

Pest management business

Business start-up guide

Pest management industry overview

Demand for professional pest (including weed) control services is increasing. Strict health regulations that monitor and control pests across business and commercial properties, particularly in the food and hospitality industries, have made it difficult for people to manage pests themselves.

Starting or buying a pest management business involves many essential steps. Legally, you must ensure that you apply for and receive the correct licences.

This guide explains how to start a pest management business in Queensland. It will help you understand the challenges and opportunities of entering the pest management industry so you can make good business decisions.

Getting into the pest management industry

Before you start a pest management business in Queensland, you need to understand how the industry works, what things you need to consider in your planning, and the legal requirements you must meet.

Finding a competitive edge in Queensland's pest management industry

There are many small businesses in Queensland's pest management industry so competition is mainly based on price and service quality. There is also external competition from people that do their own pest control using do-it-yourself products available in stores.

To give your business a competitive edge, offer an integrated pest management service (one-stop-shop) to:

- inspect for pests

- identify pests
- determine how best to treat the pests.

Adapting your service to each customer's unique needs will help you secure their loyalty and gain word-of-mouth referrals. You can also set high quality standards and provide friendly customer service to stay competitive.

Key success factors for pest management businesses

To build a successful pest management business, you need to:

- have good technical knowledge
- control your business costs effectively
- market and promote your services to the right people
- have access to secure revenue.

Pest management industry entry barriers

Start-up costs for a pest management business are low, however, strict licensing and regulations can make it difficult to enter the industry. Pest management is skill and knowledge intensive, so you must have technical knowledge and experience before setting up a pest management business.

Customers can be wary about using pest control chemicals around their homes so you need to explain how your business safely uses pest control chemicals.

Advances in technology make pest management, particularly in termite control, more efficient but this also means customers need less pest control visits.

(Source IBISWorld, March 2012)

Pest management industry requirements

A number of licensing and registration regulations govern the pest management industry. There are

strict regulations about how to store, handle and use chemicals.

When starting a pest management business you need to consider the following requirements.

Pest management technician licence

To work as a licensed pest management technician, you may need a Pest Management Technician Licence from [Queensland Health](#). Applications costs start from \$233.50 and it can take 1-2 weeks to process your application. You must successfully complete the following pest management criteria:

- modify environment to manage pests
- apply pesticides to manage pests
- maintain equipment and consumable storage area.

Queensland Health will also inspect your pest management equipment and business vehicle.

Acting as principal contractor or nominated supervisor for a registered company

Pest management companies must employ a nominated supervisor who is licensed in the same class of work as their company. To act as a principal contractor or nominated supervisor for a registered company, you may need a Contractor Licence - Trade Contractors (Company) from the [Queensland Building Services Authority \(QBSA\)](#). Licence costs vary and it will take QBSA 6-8 weeks to process your application. This licence cannot be transferred.

Working for a nominated supervisor or a registered company

To work for a nominated supervisor or for a registered company as a contractor or employee but not as the principal contractor, you may need a Contractor Licence - Trade Contractors or Supervisors. [QBSA](#) manages this licence. Licence costs vary and it takes 6-8 weeks to process your application. You must meet technical and managerial qualifications, experience and financial requirements to have your application approved. This licence cannot be transferred.

Removing problem wildlife (e.g. possums, snakes)

To remove problem wildlife in the course of your pest management work, you may need a Damage

Mitigation Permit from the [Department of Environment and Heritage Protection](#).

Buying, storing or using strychnine

To buy, store or use strychnine, you may need a Strychnine Permit from [Queensland Health](#).

Storing dangerous goods

To store dangerous goods over the limits listed in the Hazardous Substance Regulation 1988, you may need an Assessment of Off-site Plans from the [Queensland Fire and Rescue Service \(QFRS\)](#). The QFRS will tell you whether the amount of dangerous goods you store is over the regulation exemption limits.

Legislation that may apply to your business

- *Chemical Usage (Agricultural and Veterinary) Control Act 1988*
- *Dangerous Goods Safety Management Act 2001*
- *Debts Tax Act 1990*
- *Drugs & Poisons Regulation 1996*
- *Duties Act 2001*
- *Environment Protection Act 1994*
- *Fair Trading Act 1989*
- *Fire and Rescue Authority Act 1990*
- *Industrial Relations Act 1999*
- *Integrated Planning Act 1997*
- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994*
- *National Measurement Act 1960*
- *Pest Management Act 2001*
- *Pest Management Regulation 2003*
- *Sale of Goods Act 1896*
- *Statistical Returns Act 1896*
- *Trading Hours (Allowable Hours) Act 1990*
- *Vocational Education, Training and Employment Act 2000*
- *Water Supply Act 2008*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

To access copies of legislation, visit www.legislation.qld.gov.au.

Useful industry contacts

Business Support Unit

For more information on licences, regulations, market research, business planning and other support services phone 13 25 23 or visit business.qld.gov.au



**The Australian Environmental Pest
Managers Association**

Phone 1300 307 114

Visit www.aepma.com.au

The Australian Pest Control Association

Phone 1300 660 200

Visit www.pestcontrol.org.au

