

MINUTES OF THE GEORGIA STRUCTURAL PEST CONTROL COMMISSION MEETING

January 13th, 2026

- A. The Georgia Structural Pest Control Commission convened at 10:02 a.m. in the Chapel at the University of Georgia located at 109 Herty Drive, Athens, Georgia. Commission members present were Chris Gorecki; Chairman, Derrick Lastinger; Vice-Chair, Dr. Brian Forschler, Bodine Sinyard, Greg Holley, and Dr. Thuy-Vi Nguyen.
- B. Also in attendance were representatives with the Georgia Department of Agriculture, GPCA, CPCO, registrants, and other members of the pest management industry.
- C. Mr. Gorecki announced modifications to the agenda, which included a special presentation by CPCO, extending the same privilege to GPCA, and a closed Executive Session.
- D. Mr. Lastinger provided background and information on Executive Sessions.
- E. A motion was made by Mr. Holley to hold an Executive Session at today's meeting. Dr. Forschler seconded the motion and the motion passed.
- F. A motion was made by Mr. Sinyard to approve the amended agenda. Mr. Holley seconded the motion and the motion passed.
- G. A motion was made by Mr. Sinyard to approve the minutes of the December SPCC meeting. Mr. Holley seconded the motion and the motion passed.
- H. Dr. Forschler provided the UGA Urban Entomology Update. He spoke about how the GDA helps to fund UGA Urban Pest Entomology through fees collected as part of company applications. He provided the Urban Pest Control Program Research Report (Attachment 3) to the commission and the attendees. Dr. Forschler then yielded the floor to Dr. Sabrina Elgar, postdoctoral associate, who gave a brief overview of her background researching southeastern peach systems. She now endeavors to begin a new research project focused on structural pest management. Emily Haney, who is a first-year master's student working with Dr. Dan Suiter, also spoke about her research. Her project focuses on the bioavailability and longevity of perimeter soil treatments. Dr. Forschler then spoke about the breakfast hosted by UGA that was held that morning that brings the SPCC, the SPD, members of the pest management associations, and the UGA School of Agriculture together. He spoke about the importance of the structural pest control industry gaining more recognition for its economic impact on the state of Georgia, and his appreciation for the Dean of Agriculture attending. He emphasized how pest control has evolved over time, especially with new detection technologies, better identification of specific termite species, and the ability to better tailor treatments to customer's specific needs. He also spoke about how our understanding of species has evolved, using the project on carpenter bees completed last year that illustrated their impact in improving biodiversity through habitat creation and their role as pollinators. He highlighted that he welcomes any comments about the work the UGA Urban Entomology department performs and invited everyone to attend the presentations highlighting the students' research at the GPCA Winter Conference tomorrow.
- I. Mr. Lastinger provided the department updates. He began by thanking UGA for hosting this annual meeting in January. This tradition is always a great way to kick off the new year. He spoke about a meeting with Commissioner Tyler J Harper last week, who plans to attend an

in-person SPCC meeting later, to be determined date. Mr. Lastinger also mentioned that the legislative calendar was announced yesterday, along with the topics of discussion which will include the state budget. The SPD team met for a strategic planning meeting recently. This meeting is an opportunity for the SPD to review accomplishments from the past year and set new goals for this year which will likely focus on rule changes and related outreach. Mr. Lastinger also talked about two new work groups at the department level. An outreach workgroup has been formed with Ali Ikner and Nan Collier from the SPD team participating. This workgroup was created to aid in advancing the public's understanding of the work the GDA does. The other work group was formed to develop division specific performance measures. Mr. Lastinger explained that each year SPD reports state level performance measures and US EPA Performance measures. Because these measures are designed to be broad and apply to many different programs, they often do not give a very complete or clear picture of what our division accomplishes. The intent of the workgroup is to create measures that more accurately represent the work of each division.

