

MINUTES OF THE
IPM CERTIFICATION PROGRAM COMMITTEE
MEETING OF THE
STRUCTURAL PEST CONTROL BOARD
April 23, 2012

The meeting was held on Monday, April 23, 2012, at Structural Pest Control Board, 2005 Evergreen Street, Pyramid Lake Conference Room, Sacramento, California, commencing at 2:00 P.M. with the following members present:

Darren Van Steenwyk, Chairperson
Dave Tamayo
Caroline Cox
Luis Agurto Jr.

Board staff present:

Bill Douglas, Interim Executive Officer
Susan Saylor, Assistant Executive Officer

OPEN DISCUSSION REGARDING IPM CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS / BOARD RECOMMENDATION

Mr. Van Steenwyk stated that the Committee made the following findings:

- Legitimate IPM certification programs have the potential of helping customers obtain IPM services without having beyond a lay person's knowledge of IPM.
- Current IPM certifications known to the committee and available in California (EcoWise, GreenPro, and GreenShield) appear to have the characteristics of a legitimate program that can benefit consumers.
- To date, no complaints of improper IPM certification claims have been received by the Board.
- The Board currently has a definition of IPM in regulation that can serve as the basis for enforcement for false or misleading claims regarding the offer or provision of IPM services.
- The Board does not currently have a definition of "certification", so its ability to pursue enforcement against false or misleading claims of certification is likely to be limited.

- Claims of IPM certification made by licensees have the potential to be misleading to consumers if the certification is not backed by programmatic requirements for the licensee, that a consumer would reasonably expect to be associated with the words “IPM” and “certified”.
- IPM certification in structural pest control is new and not yet widely recognized by consumers. It is in the interest of consumers to have information regarding the potential benefits of IPM and IPM certification, what to look for in an IPM certification program, and how to obtain bona fide certified IPM services.

Mr. Van Steenwyk stated that the Committee makes the following recommendations to the Board:

- Staff should work with stakeholders to develop and promote a fact sheet that provides guidance to consumers regarding the potential benefits of IPM and IPM certification, what to look for in an IPM certification, and how to obtain bona fide certified IPM services.
- Staff should monitor IPM certification claims, and report to the Board annually on the extent to which complaints are received regarding misuse of IPM certification claims.
- Given the lack of complaints regarding IPM certification claims, the resources required to amend regulations, and the desirability of encouraging beneficial innovation in the early stages of this field’s development, do not establish a regulatory definition of “IPM certification” or “certification” at this time.
- In recognition that IPM certification programs may grow substantially, revisit this issue in approximately 3 years, or earlier if circumstances warrant.

Mr. Tamayo moved and Mr. Agurto seconded to approve to present these recommendations and findings to the Board. Passed by majority.
(AYES: Mr. Tamayo, Mr. Agurto, Mr. Van Steenwyk; NOES: Ms. Cox)

Ms. Cox stated that in most respects, she supports the recommendations of the committee; however, in one respect she believes that the recommendation to not establish a regulatory definition of “IPM certification” or “certification” at this time is not in the best interest of either the Board or Californians who contract for pest control services. She added that she believes that the Board should begin to define “IPM certification” as soon as possible and that waiting until complaints have been received puts consumers in an ambiguous position.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:28.

Darren Van Steenwyk, Chairperson

William Douglas, Interim Registrar

DATE