Structural Pest Division
Georgia Department of Agriculture

Compliance Fact Sheet
Control and Removal of Honey Bees from Structures

This fact sheet is for honey bee removal operators and technicians. It provides guidance on how to comply with Rule 620-9 Control and Removal of Honey Bees from Structures in the *Rules of the Georgia Structural Pest Control Act*

Summary of Requirements for HBR Operators

Licensing & Certification

- Certified in Honey Bee Control & Removal which includes an approved pre-examination training, experience, and passing a state certification examination.
- Hold a structural pest control company license in the category of HBR and provide verification of minimum liability insurance and renew as required, or work for a company licensed in HBR.
- Maintain certification by meeting the recertification training requirement and submitting renewal fees as required.

Operating

- Services can be advertised under the licensed company name only.
- Service vehicles must have the complete licensed name on the vehicle with a minimum of 2 inches lettering.
- Each service must meet the minimum standards for control and removal.
- The service must be sold and provided by a certified honey bee removal operator or someone under their direct supervision.
- The use of any pesticide for the control of honey bees is prohibited unless the operator holds a household pest control license.

Recordkeeping

- A contract must be issued for each service.
- The contract must include the scope of work and type of removal service.
- The contract must be issued in accordance with rule of the Federal Trade Commission including disclosure of the 3-day right of cancellation.

Training

- Pre-examination training requirement includes 8 hours of training approved by the SPCC and provided by an approved trainer. The training includes the following areas:
    - State and Federal laws and regulations on Honey Bee Control.
    - Honey bee identification and types of live honey bee removals (cut-out, trap-out, and swarm removal) including basic removal techniques.
    - Determining if there is an established honey bee colony, and how to locate a colony living inside of a structure.
    - Proper cut-out removal techniques including basic construction knowledge, recommended tools, finding and caging the queen, preventing future infestations, saving comb and hiving the bees.
    - Trap-out techniques and negative consequences of leaving honeycomb, honey pollen and brood inside a structure.

    - Eradication vs. Relocation including common insecticides/pesticides applied to honey bees by homeowners and PCOs.
    - Potential safety and health hazards
- Experience participating in a minimum of 3 honey bee removal jobs.
- Recertification requirement – HBR operators must complete 5 hours of approved training such as a workshop, seminar, short course, or training program that cover new information and subject matter necessary to ensure continued competence.

HBR FAQs

What are the fees and other requirements for a company operating in HBR?

The cost for a company license is $100 with a $70 required UGA Entomology Research fee. These fees are collected by GDA and transferred to the UGA Entomology Department to fund Entomology Research. All licensees are required to pay these fees every 2 years alongside the license renewal.

A company operating in HBR must designate at least one HBR certified operator. Every 5 years, an HBR operator must meet the recertification training requirements to recertify.

A company already licensed in other pest control operations will require an HBR license if they want to provide honey bee removal services.

Insurance requirements for HBR companies may be found on SPS 13-06 Georgia Structural Pest Control Act Insurance Certification Form.

Can HBR operators perform pest control work in HPC, WDO, or Fumigation?

NO, if an operator only has a license in HBR then they may not be involved in the solicitation or performance of pest control work in Household Pest Control, Wood Destroying Organisms, or Fumigation, **EVEN IF** they have direct supervision. If an individual is working in other categories in any capacity, they must be a registered employee in the category.

Can technicians provide honey bee control and removal services without an HBR certification?

Anyone doing or selling HBR work is required to have an HBR certification unless they are working under the direct supervision of an HBR Certified Operator (Rule 620-9-.01 (10)).

Can HBR operators control other bees and stinging insects?

NO, the HBR license is only for the control and removal of honey bees. Control of any other bees or stinging insects require a license in the category of Household Pest Control.

Is an HBR license required for the removal of a free-hanging swarm?

NO, removal of free-hanging swarms is a listed exception under 620-9-.03, and do not require a license to be removed.

Free-hanging swarms are defined as a mass of honey bees which have temporarily clustered on an object.

What are the requirements of a cut-out or open-air hive honey bee removal?

A cut-out, or open-air hive in a structure, honey bee control and removal job must include the removal of the honey bees, wax comb, honey, brood and other associated material and debris from the structure, filling the cavity, and sealing all possible reentry points to the cavity to inhibit reinfestation.

What are the requirements for a trap-out honey bee removal?

Since a trap-out honey bee removal job does not remove the debris associated with the honey bee colony from the structure, every contract for this type of job must contain the statement:

"*This job will only remove honey bees. The wax comb, honey, brood and other associated material will remain in the structure and may result in reinfestation and secondary pest issues*."

What qualifies as a structure and a reentry point?

The rules of the SPCC define a structure as "*any building, regardless of its design or the type of material used in its construction, whether public or private, vacant or occupied, and adjacent outside areas.*"

A reentry point is any entry point to the cavity where the honey bee nest is located.

Can HBR operators use 25b exempt pesticide products?

NO, products with the FIFRA 25b exemption are pesticides and regulated the same under the Rules of the Georgia Structural Pest Control Act as pesticides with a FIFRA Section 3 registration. A Household Pest Control license is required to apply these products or any other pesticide to control honey bees.

Do HBR services have record-keeping requirements since no pesticides are applied?

YES, there must be a record of the honey bee control and removal contract. The record must be retained by the licensee and made available to GDA for inspection upon request. These records must be retained for a minimum of two years.

Online Resources

Laws & Regulation
Honey Bee Control and Removal Exam
Application for HBR Certification
Application for HBR Company License
Honey Bee Control & Removal Certification Manual
Georgia Structural Pest Control Commission

If further assistance is needed, please contact the Structural Pest Control Office at (404) 656-3641 or pest@agr.georgia.gov

The Georgia Structural Pest Control Commission and Georgia Department of Agriculture have issued this document to help pest management professionals comply with the Rules of the Georgia Structural Pest Control Act. This document does not include all regulatory requirements. Refer to the complete Rules of the Georgia Structural Pest Control Act for complete rules and regulations.

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