- J. Mrs. LeAnna Merritt provided an update on SPD Inspector field activities and gave the Compliance and Enforcement update. She expressed appreciation to the industry for their condolences and understanding in working with our team following the loss of Mr. Taylor. She also announced that there are currently two open positions, which include an inspector position in the northeast area, and an Enforcement officer position in Atlanta. Mrs. Merritt noted that our Compliance and Enforcement team completed over two thousand inspections in 2025. This number includes routine and for-cause inspections. She noted that it has been observed on several occasions now that some applicators are filling out their PURs based on what the label requires, and not what they are actually doing on site. She reminded attendees that PURs should be filled out to reflect the application performed. Mrs. Merritt also spoke about a trend in homeowners and pest management companies calling in to submit complaints over the last 12 months, with a greater increase in the last 6 months. The largest increase has been in reports of unlicensed operators, but there is also an increase in fumigation notifications. She applauded the efforts of the inspector team handling the influx of inspections. Mrs. Merritt also emphasized that all pest control salespeople must be licensed. She highlighted that a full department update would be presented on Thursday at the GPCA Winter conference as well.
- K. Ms. Ali Ikner provided the Certification and Training update. She reflected on the successes of the recent renewal period. Despite a few technical difficulties, the SPD team worked to provide information and assistance through two editions of The Inside Buzz, the renewal webpage, inspector outreach, and one on one assistance through the admin team. Thanks to everyone's hard work we had record low numbers of unrenewed licenses. Ms. Ikner then provided the final renewal numbers for the 2025 season, which included 2,269 Certified Operator licenses, 7,797 Registered Employees, and 1,278 company licenses that were renewed this year. Ms. Ikner also reminded Course Sponsors that the 2025 course numbers are now officially expired, and everyone should now be using the 2026 course numbers.
- L. Mrs. Nan Collier provided the Outreach report. She spoke about what an honor it is to be associated with UGA and their wonderful team. She highlighted that SPD will be hosting a Compliance booth this week at the GPCA Winter Conference, as well as providing several presentations throughout the conference. Mrs. Collier then spoke about the upcoming Spring Workshop series hosted through UGA at the Griffin campus. These include the

upcoming Bed Bug Workshop on February 5th, the Commercial IPM Workshop on February 19th, and two two-day Spring Termite Workshops to be held March 3rd and 4th and on March 19th & 20th. Registration links for these will be available on the [Workshops page of the UGA Extension Structural Pest Management website](#). Mrs. Collier also emphasized that while the School IPM grant has officially concluded, the SPD hopes to continue offering this program while supplies last. Anyone interested in arranging a school visit for SPD to educate students on the importance of IPM and pest ID should contact the SPD office. Mr. Lastinger added that while the division may need to adjust to operating under a reduced budget, SPD will strive to continue its outreach work. He emphasized the importance of how this work provides compliance assistance and education to reduce the need for enforcement.

- M. Mr. Lastinger thanked Ms. Bradshaw for the important work she does behind the scenes as a project coordinator to keep the SPD team organized.
- N. Ms. Bradshaw spoke about the GDA internship program and its benefits. This summer internship program is a paid opportunity, with roles available with many divisions at the GDA. The application window for summer 2026 will close on February 8th.
- O. The Commission approved company applications (see attachment 2)
- P. Mr. Lastinger gave an update on Notice 14-08 Under-floor space ventilation – unvented crawl space. The diagram in reference D of this fact sheet suggests that insulation practices may vary in “low termite risk areas”. This is believed to be in reference to IRC Table R301.2, which is a template to be completed by the local authority having jurisdiction, such as the county, to determine level of termite risk, or it may be in reference to the IRC’s Termite Infestation Probability Zones (also known as TIP Zones). Mr. Lastinger explained that he would be consulting with the DCA for clarification and will consider modifying this fact sheet if appropriate.
- Q. Mr. Gorecki spoke about proposed amendments to the SPCC Regulations and the upcoming Public Consideration meeting. He clarified that while the proposed rules were originally set to be posted in October, after further review the GDA Legal services department determined additional modifications would need to be made to make the rules more enforceable. The revisions focused on improving the legal language of the rules and did not substantively modify the underlying intent, outcomes, or processes previously discussed. A complete copy of the draft rules and regulations and a synopsis of changes are available on the Legal Notices section of the GDA website. The 30-day comment period began on January 2nd and will remain open until February 2nd. Comments may be submitted via email to SPCC@agr.georgia.gov, by mail, or in person at the public consideration meeting to be held in Atlanta on January 21st. Mr. Gorecki also stated that he will be providing a presentation with an overview of the proposed rule changes at the GPCA Winter Conference and describing how these changes will better prepare the pest management industry for national changes in the regulatory landscape.
- R. Mr. Gorecki spoke about Big Canoe POA Regulations. A letter was distributed by the Big Canoe Property Owners Association to inform its residents and pest control vendors that no outdoor pest control bait stations would be permitted within the community in response to a case allegedly involving a bear poisoning. Questions about what occurred in the incident that precipitated the POA’s rule change, what types of bait stations are prohibited by the rule, the ability of the POA to impose this type of regulation, and how this affects preemption in Georgia have been raised. Mr. Lastinger explained that the GDA is taking this very seriously

