

New SC Core Exam Transition

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Transitioning to the National Pesticide Applicator Certification Core Exam

The Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) at Clemson University is transitioning from the current South Carolina Core Exam to the National Pesticide Applicator Certification Core Exam.

This FAQ has been developed to assist applicators, employers, trainers, Extension personnel, and other stakeholders during the transition period.

Key Terms and Definitions

To help avoid confusion during the transition, DPR will use the following terms throughout this document:

Term	Description
SC Core Exam (old)	The existing (old) South Carolina Examination currently used for pesticide applicator certification
SC Core Exam (new)	South Carolina's updated Core (new) examination based on the National Pesticide Applicator Certification Core Examination and scheduled for implementation in July 2026.
SC Core Study Guide (old)	<i>Core: Applying Pesticides Correctly</i> (the study guide used to prepare for the current (old) SC Core exam.
SC Core Pesticide Study Manual (new)	The new study manual developed to prepare candidates for the SC Core Exam (new).
Transition Period	Approximately three months following implementation of the new Core exam, during which candidates may choose either Core exam (new or old).
Implementation Date	The official date in which the new South Carolina Core Exam becomes available.
Retirement Date	The final date the current (old) SC Core Exam will be available for testing.



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When Will the New SC Core Examination Be Implemented?

Implementation is anticipated in mid-July 2026.

DPR will announce the official implementation date once all study materials, testing system updates, and administrative preparations have been completed.

Why is South Carolina Making This Change?

South Carolina is adopting the updated SC Core Exam (new) to align its certification program with nationally recognized competency standards for pesticide applicators.

The updated examination emphasizes core knowledge areas such as pesticide safety, labels, application, calibration, equipment, regulations, environmental protection, storage, and toxicity while maintaining South Carolina's certification and licensing requirements.

Which Core Exam Should I take?

During the transition period, candidates may choose to take either:

- SC Core Exam (old) or
- SC Core Exam (new)

After the transition period ends, only the updated SC Core Exam (new) will be available

Can I Still Use My Current Core Study Guide (old)?

Candidates who have prepared for the exam with the current (old) material may continue using it while the old exam is available. The old exam will be available during a 3-month transition period until approximately Oct 15, 2026.

Candidates planning to take the updated SC Core Exam (new) should use the new, updated SC Core Pesticide Study Manual once it becomes available to order online.

Can I Purchase the Current Core Study Guide (old) After the Implementation Date?

No. Once the implementation date arrives, the current Core Study Guide (old) will no longer be available for purchase.



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What Happens If I Fail the Current South Carolina Core Examination During the Transition Period?

Candidates who do not pass the current SC Core Exam (old) during the transition period may continue testing under the current exam (old) until the transition period ends.

After the transition period ends, all candidates must take the updated SC Core Examination (new).

When is the Last Day I Can Take the Current South Carolina Core Examination?

DPR plans to offer the current SC Core Examination (old) for approximately three months following implementation of the updated SC Core Exam (new). The transition period will end on Oct 15, 2026.

Can I Take the Current South Carolina Core Examination After the Transition Period Ends?

No. Once the transition period ends, the current (old) SC Core Exam will be retired and no longer available for scheduling or testing.

Do Current License Holders Need to Retest?

No. Current pesticide applicator licenses and certifications remain valid.

Will My Existing Certification Become Invalid?

No. Current certifications remain valid and are not affected by the transition to the updated Core Examination.

Is the Cost of the Core Examination Changing?

No. The cost of the Core Exam will remain the same.

Are Category Examinations Changing?

No. This transition affects only the Core Examination.

How Do I Register for an Examination?

Candidates must register online through Metro Institute.

Registration information and testing locations are available on the Exam Information page of DPR's website: www.clemson.edu/dpr

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SC Core Pesticide Study Manual (*NEW*)

The SC Core Pesticide Study Manual (new) will be available through a dedicated ordering link provided by DPR once the publication becomes available.

The ordering link will be posted on the Exam Information page of DPR's website: www.clemson.edu/dpr

Please note that the SC Core Pesticide Study Manual (new) will not be purchased through Clemson University's existing online ordering system used for category study materials

Category Exam Study Guides

Study materials for pesticide category exams will continue to be available through Clemson University's existing online ordering system.

The transition to the New SC Core Exam does not affect the ordering process for category study materials.

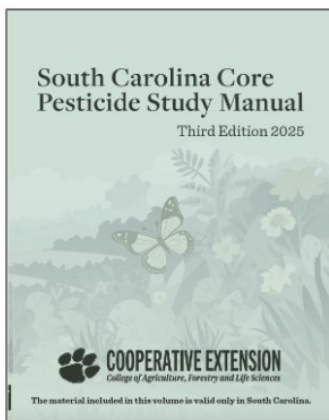
Applicants should carefully review DPR's website to ensure they are accessing the correct ordering location for the study materials they need.

DPR will provide direct links and ordering instructions once the NEW SC Core Pesticide Study Manual becomes available.

Will Training Providers and Instructors Need to Update Their Training Materials?

Yes. Training providers, instructors, and organizations that offer pesticide applicator training should review and update their materials to align with the updated SC Core Exam (new) and the SC Core Pesticide Study Manual (new).

Important Note for College Instructors: DPR encourages instructors to begin planning for the transition as early as possible. The transition period is expected to end before the Fall 2026 end-of-semester pesticide examinations are administered in Nov/Dec! Therefore, course materials should be updated to reflect the new, updated SC Core Exam and the South Carolina Core Pesticide Study Manual (new).



New CORE Study Manual

Will Extension Offices Need to Update Their Study Material Inventory?

Yes. Once the implementation date arrives, the Current Core Study Guide (old) should no longer be sold or distributed to individuals preparing for certification.

Candidates seeking certification after the implementation date should purchase the new, updated SC Core Pesticide Study Manual and prepare for the new SC Core Exam.

Extension offices and other sales locations should monitor DPR announcements regarding implementation dates and the availability of the (new) South Carolina Core Pesticide Study Manual

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What is Not Changing?

The following remain unchanged:

- ✓ Current licenses and certifications remain valid.
 - ✓ Existing certification and licensing requirements remain in effect.
 - ✓ Category examinations remain required where applicable.
 - ✓ Exam registration procedures remain unchanged.
 - ✓ The cost of the Core Examination remains unchanged.
 - ✓ DPR will continue administering South Carolina's certification and licensing program
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Where Can I Find Updates on Implementation Dates and Study Materials?

DPR will post updates regarding:

- Implementation dates
- Examination availability
- Study materials
- Registration procedures
- Transition deadlines
- Frequently Asked Questions

Visit: **Exam Information** at www.clemson.edu/dpr

Who Should I Contact If I Have Questions?

Exam Registration Question:

Department of Pesticide Regulation - dprExams@clemson.edu

Metro Institute - metrosignup@gmail.com

Study Material Ordering Questions:

Katie Moore – kcrouch@clemson.edu

QR code for Additional Info found on **DPR Blog Post**
(<https://blogs.clemson.edu/regulatory/>)



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