



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

For immediate release: July 21, 2008 (08-22)
Contact: Mike Louisell (360) 902-1813

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, Washington 98504-2560
Visit our Web site at: agr.wa.gov

Agriculture Department issues fines for pesticide violations

OLYMPIA – During the second quarter of 2008, the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) issued fines totaling \$4,550 and imposed license suspensions for violations of state pesticide laws and rules. Fines ranged from \$100 to \$4,000 for incidents that involved herbicide drift that damaged crops, creating fraudulent records, making false or misleading statements during an investigation, and not properly maintaining a pesticide storage area.

WSDA completed investigations in Benton, Grant, Pierce and Whatcom counties. The agency issued fines or license suspensions in the following cases:

Blue Sky Landscape Services, Inc., Puyallup. WSDA alleged that pesticide application records were not readily available for inspection and records that were available were missing required information. Personal protective equipment was not properly maintained and the company's chemical storage area needed better housekeeping. WSDA also alleged that certain pesticides had been applied at higher rates than allowed by the label. The issues were resolved when Blue Sky Landscape Services agreed to pay \$4,000 and accept a two-day license suspension.

Randy Ferguson, Ferguson Flying Service, Inc., Quincy, was fined \$450 and his commercial applicator license was suspended for seven days. While applying an herbicide to a wheat field in May 2007, the spray drifted off-target and damaged crops and a nearby residential landscape.

Patrick Hobart, Blaine, had his commercial operator license suspended for 30 days. In June 2007, while working for Paratex Pest Control, Seattle, Hobart falsified records to make it appear as though he had treated a house in Bellingham for termites. WSDA sampled the site not long after Hobart claimed to have treated it, but no chemical residues from the treatment were detected. Hobart also made false statements to WSDA investigators, failed to issue a proper wood-destroying organism report, and maintained inadequate pesticide application records.

Senske Lawn and Tree Care, Kennewick. WSDA alleged that a pesticide application record from a roadside application made in October 2007 was in error. The matter was resolved when Senske Lawn and Tree Care agreed to pay \$100.

To file a complaint involving the misuse of a pesticide, or to find out if a pesticide applicator or structural pest inspector is licensed, call WSDA at (877) 301-4555.

###