

Research Authorization Program in California

Maryam Khosravifard, Staff Environmental Scientist, California Department of Pesticide Regulation, 1220 N Street Sacramento, Ca 95814, mkhosrav@cdfa.ca.gov

The Research Authorization (RA) program governs the experimental application of pesticides in California. The permits are requested by, and granted to researcher personnel working for registrants, contract researchers, commodity groups, and individuals seeking to test pesticides to study efficacy, residues, environmental fate and other aspects of pesticide use. The purpose of these tests is to gather information to eventually support the registration and use of a product in California and with the USEPA. The oversight of the RA program resides in the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR), Pesticide Registration Branch, in the Plant Physiology station.

Authorization for Research (CCR Section 6260)

Authorization for research shall be obtained from DPR prior to any experimental, unregistered use of pesticide. The authorization may specify conditions under which the research shall be conducted. The condition may include handling of the treated commodity, safety equipment, reentry intervals, medical monitoring, and field posting. Research requiring an approved human exposure protocol pursuant to Section 6710, shall be conducted in accordance with that protocol.

DPR may terminate, amend, or refuse to issue a RA whenever it is determined that 1) the research may involve a hazard to handlers and/or field workers, the public health or the environment; 2) the research is used for purposes unrelated to pesticide data development; or 3) violation of the authorization, a previous authorization, or Division 6 or 7 of the Food and Agriculture Code, or regulations adopted pursuant to them, have occurred in connection with such research.

Application for Research Authorization (CCR Section 6262)

Application for a RA may be obtained from DPR at www.DPR.CA.gov/docs/regforms/ra/ramenu.htm. The application requires applicants to provide the following information: 1) Name, mailing address and telephone number of applicant; 2) pesticide to be applied; 3) type of site or commodity and stage of growth at which pesticide will be applied; 4) size, number, and total area of trials; 5) date of first and last applications; 6) type of data sought; 7) planned disposition of treated commodity; 8) signature and title of persons responsible for the trials. Additional data may be required if necessary to assess the potential adverse effects to workers, the public, and/or the environment.

Notification and Use of Research Authorization (CCR Section 6264)

At least 24 hours prior to beginning application of a pesticide, the researcher shall submit to the agricultural commissioner of the county where the proposed trial site is located a copy of the RA. In addition a notice of intent as provided in Section 6434(b) specifying the location of each trial. If not submitted with the notice of intent, the research shall submit a plot map of the exact location of each trial within seven days after initial application of the pesticide. If no application of pesticide is made following the notice of intent, the researcher shall notify the agricultural commissioner within two weeks by submitting an Experimental Trial Report as required in Section 6266 (a).

Reports of Research Authorization Use (CCR Section 6266)

The researcher shall submit an Experimental Trial Report to California agricultural commissioner following the final application of a pesticide requiring an RA, and at least 24 hours prior to either harvest or crop destruction the following information: 1) firm name; 2) RA number; 3) commodity or site treated; 4) date of report; 5) trial location; 6) date and method of planned disposition of treated commodity; and 7) name and telephone number of researcher or representative responsible for crop disposition.

The researcher shall submit to the DPR an Experimental Pesticide Use Report within two weeks following the expiration date of the RA. The report shall include the following information: 1) RA number; 2) pesticide product applied; 3) commodity or site treated; 4) rate of active ingredient per acre or unit; 5) Total amount of active ingredient used 6) total acres or units treated; 7) counties where trials were conducted; 8) name, address, and phone number of researcher; 9) certification that the commodity was harvested/disposed of as required by RA.

Exemption from Authorization for Research (CCR Section 6268)

A pesticide registrant is exempt from these requirements when the registrant is the operator of the property upon which the research is to be conducted and continues to be the operator until the treated commodity is destroyed or harvested. Also, personnel employed by colleges and universities and engaged in pesticide research are exempt if they are operating according to the current established policy of the college or university, which covers pesticide use and experimentation.

Position of Authorization (CCR Section 6272)

Each person making an application of a pesticide under a RA shall have a copy of the RA available at the use site at the time of application.