

MINUTES OF THE GEORGIA STRUCTURAL PEST CONTROL COMMISSION MEETING

January 9, 2024

- A. The Georgia Structural Pest Control Commission convened at 10:08 a.m. at the UGA Chapel in Athens on January 9th, 2023. Commission members present were Chris Gorecki; Chairman, Derrick Lastinger; Vice-Chair, Greg Holley, Dr. Brian Forschler, Christy Kuriatnyk, and Kim Bragg.
- B. Also in attendance were representatives with the Georgia Department of Agriculture, GPCA, CPCO, University of Georgia, Athens Technical College, registrants, and other members of the pest management industry.
- C. Dr. Nick Place, Dean of the UGA College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, delivered welcome remarks. He spoke about the recent updates to UGA and the increase in outreach for the College of Agriculture. He spotlighted the importance of the pest control industry to the state of Georgia. He also provided information regarding the retirement of Dr. Braman and the search committee for the new CAES Department Head for Entomology.
- D. Mr. Chris Gorecki contributed opening remarks. He thanked Dr. Brian Forschler for arranging the meeting location and expressed condolences to commission member Bodine Sinyard who was absent due to a recent loss in his family.
- E. Dr. Forschler provided the UGA Urban Entomology update and annual report (see attachment 3). He underscored the significance of recent graduate Jacob Winkles' work concerning revenue and employment figures in the pest control industry in Georgia. Currently undergoing peer review, Jacob Winkles' research report is concurrently being adapted into an article for PMP magazine. Dr. Forschler hopes that this work will facilitate state-to-state comparisons and emphasize the economic impact the pest management industry has in agriculture.
- F. Dr. Forschler invited several graduate students to introduce themselves and provide a brief overview of their projects. Jacob Winkles shared insights and plans for dissemination of the information garnered by his Economic Impact study. AJ Stevenson spoke about his project on the Natural History of carpenter bees and his work mapping carpenter bee galleries. Karen Corsetti's project focused on the invasive Asian Needle Ant and has resulted in the development of a comprehensive management program for this pest. Nia Keyes-Scott highlighted her research on the Kissing Bug and how gut microbiome contributes to the proliferation of this insect. Ashley McCormick, also investigating the Kissing Bug, underscored its medical relevance in relation to Chagas disease. She delved into her research on how proteins influence feeding habits on human blood. Dr. Forschler commended them for their exceptional work and valuable contributions to the industry.
- G. Dr. Andrea Daniels, Athens Technical College President, provided an overview of the impact and successes of the Athens Technical College and the Georgia Pest Exam Program. She stressed the wide variety of trainings provided, the unique partnership with the GDA, and how they are able to positively impact major economic sectors in Georgia. She introduced Mr. David Floyd, the director of IT, and Geoff Barrow, webmaster, who work first-hand with the implementation of the Georgia Pest Exam Program, as well as Justin McCannon who handles support and Alan McCall who oversees noncredit training. They provided an

overview of the testing trends of the Georgia Pest Exam and the most common calls support receives. Mr. Alan McCall also spoke about how they would like to do more outreach to increase participation in the Registration Exam Prep Course.

- H. Mr. Lastinger provided the department and program updates. He began by recognizing several important attendees present at the meeting, including Bailey Whiten who is the new Division Director of Agricultural Inputs, Mike Evans Division Director of the Plant Protection Division, Jay Jones Associate Editor of the Market Bulletin, and several Structural Pest Division inspectors.
- I. Mr. Lastinger discussed the first day of the legislative session and a recent meeting with the Director of Policy. The Georgia Department of Agriculture foresees a demanding session.
- J. Mr. Tim Taylor provided the Compliance and Enforcement update. Mr. Taylor provided an overview of accomplishments from the past year, including a completed injunction, completed investigations on over 20 unlicensed operator cases, and made compliance assistance visits under the new Honeybee Removal program.
- K. Ms. Ali Ikner gave the Certification and Training update. She discussed highlights from 2023, including the Memorandum of Agreement that was signed with Athens Technical College earlier this year and the results of the renewal year. Last year the Structural Pest Division licensed/renewed 2,242 Certified Operators, 7,213 Registered Employees, and 1,246 companies. This past year was also the first full year for the HBR program and saw 27 companies and 57 individuals certified. Ms. Ikner also issued a reminder that it is time for Course Sponsors to renew their courses and to ensure that Sponsor are using the most up to date course numbers.
- L. Ms. Ikner also submitted proposed amendments to Section 13-01 for readability and a change to the computer-based training course requirements that updates the language to better represent the technology advancements being used today. Dr. Forschler made a motion to accept the changes, Greg Holley seconded the motion and the motion passed.
- M. Mrs. Nan Collier provided the Outreach update. She expressed excitement for the upcoming year and noted the Compliance booth that is currently operating at the GPCA winter conference. Mrs. Collier also discussed the recently published issue of *The Inside Buzz*, the GDA Internship program, and the upcoming workshops including the Bedbug workshop to be held on the UGA Griffin campus on Feb 1, 2024, and the Commercial IPM workshop on Feb 15, 2024. Two termite workshops have also been planned for March.
- N. A motion was made by Mr. Chris Gorecki to approve the minutes of the December meeting. Mrs. Kim Bragg seconded the motion and the motion passed.
- O. The Commission approved company applications (see attachment 2)
- P. Mr. Mike Evans gave an update on the Yellow-legged Hornet Response and current eradication efforts. The Plant Protection Division is considering hiring part time help for the next season to assist in the YLH response. He provided details about the detection of a yellow-legged hornet in South Carolina and how efforts are being coordinated across state lines. He emphasized the importance of outreach, owing many of the successes thus far in large part to the support provided by the Pest Management Industry and the public, and referenced a project to help inform beekeepers and the public of how to create their own traps. He also discussed the phases for eradication to be declared.
- Q. Mr. Lastinger reviewed the progress thus far of the HBR recorded training. The Structural Pest Division is working with Dr. Suiter to ensure that all pertinent materials to aid in

