



# Commercial Clippings

FOR THE NORTHEAST FLORIDA GREEN INDUSTRY  
*Serving Clay, Duval, and Nassau County*

June/July 2011

Issue 14, Page 1

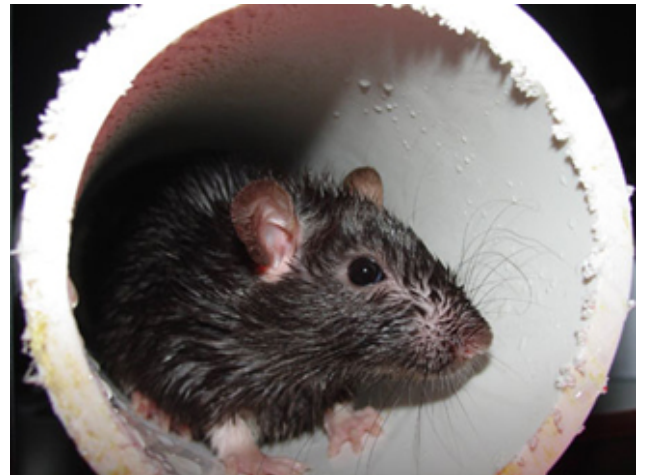
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## New Regulations for Rodent Control Effective June 1<sup>st</sup>

By Erin Harlow

As a result of changes made by the Environmental Protection Agency in 2008 to rodenticide labels and labeling to reduce the risk of pesticide exposure to children, pets, and wildlife, as of June 1<sup>st</sup> you may have to make a few changes. Most of the changes influence consumer products. Any products currently in your inventory can be used according to the old label, but new products purchased will have to be used according to their new labels.



All outdoor bait stations must be within 50 feet of a building and this may influence some commercial pest control programs. If you would like to read all the changes from the EPA, visit

<http://www.epa.gov/opp00001/reregistration/rodenticides/finalriskdecision.htm#summary>

A summary of the new restrictions are below:

### “Consumer Size” Products (Products containing ≤ 1 pound of bait)

- May not contain brodifacoum, difethialone, bromadiolone, or difenacoum (the second-generation anticoagulants).
- Loose bait forms such as pellets will no longer be sold.
- Each retail unit must include a bait station.
- Bait refills may be sold with bait stations in a single retail unit.
- All outdoor above ground use must be in a bait station and be applied within 50 feet of buildings.

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Photo Credit: Center for Disease Control



**All Classes Require Pre-Registration** unless stated otherwise.  
To register visit us at <http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu> and click Commercial Horticulture/Training or call Becky Davidson at 904-387-8850.

*You can now pay for classes  
with a credit card on our website!*

**The Great CEU  
Round-Up hosted by  
UF and the Florida  
Turfgrass  
Association**

**June 8, 2011**

8:00 am – 4:00 pm  
\$50.00 for FTGA members  
\$75.00 for non-members

2 CEUs – CORE, Aquatic, Right-of-Way, Natural Areas, Ag Row  
Crop, LCLM, and more

4 CEUs – L&O, O&T, LL&O, Pvt  
Also CEUs for CCA, FNGLA, GCSAA PDI, and ISA

Lunch included  
Location: Duval Extension Office

Register at [Duval Extension](#) or [www.ftga.org](http://www.ftga.org).

**Limited Commercial  
Landscape  
Maintenance  
Workshop**

**June 23, 2011 (Lake City)  
June 28, 2011 (Yulee)  
July 28, 2011 (Gainesville)  
September 29, 2011 (Duval)**

8:15 am - 3:00 pm - Full Day  
\$30.00

8:15 am – 12:00 pm - Half Day  
\$30.00

6 CEUs Total: 3 CORE & 3 LCLM, 3 LL&O, 3 L&O  
Lunch Included; textbooks not included  
Optional LCLM or LL&O Exam at 3:00 pm  
You must have all required paperwork to take the exam.  
For more information about the exam or books or to register, please  
visit <http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu> and click on Commercial Horticulture.

**Forensic  
Entomology  
Summer Camp  
(ages 11-15)**

**June 20 – June 23, 2011**

9:00 am – 2:00 pm, (Location: Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Rd)  
\$90.00 for the week

Bug collecting supplies, snacks, and t-shirt are included. This camp  
is not for the squeamish! Register with Gaye at 904-387-8850.

**All Classes Require Pre-Registration** unless stated otherwise.  
 To register visit us at <http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu> and click Commercial Horticulture/Training or call Becky Davidson at 904-387-8850.

