

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5972

C 338 L 24
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning the use of neonicotinoid pesticides.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks (originally sponsored by Senators Liias, Van De Wege, Billig, Nobles, Pedersen and Salomon).

Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks
Senate Committee on Ways & Means
House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources
House Committee on Appropriations

Background: Pesticide Control Act and Pesticide Application Act. The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) administers the state Pesticide Control Act and the state Pesticide Application Act. Its activities include adopting rules requiring the registration and restricted use of pesticides, testing and certifying pesticide applicators, issuing handler and worker pesticide training documentation, and providing technical assistance to pesticide applicators and workers.

All individuals who are licensed, or who are required to be licensed as pesticide applicators, pesticide operators, structural pest inspectors, and pest control consultants, must be certified through examination in the area in which they operate or consult. To be certified, a person must attain a passing score of at least 70 percent on a certification examination.

Examinations are administered by WSDA, and WSDA collects a fee from the applicant for each exam at an amount set in rule. License classifications address the control of a variety of pests, including insects and diseases, pest animals in agricultural situations, aquatic pests, both generally and in irrigation systems, and weeds.

Summary: Beginning January 1, 2026, a person may not use neonicotinoid insecticides on nonproduction outdoor ornamental plants, trees, and turf in this state, unless the application is made as part of a licensed application, a tree injection, or during the production of an agricultural commodity.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Upon identification of an urgent pest threat, the Director of WSDA (Director) may authorize the sale, possession, or use of restricted neonicotinoid insecticides by written order. The Director must make reasonable efforts to inform the public of the urgent pest threat identified. The written order must include certain information, including:

- identification of the urgent pest threat and the neonicotinoid insecticide to be used in addressing the urgent pest threat;
- a description of all other less harmful insecticide or pest management practices considered that were not deemed to be effective in addressing the urgent pest threat;
- a description of the geographic scope of the written order; and
- the duration the order is in effect, not to exceed one year.

WSDA must review and update rules related to neonicotinoid insecticides by June 30, 2025, and every four years thereafter.

"Neonicotinoid insecticide" means any insecticide containing a chemical belonging to the neonicotinoid class of chemicals including, but not limited to acetamiprid, clothianidin, dinotefuran, imidacloprid, nitenpyram, nithiazine, thiacloprid, thiamethoxam, or any other chemical designated by WSDA as belonging to the neonicotinoid class of chemicals.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	29	20	
House	78	16	(House amended)
Senate	33	16	(Senate concurred)

Effective: June 6, 2024