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Acting Director

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Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) License and Certificate Holders (Licensees) and Continuing Education (CE) Sponsors:

As we enter this New Year and new renewal cycle, DPR would like to inform licensees and CE course sponsors about recent changes to the law and remind licensees of the importance of professional pest control stewardship and DPR licensee responsibilities.

In July 2017, Governor Brown signed Assembly Bill 1480. This bill went into effect on January 1, 2018 and made changes to sections 11792 and 12994.4 of the California Food and Agricultural Code. The intent of the bill was to ensure the integrity of DPR's pesticide licensing and certification program and uphold the professional responsibilities of its licensees. In summary, the bill gave the Director of DPR the ability to levy a civil penalty against persons that: make any false or fraudulent statement, record, report; use any fraud or misrepresentation in connection with meeting any license requirement; or cheat on or subvert a licensing examination.

In 2018, DPR took multiple enforcement actions pursuant to the new law for violations that compromised the integrity of DPR's licensing and certification program. Specifically, DPR has taken actions against the following entities:

- An individual licensee who submitted falsified CE records as part of their renewal application.
- A company that offered exam prep courses to prospective DPR licensees using unlawful reproductions of DPR licensing examination questions.
- A CE course sponsor who let attendees out after only providing 40% of the CE hours approved by DPR and submitted false reports to DPR indicating attendees received instruction for the total amount of hours approved.
- In addition, a DPR audit of a CE course found that the course did not fulfill the CE time and content that DPR approved. This resulted in approximately 300 licensees submitting "certificates of completion" documenting more course hours completed than they had attended. DPR only gave CE credit for the time attended.

DPR's mechanism for ensuring pesticide use competency is by requiring licensees to take an initial exam to demonstrate the required knowledge to use pesticides safely and effectively. Once licensed or certified, licensees are required to obtain CE hours in pesticide laws and regulations, safe and effective pesticide use, and pest management information. CE is required for license or certificate renewal and is in lieu of taking recertification examinations.

DPR would like to remind you that we only give CE credit for the time individuals actually attend and receive instruction during a CE course. Specifically, licensees earn one hour of CE for each hour of attendance in a DPR-approved CE course. CE course sponsors submit time-specific course agendas to DPR for evaluation and approval. It is expected and required that CE course sponsors teach the information for the time they specified and the information is at a level and detail appropriate for a pest control professional. **Please note, if a CE course is dismissed significantly early, you cannot claim the hours that the course was advertised for, you may only claim the actual hours you attended and completed.** An attempt to claim CE hours beyond the time that you attended could result in civil penalties or an enforcement action.

DPR asks for your cooperation in upholding the professional stewardship of all DPR license and certificate holders and requests that you notify DPR of any acts that undermine the integrity of DPR's licensing and certification program. If you have experienced an issue that might be considered false or fraudulent in connection with meeting any license requirement, you should notify DPR immediately. DPR also attends CE courses as part of our audit responsibility to ensure that the hours approved are provided and that content is consistent to what we reviewed and approved.

Going forward, DPR will continue to take action against licensees, course sponsors, or any others that falsify or subvert licensing and CE requirements. DPR appreciates working with you to maintain the professional stewardship and integrity of a California licensed and certified pest control professional.

If you have any questions or need further assistance, please feel free to contact Ms. Laurie Brajkovich, Environmental Program Manager, by phone 916-445-9903 or e-mail <Laurie.Brajkovich@cdpr.ca.gov>.

Sincerely,



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cc: Ms. Laurie Brajkovich, Environmental Program Manager, Pest Management and Licensing Branch
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