What is the Bureau of Entomology and Pest Control?
The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is the state agency that regulates structural pest control (commercially) within the State of Florida under the authority of Chapter 482, Florida Statutes, and the associated rules, Chapter 5E-14, Florida Administrative Code.

When this agency is called upon to investigate a consumer complaint, a professional, unbiased investigation is undertaken each time. The Bureau does not take sides in these complaint investigations. In addition, the Bureau cannot mitigate damage claims nor can it force one party to pay another for any damages that may have occurred.

What will happen when the investigator visits my property?
The investigator will assess your complaint and collect and document any evidence from your property to determine its relevance to the investigation and compliance with the regulations.

Although the goal of our Department is to conclude every case as quickly as possible, many factors may delay the conclusion of a case. Some of these are: complicated laboratory analyses; lack of cooperation of applicator and complainant; legal rights of the applicator; the need to conduct follow-up investigations; the need to respond to other complaint incidents; and the need to involve other state agencies or the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Because each case varies, it is impossible to provide a definitive time on how long it may take to conclude a particular case. Our investigators strive to have their field investigations completed with 45 days.

However, please be aware that if the inspector determines that physical pesticide sampling was necessary, some samples can be analyzed rather quickly, while other environmental samples may require complicated residue analysis that can take months to complete – and some of the samples may not be run at all depending on their value to the case and expense associated with analysis.

How much does an investigation cost?
Investigations, including analysis of any samples, are conducted by the Department at no cost to either the complainant or the alleged violator. However, the Bureau does not have unlimited funding and, therefore, evaluates each investigation on a case by case basis.

What happens after the investigator has collected all of the necessary information?
After the investigator has gathered all of the necessary information related to an investigation, it is forwarded to our Headquarters located in Tallahassee,
Florida. The Bureau of Licensing and Enforcement’s technical support staff review the case for possible violations of state and federal pest control and pesticide laws. If a violation has been detected, one or more of the following remedies may be applied:

- Advisory Notice
- Warning Letter
- Administrative civil penalty assessment, up to $5,000 per violation
- License/permit/registration revocation, suspension or modification

The specific enforcement action taken will depend on such factors as the violator’s compliance history; remedial or corrective action taken by the violator; potential for damage or harm; and the nature of the products that were used.

If an administrative action is taken, please be aware that this process, alone, could take several months or years to resolve the entire legal process.

**How will I be compensated for my damages?**

The focus of our investigation is to determine if pest control practices and the pesticide applications were performed according to label directions and if any applicable laws were violated by the licensee, certified operator, and/or applicator.

No attempt will be made by the investigator to determine the monetary value of any damage due to the proper or improper use of these materials. Damage recovery must be done through private negotiation with the company, or by taking civil action (lawsuit) against, the company/applicator and/or their insurance carrier.

**Case #:**

**Date:**

**Inspector Name:**

**Phone Number:**

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**How will I be kept informed of the progress of my investigation?**

You will automatically receive a copy of the case field summary at the time the investigator forwards his case file to Tallahassee. You can contact the investigator handling your case for a progress report, but please allow for a minimum of 10 to 12 weeks for the review process.

You may also e-mail the investigator at the address on the business card you received at the time of the investigation. If you call the local inspector, please be aware that they spend most of their time in the field, but will get back with you as quickly as possible. Make sure to leave a message that includes your name, area code, phone number and the time(s) that you are available at that number.

**Who has access to information and case summaries resulting from an investigation?**

A case summary is routinely provided to both the complainant and the alleged violator at the time it is forwarded to Tallahassee. The Bureau makes a concerted effort to provide the conclusion of the investigation and enforcement process (if applicable) to all of the parties involved.

Case files are considered public documents once the Bureau has concluded any enforcement proceedings and archives them electronically. Anyone can request a copy of the entire case file upon a written request and the payment of duplication fees associated with the size of the file.