providing information for the pre-exam training requirement are addressed in the video. It is expected to be available for use later this year.

- R. Mr. Lastinger supplied the C&T plan update. The Structural Pest division is continuing to work with the GDA legal department and plans to have more updates in the near future.
- S. Mr. Lastinger also discussed the EPA Proposed New Mitigation Measures for Rodenticides. ASPRO had a committee meeting recently regarding the proposed measures and the need for clarification on several key issues. Mr. Lastinger confirmed that Mr. Rick Bell would be further discussing the proposed measures in his update later in the meeting.
- T. Mr. Lastinger gave a brief update on the Spring Meeting; the commission is in the process of selecting a location and will be finalizing details soon.
- U. Mr. Rick Bell provided the NPMA update. He spoke about the legislative session and the proposed Occupational Licensing bill which includes a reciprocity requirement that is of particular concern. He then delved deeper into the upcoming preemption considerations in the Farm Bill. The emphasis remains on empowering states for regulation, ensuring uniformity and avoiding disparate regulations from county to county.
- V. Mr. Rick Bell then spoke about the EPA Proposed New Mitigation Measures for Rodenticides and Biological Evaluations. A committee phone call occurred the day prior, and they are now anticipating rodenticides being reclassified as RUP. Mr. Bell also discussed the definition of structures in the proposed measures, and it appears as though the preferred 2008 definition may apply. He also emphasized considerations regarding carcass search that are still in need of clarification. Additionally of concern is a potential restriction on the use of rodenticides during specific parts of the year, possibly with additional constraints, for example bait station openings. It was noted that the EPA is unlikely to incorporate industry responses into their final decisions, which was met with disappointment considering the collective effort to provide information and support from everyone involved.
- W. Mr. Gorecki also brought up the proposed House Bill 404 which would codify language regarding tenants' rights and require rental properties to be "fit for habitation". The commission and Mr. Rick Bell plan to investigate further and may discuss at a future meeting.
- X. Mr. Gorecki closed the meeting by expressing appreciation to all the guests in attendance. Meeting adjourned at 11:46am.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1	January 9 th GSPCC Agenda
Attachment 2	Company License Applications
Attachment 3	Urban Pest Control Program Annual Report

Chris Gorecki, Chairman

Commissioner Tyler Harper, Secretary

ATTACHMENT 1



Georgia Structural Pest Control Commission

Chris Gorecki, Chairman
Derrick Lastinger, Vice-chairman
Christy Kuriatnyk, Georgia Department of Public Health
Dr. Brian Forschler, University of Georgia
Bodine Sinyard, Adams Exterminators
Greg Holley, Zone Pest Solutions
Kim Bragg, Consumer Affairs & Protection Representative

Agenda

January 9, 2024

Open –Chairman Gorecki

Welcome Remarks –Dr. Nick Place, UGA College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences

Minutes

Old Business

New Business

- a. UGA Urban Entomology Update & Research Reports - Dr. Brian Forschler
- b. Georgia Pest Exam Program - Dr. Andrea Daniels, Athens Technical College President
- c. Georgia Department of Agriculture Updates – Derrick Lastinger
 - Compliance/Enforcement – Tim Taylor
 - Certification & Training –Ali Ikner
 - Outreach – Nan Collier
- d. New Company Applications – Ali Ikner
- e. Yellow legged hornet Response Update – Mike Evans
- f. HBR training
- g. C&T Plan and Update
- h. EPA Proposed New Mitigation Measures for Rodenticides
- i. Spring Meeting
- j. Legislative update – Trip Martin
- k. NPMA update – Rick Bell
- l. Certification Examination Application Review

