

AGRICULTURE / WEIGHTS & MEASURES



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

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SUBJECT: Restrictions on Neonicotinoid Uses in Non-Agriculture Outdoor Settings
Effective January 1, 2025

This letter announces a revision to Food and Agricultural Code (FAC) section 12838 by Assembly Bill (AB) 363 (Chapter 836, Statutes of 2023). Effective January 1, 2025, **neonicotinoid pesticide products used for non-agricultural uses on outdoor ornamental plants, trees, or turf can only be sold by licensed dealers and applied by California certified commercial applicators.**

Neonicotinoid pesticides are defined as pesticides containing acetamiprid, clothianidin, dinotefuran, imidacloprid, thiamethoxam, or any other chemical designated by the department as belonging to the neonicotinoid class of chemicals.

A California certified commercial applicator is one who has a valid Qualified Applicator License (QAL), Qualified Applicator Certificate (QAC) except subcategory Q (Maintenance Gardener Pest Control), Structural Pest Control Operator or Field Representative license, or Vector Control Technician. **Neonicotinoids used in non-agricultural settings cannot be applied by employees unless properly certified**, even if under the supervision of a certified commercial applicator.

Non-agricultural use sites include home use, industrial or institutional use, structural use, and vector control use. Examples of outdoor, non-agricultural use sites that would fall under these restrictions include:

- Outdoor applications to ornamental nursery stock at a retail nursery.
- Outdoor applications to ornamental plants in a non-agricultural use setting, such as landscaping around homes and other residences, schools, libraries, airports, and businesses.
- Outdoor applications to all trees in non-agricultural use settings, including “nonproduction” fruit and nut trees around homes and residences.
- Outdoor applications to turf in non-agricultural use settings.

Pesticide use on parks or recreation areas, greenbelts, golf courses, cemeteries and along rights-of way are considered “Agricultural use” and are unaffected by this change.

To dispose of existing neonicotinoid products appropriately, please contact your local hazardous waste disposal program.

If you have questions on this amended regulation, please contact our office at (650) 363-4700.