq.)
- 2) Defines “structural pest control” and “pest control” to mean 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 the identification of infestations or infections; making an inspection for purpose of identifying or attempting to identify infestations or infections of household or other structures by pests or organisms; making inspection reports, recommendations, estimates, and bids, whether oral or written, with respect to those infestations or infections; and, making contracts, or submitting bids for the performance of any work including structural repairs or replacements, or 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)
- 3) Defines a “registered company” as any sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, or other organization or any combination thereof that is registered with the Board to engage in the practice of structural pest control which may submit bids or otherwise contract for pest control work. A registered company may employ licensed field representatives and licensed operators to identify infestations or infections, make inspections, and represent the company in the securing of pest control work. A registered company may hire or employ individuals who are not licensed under this chapter to perform work on contracts covering Branch 1, 2, or 3, or any combination of branches, only after an operator or field representative has fully completed the negotiation or signing of the contract covering a given job. (BPC § 8506.1(a)(b))

- 4) Permits fumigation to only be performed under the direct and personal supervision of an individual who is licensed by the Board as an operator or field representative in Branch 1, as specified. (BPC §§ 8505.2 and 8505.3)

This bill:

- 1) Defines the following:
 - a) “direct supervision” to mean the direction of actions authorized by this bill by a licensed operator or field representative who is physically present on location and immediately available to intervene.
 - b) “supervision” to mean either direct supervision or the direction of actions 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.
 - c) “outdoor applications” to mean exterior areas, including exterior structural surfaces, exterior perimeters, landscape areas, hardscape areas, and other outdoor areas associated with a structure, but does not include the interior of any structure, as specified.
- 2) Allows 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 outdoors under supervision of a licensed operator or field representative for a period of up to 60 days if the unlicensed individual has submitted a complete structural pest control applicator examination and completed specified training.
- 3) Requires the training in (2) above to at a minimum be relevant to Branch 2 and Branch 3 structural pest control work and include sufficient instruction to ensure safe and competent pesticide application, as specified.
- 4) Requires the training to include the following: specified information related to each pesticide or chemically similar group; a minimum of 80 hours of documented in-person training under direct supervision; the training must be in a manner the employee can understand and in a format or combination of formats; and provided by or under the direction of a licensed operator, licensed

field representative, registered company, or their designee.

- 5) Authorizes the Board to adopt regulations to further specify the training components, which must focus on pesticide handling, pesticide application, pesticide safety, label compliance, and the applicable laws and regulations.
- 6) Sets the parameters of the authorization period for an unlicensed individual to apply pesticides outdoor, as specified.
- 7) Prohibits the authorization provided under this bill from overlapping with the current 90-day supervised training, as specified.
- 8) States that the provisions of this bill do not expand or limit any laws authorizing or prohibiting an unlicensed individual from applying a pesticide classified as a restricted use pesticide, as specified.
- 9) Requires the supervising licensee and registered company to maintain documentation of compliance as specified and requires the documentation to be retained by the registered company and supervising licensee for not less than three years and make the information available to the Board, the Department of Pesticide Regulation, the applicant, or the county agricultural commissioner upon request.
- 10) Makes the provisions of this bill effective on January 1, 2028.
- 11) Makes findings and declarations related to reducing employment barriers in California's regulated pest control industry.

Background.

Structural Pest Control Board (Board). The Board issues three types of licenses for three different practice areas (branches) of pest control which include Applicator, Field Representative, and Operator. The three branches include fumigation, general pest, and termite (wood-destroying pests and organisms). Each branch covers a distinct area of pest control.

The branch types are as follows:

- Branch 1 Fumigation – the control of household and wood-destroying pests or organisms by fumigation with poisonous or lethal gases.

- Branch 2 General Pest – the control of household pests, excluding fumigation with poisonous or lethal gases.
- Branch 3 Termite –the control of wood-destroying pests or organisms using insecticides, or structural repairs and corrections, excluding fumigation with poisonous or lethal gases.

The license types are as follows:

- Applicator - An entry-level license category issued in Branch 2 and 3 only. An Applicator is an individual licensed by the Board 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.

The provisions of this bill are applicable only to those individuals who apply for an applicator license.

