



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO Department of Agriculture/Measurement Standards

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MAINTENANCE GARDENER PESTICIDE USE LEGAL?

San Luis Obispo, CA – Now is a good time to get your yard in order for summertime outdoor parties. Have you hired a Maintenance Gardener to help control pests such as insects, gophers, weeds, snails and plant diseases? Did you know that Maintenance Gardeners who apply pesticides to control yard pests are required to be registered and licensed to apply pesticides?

Pesticides are defined as any substance used to control pests including weeds and gophers. Some examples of common home-use pesticide products are Roundup®, Gopher-Getter®, Trimec® and malathion. When these and other pesticide products are used as a part of a gardening service the Maintenance Gardener is required to be registered with the County Agricultural Commissioner's Office and licensed with the California Department of Pesticide Regulation.

The County Agricultural Commissioner's Office inspects pesticide applications and enforces legal use. "Unlicensed use of pesticides by Maintenance Gardeners is widespread and typically involves other pesticide use violations. Maintenance Gardeners are either not aware of the pesticide licensing requirements or have chosen not to become licensed." according to Janice Campbell, Deputy Agricultural Commissioner.

County Agricultural Commissioner Office Pesticide Use Enforcement Inspectors are targeting inspections in urban areas. If caught applying pesticides, unlicensed Maintenance Gardeners may be fined a minimum of \$250 dollars.

If you want your Maintenance Gardener to apply pesticides, check to make sure they are properly licensed. Campbell also encourages homeowners to consider alternatives to using pesticides for control of garden pests.

Call the San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture at (805) 781-5910 to find out if your Maintenance Gardener is registered and licensed to apply pesticides.

For more information please check the following websites:
County Agricultural Commissioner's Office: <http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/aqcomm.htm>
California Dept. of Pesticide Regulation: <http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/>

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