*You can now pay for classes with a credit card on our website!*

**Best Management Practices for the Protection of Water Resources by the Green Industries (GI-BMPs)**

**July 20, 2011 (St. Johns)  
 August 18, 2011 (Duval)**  
 8:30 am – 3:30 pm  
 \$25.00

**Certified Pest Control Operators of Florida (CPCO) Technician Boot Camp**

**July 28, 2011**  
 8:00 am – 1:30 pm  
 \$40.00 for CPCO members  
 \$50.00 for non-members  
 2 or 4 hours of technician training hours is provided  
 Register at <http://www.cpcofflorida.org/>  
 Location: Duval Extension Office

**Gulf Coast Turfgrass Expo & Field Day at the Research Center in Jay, FL**

**June 15, 2011**  
 To register visit:  
<http://turf.ufl.edu/calendar.shtml>  
 Come learn about the new turf research.

**Certified Pest Control Operators of Florida (CPCO) Field Day**

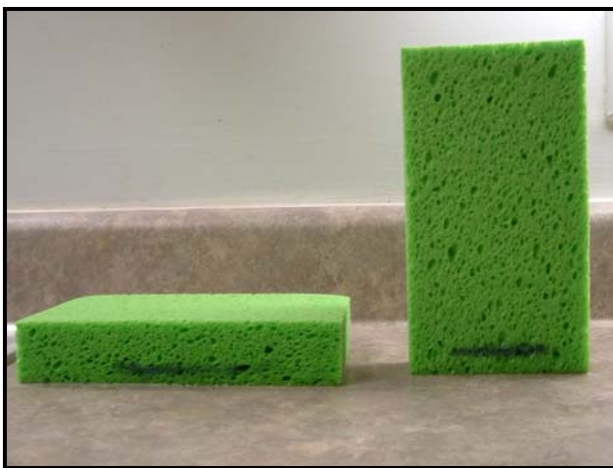
**August 26, 2011**  
 \$30.00 per category for non-members of CPCO  
 \$20.00 Technician Training  
 At Door Registration \$10.00 additional  
 Call 407-217-5655 to register  
 Hands-on demonstrations, CEUs, Technician Training, Vendors  
 Location: Duval Extension Office

## Root Suffocation of Drought Tolerant Plants

By Raymond Zerba, Clay County Extension

Have you ever watched Dwarf Pittosporum (or any other drought tolerant plant such as dwarf holly, shore juniper, etc.) die one-by-one and wonder why? If so, know that one of the more common reasons for this is a problem with too dense a soil or too much water leading to root suffocation. Drought tolerant plants need lots of air at their roots and this is not possible in dense soils or where water is being applied too frequently. When plants are dying one-by-one in a bed – consider whether these issues might apply:

- Is there evidence of lichens (furry grey growth) on the stem of the plants?
- Is the soil a dark color indicating it is low on the sand side and high on the silt (dense) side?
- Is there some sort of weed blocking cloth beneath the mulch that would inhibit earthworms from freely working the soil profile to keep it looser?
- Are these drought tolerant plants being watered more than once every two weeks?
- Is the bed plagued with dollarweeds?
- When you dig right down next to the plant do you have to dig an inch (or more) to find the first root which would be an indication it has been planted too deeply?
- Is the bed lower than the turf surrounding it?



If you answered yes to two or more of the above questions, your problem is likely “root suffocation” and until something is done, this will be a problem bed for your client anytime they grow a plant in it that likes to be well drained. Here’s why:

Take a sponge and wet it until saturated. Lay the sponge flat and observe that water flows out until a zone of saturation forms somewhere at the bottom. This is equivalent to what happens in a yard after a rain. Now turn that same sponge on end and observe how just those additional few inches of height cause more water to flow out, making the top of the sponge that much drier (and better aerated)! This is equivalent to what happens if you have raised beds. Now, even if over-watered and growing in poorly aerated soil, the top 3-4 inches of bed will get more air and plants will have a higher chance of survival – most of the tiny roots (that really make a difference to a plant) are in these top few inches.

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## Do you know what this is?

Have you seen this lizard at any of your accounts? Know what it is?

You probably have seen these running in the landscapes at some of your accounts. It is a type of lizard and it does eat lots of insects (roaches, flies, moths, beetles, etc.), so why would anyone be concerned that so many of these are being seen in Florida? In the August/September issue of Commercial Clippings I'll tell you what this lizard is called, why we are seeing more of them in our area, and why there are a number of natural ecologists concerned about its spread. Talk to you then – RZ



## MILKWEED ASSASSIN BUG (*ZELUS LONGIPES*)

By Erin Harlow

- They are a generalist predator which feed on mosquitoes, flies, earthworms, caterpillars, etc.
- They can “bite” if handled.
- They have a long 3-segmented beak; long hairy legs, and long antennae.
- They are seen in large numbers when recently hatched.
- Most homeowners notice them in their vegetable gardens.
  - They attack prey using the “sticky trap strategy” where they raise their forearms which are covered with a sticky material and ambushes their prey.
  - Feeds by extra-oral digestion – They use an enzyme to digest tissue of prey then they use their stylet (mouthpart) as a straw and drink-up dinner.



For more information about the Milkweed Assassin Bug check out this publication [EENY489, Milkweed Assassin Bug](#) by Megha Kalsi and Dakshina Seal.

