

## Pesticide Application by Drone: Proposed Changes Explained

Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) has published a proposed policy on February 23, 2026, that would allow pesticides to be applied using drones. This would only be allowed for pesticide products that already permit aerial application on their label.

This is **only a proposal** and is **not yet in effect**. PMRA is asking for public feedback and will accept comments for 30 calendar days from the publication date of the proposal. Until a final decision is made, all current pesticide application rules continue to apply.

The information below explains what is being proposed, what would and would not be allowed, and what this could mean for farmers and commercial pesticide applicators if the policy is finalized.

---

### What is being proposed?

PMRA is proposing to allow pesticides to be applied using drones **only if aerial application is already allowed on the pesticide product label**.

---

### Would all drones be allowed to apply pesticides?

No. If the proposal is approved:

- Drones used for pesticide application would have to meet all existing aerial application requirements listed on the pesticide label.
- Spray volumes, application rates, buffer zones, and other label directions would stay the same.
- The person mixing and loading the pesticide **cannot** be the same person flying the drone.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements would apply to:
  - Mixer/loaders
  - Drone pilots and visual observers
  - Anyone handling, repairing, or changing batteries on drones

Details on PPE requirements are included in the proposal document.

---

## **Can pesticides with aerial application labels be applied by drone right now?**

No. This proposal is **not yet approved**.

PMRA is collecting public comments for 30 calendar days from the date the proposal was published. After the consultation period ends, PMRA will review the feedback before making a final decision.

Until then, drones **cannot** be used to apply pesticides unless they are already allowed on the pesticide label.

---

## **When will the policy take effect?**

There is no set timeline. PMRA must first review all comments received during the public consultation.

---

## **What would this mean for producers?**

If the proposal is approved:

- Producers wanting to use drone for pesticide application would need to:
    - Register their drone with Transport Canada
    - Hold an appropriate drone pilot certificate from Transport Canada
  - Producers are exempt from commercial pesticide applicator licensing requirements under Manitoba's *Pesticides and Fertilizers Control Act*.
  - All pesticide product label directions under the federal *Pest Control Products Act* would still have to be followed.
- 

## **What would this mean for commercial pesticide applicators?**

If the proposal is approved, commercial applicators would need to meet requirements under:

- Transport Canada, and
- Manitoba's *Pesticides and Fertilizers Control Act*
- *Pest Control Products Act*

This would include:

- Registering the drone with Transport Canada
- Holding an appropriate drone pilot certificate from Transport Canada

- Holding a valid commercial pesticide applicator licence from Manitoba Agriculture
- Following all pesticide product label directions under the federal *Pest Control Products Act*.

Additional pesticide use permits may also be required under *The Environment Act*. The pesticide use permits are issued by Manitoba Environment and Climate Change.

---

### **Where can I find the consultation document?**

The full consultation document is available on Health Canada's website:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/consumer-product-safety/pesticides-pest-management/public/consultations/regulatory-proposals/2026/permitting-pesticide-application-remotely-piloted-aircraft-systems-drones-products-currently-registered-aerial-application/document.html>

---

### **How can I submit comments?**

Comments can be submitted through Health Canada's public engagement portal:

<https://pest-control.canada.ca/public-engagement-portal/en/forms/consultation-comment>

---

### **Who should I contact about commercial pesticide applicator licensing?**

For questions about commercial pesticide applicator licensing requirements, contact Manitoba Agriculture at **AGRpesticides@gov.mb.ca**.