An applicator licensee applicant does not need to meet education requirements or complete specific on-the-job training prior to applying for licensure. The process for an applicator license is as follows: complete an examination application with Board. Once approved to take the examination, the Board will provide the examination authorization for registration purposes, and a candidate handbook. The applicant is required to schedule the examination via a PSI Test Center. Once the individual passes the examination, they then apply to the Board for their license. This bill is applicable only to those individuals seeking the applicator license. An applicator license is not granted unless the applicant is employed by a

registered pest control company. An individual does not acquire an applicator license prior to employment.

Current law does allow an unlicensed individual who is employed by a registered pest control company to apply any pesticides in Branch 2 or 3; except, current law permits an individual under the direct supervision of a licensed field representative or operator to apply pesticides for the purposes of training for up to 90 days from the start date of their employment and the 90-day timeframe may not be extended. While many employers and prospective applicators take advantage of this 90-day period for purposes of training, it is not a requirement.

The author and sponsors note that the current licensing structure for applicator licenses is challenging from an employer standpoint, as the timeframe from hiring the employee to actual licensing takes a significant amount of time. This gap reportedly exceeds the necessary employment training timeframes. Although the Board processes the initial testing application in around two weeks, test center schedules and Live scan results can delay the final licensure application and approvals into longer time periods, anecdotally up to two months or more. As a result, this bill seeks to create a pathway for individuals who are in the applicator licensure process to provide Branch 2 and 3 services under indirect supervision, although they do not have a license (only after they have applied for a license). Indirect supervision, for purposes of this bill, means a supervisor is physically present or available via audio or video communication.

Beginning January 1, 2028, to be eligible for this limited unlicensed applicator opportunity, the individual must have first applied to the Board for examination eligibility, and the unlicensed individual must have completed 80 hours of supervised training in pesticide application and pesticides generally. The training must be relevant to Branch 2 and Branch 3 structural pest control work. The training must include specific information related to each pesticide or chemically similar group of pesticides. Although this bill establishes specific parameters for the training requirements, the Board is also authorized to adopt regulations to further specify training components and competencies.

The ability for an unlicensed person (with a pending application) to provide Branch 2 or Branch 3 outdoor only pesticide applicator work is limited to one-time only and cannot be renewed or granted again and must terminate once the license has been issued, denied, failed examination or expiration of 60-days, whichever occurs first.

For all other applicator license applicants, they are not required to complete any training for licensure purposes, although they likely receive on-the-job training as determined through each employer. Although this bill does not specify the liability, it is likely that any disciplinary issues would fall to the licensed pest control operators or businesses who employ the unlicensed individual. This bill narrows this authorization for unlicensed applicator work to 60 days, and it is not renewable.

Examinations. The Board does not maintain reciprocal agreements with other states and therefore does not accept a national exam. The Board does not offer exams in language other than English because the applicant and licensee must be able to read and understand pesticide labels and comply with California labeling laws. For each license type, applicants must successfully pass written examination with a score of 70% or better. The Board develops the licensing examinations; however, the Board does not administer the examinations.

The author and sponsor contend that this bill is necessary to help alleviate examination and licensing delays for those individuals who seek an applicator license. The author and sponsor note that issues with scheduling the examination, application processing delays, and background check and livescan requirements can delay an applicant's time to get a license. They note that for small companies it is problematic as multiple employees must be assigned to a single job, even when the work is routine; newly hired workers cannot perform independent work while awaiting license approval; small businesses experience reduced productivity and increased labor costs. These delays can create unnecessary workforce barriers for entry-level workers while imposing disproportionate operational burdens on small pest control businesses.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: Yes

According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, the bill will result in 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. The Office of Information Services estimates IT costs of \$50,000 to make several BreEZe system updates to support the provisional supervision process.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/21/26)

California Pest Management Association (source)

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/21/26)

None received

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: The California Pest Management Association writes in support and notes, “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.”

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 66-0, 5/7/26

AYES: 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

NO VOTE RECORDED: Arambula, Bonta, Chen, Flora, Gallagher, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Papan, Petrie-Norris, Celeste Rodriguez, Valencia, Wallis, Wicks

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