



Georgia Structural Pest Control Commission

Notice 21-03

Compliance with Rule 620-9 Honeybee Control & Removal & General Information

Background – Rule 620-9 updates pest control regulations to address a specialty in the pest management industry. Prior to the new rule, honeybee removal from a structure required a household pest control license. It is a violation of the Georgia Structural Pest Control Act to provide this service without a license. Engaging in this business without a license is a misdemeanor for the first offense and/or liable for a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000 per violation.

The Georgia Structural Pest Control Commission (SPCC) and the Georgia Department of Agriculture (GDA) responded by amending the regulation to provide regulatory reform that lessens the burden on honeybee removal operators while improving and maintaining necessary consumer protection.

The new rule only applies to the professional control and removal of an established honeybee colony in a structure. The new rule also

- protects consumers by establishing a minimum competency standard for honeybee removal operators and a state issued certification license.
- supports honeybee conservation and promotes honeybee removal and relocation without killing the colony.
- supports agriculture for the production of honey and related products or the pollination of crops.
- supports the profession of honeybee control and removal by creating a state certification and minimum standard for a removal service.

Who does this rule affect, and how?

Companies and operators working in the State of Georgia that provide the service of honeybee control and removal (HBR) from a structure will need to be certified and licensed by the compliance date of January 1, 2023.

The rule establishes minimum competency training standards and a state certification. The revision to the rule strengthens the baseline of knowledge for all HBR operators.

How did the SPCC develop the rule and revisions?

Revising the rule was an inclusive process that occurred over several years. The SPCC and GDA engaged stakeholders on suggestions for the revisions starting in November 2019. The SPCC received extensive feedback, including in-depth comments on the proposed rule. The revisions were developed with input from individuals, state partners and organizations through stakeholder meetings and other outreach.

Summary of Requirements for HBR Operators

Licensing & Certification

- Certified in Honeybee Control & Removal which includes an approved pre-examination training, experience, and passing a state certification examination.
- Hold a structural pest control company license and provide verification of minimum liability insurance and renew as required.
- 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 honeybee removal operator or someone under their direct supervision.
- The use of any pesticide for the control of honeybees 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 Honeybee Control.
 - Honeybee identification and types of live honeybee removals (cut-out, trap-out, and swarm removal) including basic removal techniques.
 - Determining if there is an established honeybee 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 honeybees by homeowners and PCOs.
 - Potential safety and health hazards
- Experience participating in a minimum of 3 honeybee 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 insure continued competence.

FAQ's

Licensing & Certification

1. Where can I get a copy of the rule? [Honeybee Control and Removal - Ga Dept of Agriculture \(georgia.gov\)](#)
2. What is the cost for the company license? *The license fee is \$100 and requires renewal every 2 years.*
3. Are there any other fees? *There is UGA Entomology Research fee. All licensees are required to pay this fee and the fee is currently \$70 every 2 years. These fees are collected by GDA and transferred to the UGA Entomology Department to fund Entomology Research.*
4. How long is the recertification period for Certified Honeybee Control & Removal Operators? *Every five (5) years, the HBR operator must meet the recertification training requirement to recertify.*
5. Can a company licensed in Household Pest Control also get an HBR license? *Yes, this license is required to operate in Honeybee Control and Removal by providing a honeybee removal service.*
6. What are the requirements for obtaining a company license? *The HBR license application including the requirements and instructions [Company License Application](#)*
7. If a HBR Operator has a technician that provides honeybee control and removal services, are they required to have an HBR Certification? *Yes, unless they are working under direct supervision Rule 620-9-.01(10)*
8. How do I get the required certification? *Complete the requirements and apply for certification.*

Operating in the Category of Honeybee Control & Removal (HBR)

1. What is a structure? *The rules of the SPCA 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.*
2. If a company with a license only in Honeybee Control Removal provides the service and no pesticide is applied, what are the record-keeping/record-retention requirements? *The only recordkeeping requirement would be for a honeybee 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.*
3. What about using 25b exempt pesticide products? *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 for pest control services.*

4. Are the vehicles used for sales and service required to have vehicle markings? Yes, *the vehicle markings rule requires the name of the licensee (Licensed Company Name).*

[Honeybee Control and Removal Exam](#)

[Application for Certification](#)

[Application for Company License](#)

[Honey Bee Control and Removal Certification Manual](#)

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