



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 6289

January Session, 2025



***AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE USE OF DRONES TO ANALYZE, TREAT
AND APPLY FERTILIZERS AND PESTICIDES TO CROPS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (e) of section 22a-54 of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
3 *passage*):

4 (e) The following provisions shall govern the certification of aircraft
5 applicators:

6 (1) No person shall apply, offer to apply or cause to be applied any
7 pesticide or fertilizer by aircraft without a certificate or permit issued in
8 accordance with the provisions of this subsection.

9 (2) Upon application of any person qualified to fly an aircraft, the
10 commissioner may issue a certificate for the application of pesticides or
11 fertilizers by aircraft. Application for said certificate shall be on forms
12 provided by the commissioner and shall be accompanied by a fee of fifty
13 dollars.

14 (3) The commissioner may issue a permit to the owner of any crop or
15 land, or to a representative designated by such owner, for application of
16 pesticides or fertilizers by a certified aircraft applicator. Application for
17 said permit shall be on forms provided by the commissioner and shall

18 be accompanied by a fee established by the commissioner by regulations
19 adopted in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 provided the
20 fee shall be not less than twenty dollars. The commissioner may waive
21 the application form and fee requirements imposed pursuant to
22 regulations adopted in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 in
23 circumstances where application of broad spectrum chemical pesticides
24 from the air is necessary to control specific vectors of human disease
25 which pose an imminent threat to public health. The commissioner may
26 require inspection of the crop or area and its immediate environs and
27 approval as follows:

28 (A) For agricultural crops, nurseries and orchards, by the director of
29 the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station;

30 (B) For rodent control, woodland spraying and mosquito control
31 spraying, by the commissioner;

32 (C) For control of vectors of human disease, by the Commissioner of
33 Public Health.

34 (4) The commissioner shall designate the kind and amount of
35 pesticides permitted for use by aircraft. Permits for aircraft spraying in
36 congested areas shall be issued only with the approval of the director of
37 health of the municipality in which the operation is to be conducted
38 except in circumstances where the commissioner determines that the
39 application of broad spectrum chemical pesticides from the air is
40 necessary to control specific vectors of human disease which pose an
41 imminent threat to public health.

42 (5) (A) The commissioner, with the advice of the Commissioner of
43 Transportation, may adopt such regulations as [he deems] are necessary
44 for the protection of public health, aquatic and animal life and public
45 and private property, governing:

46 [(A)] (i) The type of aircraft to be used;

47 [(B)] (ii) The hours during which aircraft may be so used;

48 [(C)] (iii) The wind and weather conditions under which aircraft
49 spraying or dusting may be performed;

50 [(D)] (iv) The minimum area on which aircraft spraying or dusting
51 may be done; and

52 [(E)] (v) The amount of public liability and property damage
53 insurance to be carried by the aircraft applicator.

54 (B) Not later than March 1, 2026, the commissioner shall amend the
55 regulations adopted pursuant to this subdivision to authorize the use of
56 precision drones to analyze, treat and apply pesticides and fertilizers to
57 crops and for the planting of seeds by any person who is: (i) Licensed
58 by the Federal Aviation Administration to operate such a precision
59 drone, and (ii) a licensed commercial or private pesticide applicator.

60 (6) No person may apply pesticides or fungicides by aircraft or by
61 misting-type devices to shade tobacco crops within three hundred feet
62 of an inhabited residential building for which a certificate of occupancy
63 was issued prior to January 1, 1997, without the written permission of
64 the owner of such building, except spray applications may be
65 administered within the confines of the netting. This subdivision shall
66 not apply to an application of pesticides or fungicides to land which was
67 poled for the cultivation of shade tobacco between January 1, 1994, and
68 January 1, 1997.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	from passage	22a-54(e)

ENV *Joint Favorable Subst.*