and is fully engaged in the investigation. SPD is coordinating with DNR's biologist for a better understanding of the investigation.

- S. Mr. Gorecki discussed the 2026 SPCC meeting schedule. The public notice with the complete schedule for the year has been posted online. Should any meeting location or date be changed an additional notice will be posted.
- T. Mr. Rick Bell provided the NPMA update. He spoke about the potential for the ratio of democrats to republicans in the senate and house to shift as Georgia currently has eight members that have left to run for other positions. Mr. Bell provided details on a landmark decision in Peru, where certain municipalities in the Amazon have issued legal rights to the native stingless bees. This is the first case of insects being granted legal rights and may influence policy decisions on how pollinators are regulated. He next gave a description of SFIREG's recent meeting in Alexandria, VA. Where the pervading issue continues to be the classification of rodenticides and ESA implementation. Mr. Bell concluded with a discussion about a policy decision in California, where three towns have passed bans on the use of glue boards. The bans have given rise to federal preemption concerns, given that sticky traps are not registered with the EPA.
- U. Mr. Wally Holden spoke on behalf of CPCO. The CPCO presented the SPD with a memorial plaque in commemoration of Mr. Tim Taylor's years of service and contributions to the pest control industry. Mr. Lastinger thanked the CPCO for their kind words and thoughts during this difficult time.
- V. Mr. West spoke on behalf of GPCA. The GPCA appreciated the time to speak but announced they would be honoring Mr. Tim Taylor during their awards ceremony during the GPCA Winter Conference and therefore had nothing further to add during the SPCC meeting.
- W. Mr. Gorecki began the Executive session at 11:39am. The executive session ended at 12:13 pm.
- X. Mr. Gorecki expressed appreciation to all the guests in attendance, and the meeting adjourned at 12:16 pm.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1	Agenda
Attachment 2	Company Applications
Attachment 3	Urban Pest Control Program Report

Chris Gorecki, Chairman

Commissioner Tyler Harper, Secretary

ATTACHMENT 1



Georgia Structural Pest Control Commission

Chris Gorecki, Chairman

Derrick Lastinger, Vice-chairman

Dr. "Tiffany" Thuy-Vi Nguyen, 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 13, 2026

Open –Chairman Gorecki

Introductions

Minutes

Old Business

New Business

- a. UGA Urban Entomology Update & Research Reports - Dr. Brian Forschler
- b. UGA Structural & Urban Training Center – Dr. Dan Suiter
- c. Georgia Department of Agriculture Updates – Derrick Lastinger
 - Compliance- LeAnne Merritt
 - Certification & Training –Ali Ikner
 - Outreach – Nan Collier
- d. New Company Applications – Ali Ikner
- e. Notice 14-08 Under-floor space ventilation – unvented crawl space 2b
- f. Amendments to the SPCC Regulations & Public Consideration
- g. Big Canoe POA Regulation
- h. 2026 Meetings
- i. NPMA update – Rick Bell
- j. Certification Examination Application Review

Adjournment

ATTACHMENT 2

Company License Applications

The Commission approved the following applications:

- Northwest Exterminating Company LLC dba Volunteer Rid A Pest - Tennessee – Name Change Only (Acquisition)
- TactPoint Pest Solutions - Barrow County
- Savannah River Residential - Columbia County
- Palmetto Exterminators, LLC - Chatham County – Name Change Only

