

## Pesticide Applicator Trainings

If you have a pesticide applicator license expiring April 2018 — either private or commercial, or you need to get a new license — classes begin soon.

### Commercial/ Noncommercial Applicators

Commercial/noncommercial pesticide applicators are professionals who apply restricted-use pesticides for hire or compensation. Anyone who applies pesticides to the property of another person, either restricted- or general-use products, for control of pests in lawns, landscapes, buildings or homes must also have a commercial pesticide applicators license. Public employees (those employed by a town, county, state) applying mosquito control pesticides whether restricted or general use, must also hold a commercial or noncommercial certification.

Commercial/noncommercial applicators have four options to recertify or get a new license. Crop Production Clinics were held in January.

**Traditional training classes** — visit <http://pested.unl.edu/commercial> for a statewide list of dates, locations, registration information and categories. Trainings at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln will be held:

- Tuesday, Feb. 6 at 9 a.m. (Recertification)
- Thursday, Feb. 8 at 8:30 a.m. (Initial)

- Thursday, Feb. 22 at 9 a.m. (Recertification)
- Tuesday, Feb. 27 at 8:30 a.m. (Initial)
- Thursday, Mar. 29 at 9 a.m. (Recertification)
- Thursday, April 12 at 8:30 a.m. (Initial)

Cost is \$80 per participant if you pre-register; \$90 per participant at the door. It is highly recommended you obtain and review the written study materials prior to attending. This will greatly improve your chances of passing the written examination. Study materials for all commercial categories must be purchased online at <http://pested.unl.edu> (click on “Classes & Study Materials”).

**Testing-only option** — Take a written closed-book exam given by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. Visit [www.nda.nebraska.gov/pesticide/applicator\\_testing.html](http://www.nda.nebraska.gov/pesticide/applicator_testing.html) for a statewide list of dates, times and locations. Free.

**Pearson VUE testing** — Take a computer-based test provided by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. No training is given with this option; testing only. Not all categories are offered, so visit [www.nda.nebraska.gov/pesticide/pearson\\_vue\\_testing.html](http://www.nda.nebraska.gov/pesticide/pearson_vue_testing.html) for categories, dates, locations and registration. Cost is \$55 per exam. (Multiple categories are each charged the full fee.)

### Private Applicators

Private pesticide applicators are farmers or producers raising

an agricultural commodity on land they own or rent. Or an employee making pesticide applications on their employer’s farm. Private applicators have five ways to recertify or get a new license. Crop Production Clinics were held in January.

**Traditional training classes** — visit <http://pested.unl.edu> and click on “Classes and Study Materials,” then “Private Training Schedule” for dates and locations. Cost is \$40 per participant collected at the door. No pre-registration required.

2018 trainings at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln will be held:

- Tuesday, Feb. 13, 9:30 a.m.
- Monday, March 12, 6 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 13, 9:30 a.m.

**Computer-based self-study** — Purchase a self-study disc (CD-ROM). Complete the modules, quizzes and final test. Order a disc online at <https://marketplace.unl.edu/pested/private-pesticide-certification>. Cost is \$60 per disc.

**Self-study manual** — Purchase a self-study manual from your local Nebraska Extension office. Answer the questions in the back of the book and return the test to the Extension office. Extension staff will check your answers. Cost is \$60 per manual.

**Testing-only option** — Take a written, closed-book exam given by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. Contact 402-471-2351.

## Weekly “Successful Farmer Series” Runs Through Feb. 9



The third annual “Successful Farmer Series,” is being held **weekly** in January and ending Feb. 9 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Multiple sessions and topics allow you to pick the topics most relevant to you and your operation. All sessions will be 9–11:30 a.m. Scheduled topics are:

- Friday, Jan. 26 — Corn
- Friday, Feb. 2 — Wheat and Equipment
- Friday, Feb. 9 — Soybeans

Each topic will feature two to three speakers from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. We will also invite other experts to attend and address more specific questions or interact with

attendees during the breaks. This is also a great opportunity to visit with other producers in the area.