Adjournment

ATTACHMENT 2

Company License Applications

The Commission approved the following applications:

- Lulu – Name Change Approved
- Adam’s Exterminators Inc. acquisition of Junior’s Pest Control – Approved

The Commission approved the following applications pending additional information:

- Local Pest Experts – Peachtree City, GA – Approved/Pending Insurance
- Safer Home Services –Canton, GA– Approved/Pending Payment

ATTACHMENT 3

**URBAN PEST CONTROL PROGRAM
HOUSEHOLD AND STRUCTURAL ENTOMOLOGY RESEARCH PROGRAM
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, ATHENS, GEORGIA**

DATE OF REPORT TO COMMISSION: January 9, 2024

PROGRESS REPORT:

The research programs' graduate students continue working on projects relevant to urban pest management through experiments, data analysis, and writing publications. The program completed an economic survey of the industry in Georgia and collating data from available Department of Labor and Census sources to provide estimates of the Professional Pest Management Industry's (PPMI) revenue and economic contribution to the Georgia economy. The research showed the industry in Georgia has increased in both employment and revenue by 117% since 1997 with a consistent growth rate, over the past 10 years, of 4-5% per year. The projected estimate for 2023 is revenue over \$1 billion while contributing 14,000 jobs and slightly more than \$2 billion to the State economy through direct and indirect employment and supply chain relationships. The economic clout of the professional pest management industry, we posit, because of its relationship with the Georgia Department of Agriculture should be included in economic estimates of Agriculture in Georgia. Inclusion of the PPMI would increase annual agricultural economic revenue estimates 5-6% and bring much needed attention to an industry partner that has operated in the shadow of other agriculture-related industries.

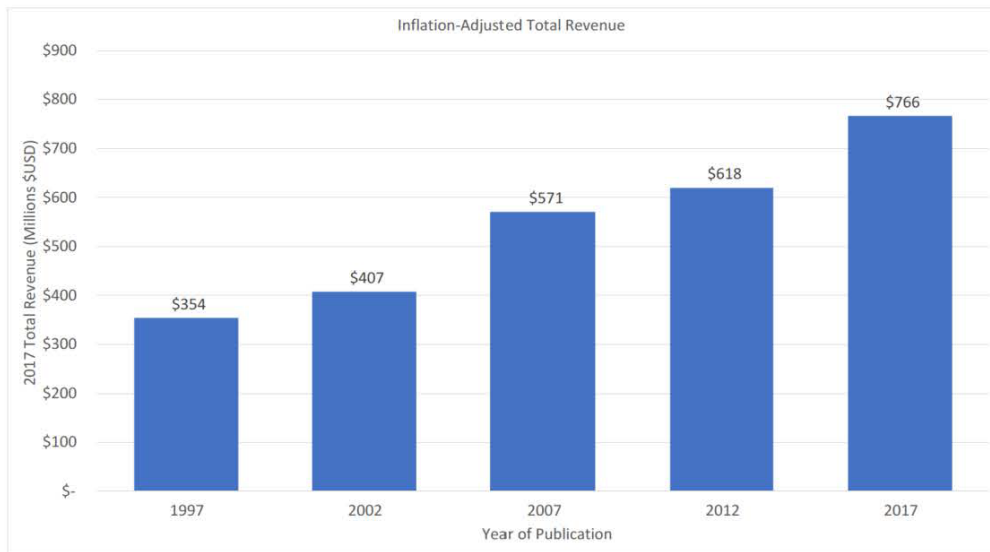
EXPENDITURES:

Graduate student stipend expenditures were approximately \$40,000 in addition to \$6,000 for undergraduate student workers and \$12,000 for supplies and equipment. The State Structural Pest Control Commission research fee was used for all of the undergraduate student salaries, a portion of the graduate student stipends, as well as, equipment and supplies.

PLANNED RESEARCH:

We plan to address the following research areas over the next year: **(1)** subterranean termite evolution and role of each of the five different species in structural infestations **(2)** continued examination of product efficacy and new application technologies **(3)** highlight the financial contribution the pest management professional industry makes to the Georgia State economy and how it ranks nationally.

Total revenue for the pest management industry in Georgia from the US Census Bureau's Economic Census dataset, by year of census, after adjusting for inflation.



Total annual employment for the pest management industry in Georgia from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Employment and Wages, by year.