The Commission approved the following applications pending additional information:

- Final Solution Pest Service – Dekalb County – Pending Email
- Fortress Pest Control - Floyd County – Pending Insurance
- Axiom Eco Pest Control – Tennessee – Approved Pending Name

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 13, 2026**

PROGRESS REPORT:

The economic clout of the professional pest management industry remains underrepresented within the academic community. Our research program has been contacted by and is collaborating with sister institutions to generate comparable data on the economic contribution of the industry to their respective state economies. The task of highlighting the role PMP businesses make toward the financial stability of university systems is the responsibility of industry advocates by establishing strong lines of communication with College of Agriculture administrators. The research generated at UGA over the past 30 years is providing an opportunity for the industry to proactively bring their termite business model into the 21st century. The current science shows that, in Georgia, subterranean termites are common, omnipresent cryptic soil-dwelling animals and of the 6 species 3 pose a high risk for structural infestation. Termite detection technology will soon be able to take a sample of termites collected at a bait station and identify the species. The PMP can use that information to inform customers of the risk that species poses toward their home and provide decision-making options on treatments and contracts tailored to their property. New termite-detection tools will provide sales personnel access to potential customers without a swarm event thereby opening opportunities for increasing the customer base. The recently completed work on carpenter bees highlighted a role those insects have in creating habitat for other insects - including an additional bee species, 2 wasp species, a fly, roaches and spiders – and increasing biodiversity in urban settings. The study of borate wood-surface applications as a preventative and remedial treatment for drywood termites continues to show promise managing the feeding activity and resulting structural injury caused by that pest.

EXPENDITURES:

Student expenditures were approximately \$12,000 in addition to \$22,000 for supplies and equipment. The State Structural Pest Control Commission research fee was used for all the undergraduate student salaries as well as equipment and supplies.

PLANNED RESEARCH:

We plan to address the following research topics over the next year: (1) the role of subterranean termite speciation and their involvement in structural infestations (2) continued testing pest management products and application technologies (3) highlight the financial contribution the pest management professional industry has on a national level (4) test termite monitoring systems.

Comparison of carpenter bee nests, by board, showing number of holes and galleries along with other insects found in each nest.

Board	Nest (#gallery)	Carpenter bee	Mason bee	Mason wasp	Grass wasp	Other Arthropods	Board	Nest (#gallery)	Carpenter bee	Mason bee	Mason wasp	Grass wasp	Other Arthropods
1	1(2)		X				4	26(8)	X				
	2(7)	X						27(11)	X	X	X	X	bee fly roach spider woodlouse
	3(4)	-	-	-	-	-	5	28(2)		X			
	4(2)	X						29(4)	X	X	X		moth
	5(6)	X						30(2)	-	-	-	-	
	6(2)	-	-	-	-	-		31(1)	-	-	-	-	
	7(1)	-	-	-	-	-		32(1)	-	-	-	-	
	8(4)	X						33(3)		X			
	9(6)	X						34(6)					Resin Bee
	10(4)	X						35(3)		X	X		
	11(4)	X						36(3)					roach
2	12(4)	X					6	37(3)	X				
	13(2)	X						38(5)	X				
	14(2)				X			39(2)		X	X		roach
	15(2)		X		X		7	40(5)					
	16(3)	X		X				41(2)	X				
3	17(2)					spider		42(5)	X	X			roach
	18(2)	X		X				43(2)				X	
	19(2)	X						44(4)		X	X		
	20(5)	X						45(5)	X				
	21(4)	X				roach							
	22(4)	X											
	23(2)			X									
	24(3)	X											
	25(2)	X											

Comparison of colonies collected from wildland and urban habitats by species.

Species	Urban		Wildland	
	Number of colonies	Percentage by category	Number of colonies	Percentage by category
<i>R. flavipes</i>	109	65%	32	31%
<i>R. hageni</i>	3	2%	15	15%
<i>R. malletei</i>	19	11%	29	29%
<i>R. nelsonae</i>	0	0	13	13%
<i>R. virginicus</i>	37	22%	12	10%
Total	168	100%	101	100%