The cost is \$5 per session. Refreshments will be provided. Please register at least two days before the workshops by contacting Karen Wedding at [kwedding2@unl.edu](mailto:kwedding2@unl.edu) or 402-441-7180, or going to <https://lancaster.unl.edu/ag>. Pay at the door, check or cash. Debit/credit card payment available for an additional fee.

The series will be livestreamed at [www.youtube.com/UNLExtensionLanCo](http://www.youtube.com/UNLExtensionLanCo). CEU credits will be available for certified crop advisors.

## How Does Winter Weather Affect Private Wastewater and Water Systems?

Meghan Sittler  
Extension Educator

In Nebraska, extreme winter temperatures can come on quickly and hang around for extended periods. Those extended periods of cold can be hard on things, but what impact do they have on your wastewater system? Can they affect your well and your water system? What can you do to limit any impact?

### Septic Tanks

A common misconception is that the bacteria in a septic tank produce heat as they work to digest the waste within your wastewater system. The truth is the digestion process does not produce heat and once temperatures in a tank reach approximately 39°F, almost all of the bacteria working in the tank comes to a halt. Once the bacteria stop working, the wastewater is not treated properly. So it is very important to keep your tank working and to prevent water within the tank from freezing.

Normal winter conditions usually do not pose a problem for the tank because the soil and groundcover, such as grass,



helps to serve as a natural insulator. Some newer septic tanks are installed with a layer of styrofoam-like or other similar insulation on the lid of the tank. Natural or added insulation may not be enough to protect the system when “normal” turns to “extreme.”

Extreme winter temperatures are of the most concern to septic systems when there is not snow on the ground. Snow cover can serve as a natural insulator protecting the tank and other system components from direct exposure to those extreme temperatures. However, with or without snow cover, once

those very cold temperatures stick around, the following tips can help prevent your tank from becoming an expensive igloo:

Use warm water (hot is even better) throughout the day and the week. For example, run the dishwasher in the morning and then do a load of laundry in the evening. Baths or showers also help to introduce warm water to the system. As always, spread the use out so as not to overload your system. And never run water constantly.

Do not compact the soil over your drainfield. Driving over your drainfield or doing other activities that can compact

the soil should never be done. However, these type of activities in the winter can force frozen soils into the drainfield. Those soils can cause the system to “backup” or the drainfield to become broken or clogged.

If you are traveling for the holidays or for a winter vacation, ask a friend to stop in daily to run a load of laundry or dishes. If you migrate south for the winter months or have a seasonal residence, you may want to consider hiring a certified professional to install a tank heater or add insulation around the tank.

Next fall, consider spreading a thick layer of mulch (8–12 inches) over the tank and other system components to help protect the system from periods of extreme cold.

### Lagoons

Extreme cold can also impact lagoon function. Water temperature in lagoons can drop as the temperature plummets. As water temperature drops, so does the activity of the bacteria treating the wastewater.

However, many of the same “in home” practices that help maintain septic tanks in freezing temperatures also apply to lagoons. Use hot water during

the day to introduce hot or warm water into the lagoon. Do not allow water to run constantly as this can overload the lagoon.

It is also critical going into winter that you have fixed any leaks within the home to prevent freezing water within the pipes leading to your lagoon. It is also very important you have done regular maintenance throughout the year to make sure your lagoon is functioning well year round.

### Water Wells

A water well is generally less susceptible to periods of extreme cold. The well pump is most at risk during extreme cold temperatures. If your well pump is within an aboveground well house, make sure the house is insulated.

The other key to protect your water system is to close the shutoff valve for outdoor hydrants to prevent the water from freezing within the hydrant and distribution pipes. This can cause pipes to rupture or create other issues in your system. And as always, disconnect hoses from hydrants, especially those attached to your home’s water system.