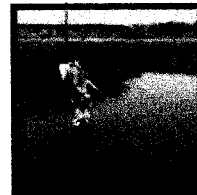


## 9

## Vector Control Technician Certification Program



**The California Health and Safety Code (§106925) requires every government agency employee who handles, applies, or supervises the use of any pesticide for public health purposes to be certified by the California Department of Public Health. The Vector-Borne Disease Section administers the Public Health Vector Control Technician certification examination twice each year to certify the competence of government agency personnel to control vectors for the health and safety of the public.**

To become certified in a control category, applicants must pass the Core section and at least one Specialty section of the examination. Each applicant to the examination pays a fee for each section requested on the application. The Core section consists of questions about the safe and effective use of pesticides. Specialty sections of the examination include the Biology and Control of Mosquitoes in California, Arthropods of Public Health Significance in California, and Vertebrates of Public Health Importance in California (Table 13). Successful examinees are issued a gold certification card that is valid for two years in the qualified

**Table 13. Results of certification examinations administered in 2010.**

Exam section	No. Exams Given	No. Passed (%)
Core	98	56 (57)
Mosquito Control	92	48 (52)
Terrestrial Invertebrate Control	68	32 (47)
Vertebrate Vector Control	74	44 (59)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>180 (54)</b>

Over 61 continuing education programs were provided to Vector Control Technicians in 2010. VBDS staff presented at over 20 of these programs.

categories specified on the card. To maintain full certification status in subsequent two-year cycles, Certified Technicians must pay annual renewal fees and fulfill minimum continuing education requirements. Successful examinees who elect not to participate in continuing education are issued parchment certificates in the categories in which they qualified. These Certified Technicians (Limited) employees may use pesticides only under the direct supervision of a Certified Technician.

Through 2010, 1,289 Vector Control Technicians employed at 115 local public health agencies and CDPH held 3,063 certificates (Table 14). The agencies include 53 mosquito abatement districts, mosquito and/or vector control districts and other special districts, 44 departments of county government, 16 departments of city government, the University of California, and CDPH.

**Table 14. Vector Control Technician certificates in effect as of December 2010**

Certification Category	No. Certificates		
	Full Status	Limited Status	Total
Mosquito Control	845	282	1,127
Terrestrial Invertebrate Vector Control	668	239	907
Vertebrate Vector Control	683	346	1,029
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,196</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>3,063</b>

Table 15 compares the certification status among employees of Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California (MVCAC) corporate member agencies and non-MVCAC member agencies.

**Table 15. Certification status among MVCAC corporate member agencies and non-MVCAC agencies.**

Agency Type	Certified Technicians		Certified Technicians (Limited)	
	No. Agencies	No. Employees	No. Agencies	No. Employees
MVCAC	61	792	21	154
Non-MVCAC	23	73	40	283
<b>Totals</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>865</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>437</b>

# Vector Control Technician Certification Program

The California Department of Health Services (CDHS) administers the Public Health Vector Control Technician certification examination in May and November each year. The purpose of this examination is to certify the competence of government agency personnel to control vectors for the health and safety of the public. Authority to administer this exam derives from the Health and Safety Code, Section 106925, which requires every government agency employee who handles, applies, or supervises the use of any pesticide for public health purposes to be certified by CDHS. CDHS first sponsored certification examination of agency personnel on mosquito control in April 1974. Standards governing certification of local agency vector control personnel are described in Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations, Sections 30001-30061.

To become certified in a control category, applicants must pass the Core section and at least one Specialty section of the examination. Each applicant to the examination pays a fee for each section requested on the application. The Core section consists of questions about the safe and effective use of pesticides. Specialty sections of the examination are Biology and Control of Mosquitoes in California, Arthropods of Public Health Significance in California, and Vertebrates of Public Health Importance in California (Table 14). Successful examinees are issued a gold certification card that is valid for two years in the qualified categories specified on the card. To maintain full certification status in subsequent two-year cycles, Certified Technicians must pay annual renewal fees and fulfill minimum continuing education requirements. Successful examinees who elect not to participate in continuing education are issued parchment certificates in the categories in which they qualified. These Certified Technicians (Limited) employees may use pesticides only under the direct supervision of a Certified Technician.

Through 2004, 1,156 Vector Control Technicians employed at 106 local public health agencies held 2,466 certificates (Table 15). The agencies include 54 Mosquito Abatement Districts, Mosquito and/or Vector Control Districts and other special districts, 38 departments of county government, 13 departments of city government, and the CDHS. Table 16 compares the certification status among employees of Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California (MVCAC) corporate member agencies and non-MVCAC member agencies.

During the 2003–2004 continuing education cycle, four approved continuing education programs were made available on videotape to vector control agencies. Each videotape offered at least five continuing education units in the Core or one of the three specialty areas.

Table 14. Results of certification examinations administered in 2004.

Exam section	No. exams given	No. passed (%)
Core	139	86 (61.9%)
Mosquito Control	131	78 (59.5%)
Terrestrial Invertebrate Control	77	29 (37.7%)
Vertebrate Vector Control	87	63 (72.4%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>256 (59.0%)</b>

Table 15. Vector Control Technician certificates in effect as of December 2004.

Certification category	No. certificates		
	Full status	Limited status	Total
Mosquito Control	657	208	865
Terrestrial Invertebrate Vector Control	506	220	726
Vertebrate Vector Control	533	342	875
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1696</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>2466</b>

Table 16. Certification status among MVCAC corporate member agencies and non-MVCAC agencies.

Agency type	Certified Technicians		Certified Technicians (Limited)	
	No. agencies	No. employees	No. agencies	No. employees
MVCAC	54	590	16	117
Non-MVCAC	25	98	32	351
<b>Totals</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>468</b>

Source: California Department of Health Services