## ***Pest of the Month continued – Root suffocation of Drought Tolerant Plants***

**Bottom Line:** To have more success when you have a damp soil, convince the client to go with plants that tolerate wet better. Suggest drought tolerant plants only in situations where they will not be watered with a sprinkler every time it comes on to water the grass. If the landscape tends to be on the damp side, then whenever you plant, create raised beds. The easiest way to do this is to buy a good quality professional potting mix and place a 3-4 inch layer over the area to be made into a bed and then rototill it in with the soil that is there – you are looking for about a one part potting media to two parts native soil mix. Plant high so that the roots of the plants you are installing are right on top of the surface and once done, mulch with a natural mulch material that earthworms can feed on (leaves, pine needles or compost). Drip irrigation is better than over head irrigation for most drought tolerant plants because the client can manually turn that on and off (as needed by the plant) and not let a timer do the thinking for them (and it saves water). Also – overhead watering leads to more leaf diseases.

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## ***New Regulations for Rodent Control, Continued***

### **Second-Generation Anticoagulant Products for Use around Agricultural Buildings**

- Products must contain at least eight pounds of bait.
- Bait stations are required for all outdoor, above-ground placements of second-generation anticoagulant products.
- Bait stations are required indoors if exposure to children, pets, or non-target animals is possible.
- Product labels must indicate that the product is for use only in and around agricultural buildings and that use in residential use sites is prohibited.
- Distribution to and sales in “consumer” stores including grocery stores, drug stores, hardware stores, club stores will be prohibited.
- All outdoor above ground use must be in a bait station and be applied within 50 feet of buildings.



### **Second-Generation Anticoagulant Products for Professional Applicators**

- Products sold must contain at least 16 pounds of bait.
- Bait stations are required for all outdoor, above-ground placements of second-generation anticoagulants.
- Bait stations are required indoors if exposure to children, pets, or non-target animals is possible.
- Distribution to and sales in “consumer” stores including grocery stores, drug stores, hardware stores, club stores will be prohibited.
- All outdoor above ground use must be in a bait station and be applied within 50 feet of buildings.

For more information on Rodent Control visit the University’s publications at [http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic\\_rodent\\_control](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_rodent_control).

## What is Good Customer Service?

Customer service can mean different things to different folks. However, there are some basic concepts that all businesses should strive for in order to excel at customer service. Create an environment that encourages relationship building as direct marketing is all about relationships! Your customers should feel like they are part of the family and the business.

Below are the basic building blocks to assure that your business is really providing excellent customer service.



### **Build a sincere, solid relationship with your customers**

Try to recognize them if you are at a face to face marketing venue or simply at the local grocery store in your community. Calling them by name is great, but if their name escapes you at least smile and act friendly. Making folks feel appreciated and important goes a long way in creating loyal customers.

### **Always help customers as quickly as you can in a friendly way**

If you are busy with another person or on another line, at least acknowledge them by letting them know you will get back to them as quickly as you can.

### **When you do wait on them, greet them properly and then find out what their needs are**

Be sure to *listen carefully and consider their request from a customer's point of view*. Remember that customers pay the bills and can make your job much easier. Anticipate and identify their needs and provide solutions to their problems by getting regular feedback from them.

### **Be sure customers know what you can and can't do for them to better serve them**

Help them understand how your business works to make transactions go faster and more smoothly. Let them know their time is as valuable as yours. Try to say 'yes' as much as you can! In addition to you, all employees should be well versed in this area so no misinformation is given.

### **Reward loyal customers**

There are lots of different ways that cost very little to make customers feel special and that you value their business. Giving more than is expected is a way to separate your business from the competition. It's less expensive and time consuming to keep customers rather than find new ones.

### **Provide customers with as much information as you can**

Things like how to reach you, where your office is located, your business history, additional details on services, helpful information, etc.

### **Listen to complaints carefully!**

There is usually always an opportunity to enhance customer service and improve on product offerings. Know when and how to apologize. Remember that for every one person who complains to you, there are probably at least 20 folks who do not, but may complain to their friends and neighbors about your service/products.

### **Lastly, treat your employees well**

Employees are often the 'face' of your business. Thank them regularly for work done well and reward them whenever possible. Appreciation of both customers and employees comes from the top!

In today's competitive environment, excellent customer service is a must for long-term business survival. Take time NOW to review your customer service policies and be sure that both you and all your employees are up to date.

This article was adapted from an article written by Linda Landrum for the North Florida Research and Education Center Newsletter.

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For individuals requiring special accommodations, please contact our office (904/387-8850) within a minimum of 5 working days of the program. For persons with hearing or speech impairments, when contacting our office, please use the Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8771 (TDD). Your comments and input are necessary for this to be a useful tool for all of us.

Extension Programs are open to all regardless of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, religion, national origin, political opinions or affiliations.

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