

Option C: TEXT FILE VALIDATOR USER GUIDE

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Overview

The Option C Text File Validator is designed to assist you in electronically reporting Pesticide Reporting Law (PRL) information to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. You can use this validation program to test ASCII text files that you (or a third-party program) have created to confirm that they meet the NYSDEC guidelines. The required file format is described in the [Guidelines](#) document. ASCII text files that do not pass validation will be rejected by NYSDEC.

Each time you run the Validator you are asked to enter or verify some basic contact information. The program assists you in validating your report files and submitting them to the NYSDEC.

Option C runs under Microsoft Windows®.

Installation

Download the most recent version of the Option C installation package, `OptionC.msi` from <http://www.nysprl.com/ClientSoftware.htm>. You may be able to run the installation program directly from the web site, but we recommend saving it somewhere on your computer and running it from there.

We also recommend *uninstalling* previous versions of Option C before installing the new version. Uninstalling the old version is not usually *required* but can help avoid confusion caused by having more than one version of Option C installed at the same time. Uninstalling the Option C program will not affect any saved data files. Recent versions of Option C include an “Uninstall” shortcut in the All Programs/Pesticide Reporting group, but for older versions you will need to open the Add/Remove Programs dialog from the Control Panel and remove the old Option C version from there.

To install Option C, run the installation package `OptionC.msi` that you downloaded from the NYSPRL web site.

Windows 2000/Windows XP Operating Systems: You must log on as an administrator or to an account with administrator rights to run the installation package.

Vista/Windows 7 Operating Systems: Depending on how your computer has been set up, you may need to log on as an administrator or provide user name and password for an account with administrator rights in order to run the installation package. It is generally *advisable* to log on as administrator but may not be *required*..

The installation package has several steps. The program files are normally installed in the folder `C:\Program Files\NYSPRL`, but you can select a different location if you wish. In addition, the installation package sets the “Report Root” to `C:\` by default, but you can select a different location if you wish. We recommend that you keep the default locations unless there is a compelling reason to change them. (For example, some users in tightly controlled networks do not have access to the `C:\` drive and need to use a different folder for program files and data files.)

When installation finishes, you should see a “PRL Option C” shortcut on the desktop and a “Pesticide Reporting” group under “All Programs”; the Pesticide Reporting group contains shortcuts to run or uninstall the PRL Option C program.

Starting The Program

Start the Option C program in any of several ways:

- Double-click the “PRL Option C” shortcut on your Desktop
- Click on the START button and navigate to Programs / Pesticide Reporting / PRL Option C
- Run the program `PRL_OptionC.exe`. The program was installed by default to `C:\Program Files\NYSPRL`, but you may have changed this setting during installation to another folder.

A message box saying something like “Data directory created called 'C:\PRL2011'.” may appear. This is normal. The data directory is the location to which your data files will be written.

Registration Form

When you start the program, the “Registration” form opens. In this form you are asked to provide contact and identity information. The Registration form also gives you access to program documentation and a variety of tools or operations that may be useful when preparing your reports.

Near the top of the Registration form, you will see the current Report Year. This is the year for which you are reporting pesticide applications or sales. If the year shown is *not* the year for which you are recording pesticide applications or sales, use `Change Year` to change the Report Year.

Near the top right corner of the Registration form, you will see the “Current Folder for Report Files”. This location is the PRLyyyy subfolder (where “yyyy” is the Report Year) of the Report Root. By default, this location is C:\PRLyyyy. If you need to store report files in a different location, change the Report Root. (The subfolder will still be called PRLyyyy, though.)

Both validating and uploading your report files is simpler if you have stored all of the files for a report in a single PRLyyyy report folder and set the Report Root so that the report folder is shown as the “Current Report Folder” on the Registration form. See [Change Report Root](#) for details about setting the Report Root folder.

Contact and Identity Information

There are nine text boxes on the Registration form where you should enter contact and identity information. **Note:** You must enter either Certification ID or Commercial Permit Number or both.

Business Name: The name of the business or agency for which you are reporting, if any. *Required* if you enter a Business Registration Number or Commercial Permit Number, otherwise *optional*.

Business Registration Number: If you are reporting for a registered pesticide business or agency, enter the Business Registration Number assigned to the business by the NYSDEC. Business Registration Numbers are five numeric digits. (If your business has more than one business registration number, enter the one for the main business office. You may — but are not required to — submit the other business registration numbers using a Form 26A.)

Certification ID: The Certification ID is issued by the NYSDEC to a Certified Commercial Applicator, Technician, or Aquatic Anti-Fouling Paint Applicator. (Private Applicators are also issued Certification IDs but are not required to submit PRL Reports.) The Certification ID begins with “C”, “T”, or “B”, followed by seven numeric digits. *Required* to validate a Form 26 or Form 26A. If you enter a Certification ID here, you *must* also enter the applicator’s name and your report *must* include either a Form 26A or Form 26 or both. A Form 26 is required if the applicator whose ID is shown here *or* any of the applicators on the Form 26A performed pesticide applications during the report year. (If none of the applicators employed by your

business or agency performed reportable pesticide applications during the report year, a Form 26A listing all of the applicators is sufficient.)

Commercial Permit Number: Enter the Commercial Sales Permit Number for your business in this box. Commercial Sales Permit numbers are issued by the NYSDEC; they consist of an “R” followed by five numeric digits. A Commercial Permittee *must* include a Form 25 or Form 27 or both as part of the PRL report. **Note:** Commercial Sales Permits are issued to businesses that *sell* pesticides either for resale or end-use in New York State. They are relatively rare — most pesticide businesses do not have a Commercial Sales Permit. If your business does not have a Commercial Sales Permit, do not enter anything in this box! If your business has *more than one* Commercial Sales Permit, you may enter one number here and provide separate Form 25 or Form 27 for each of the Commercial Sales Permit numbers. However, we recommend that you send separate PRL submissions for each Commercial Permit.

Applicator Name: Enter the name of the applicator whose Certification ID was entered above, if any. *Required* if a Certification ID has been entered in the Certification ID box.

Contact Person: You must provide a **Name**, **Phone Number**, and **Email Address** for a contact person. This is the person that the NYSDEC or Pesticide Reporting Service Bureau will contact if there are any problems with or questions about your report. Emails acknowledging receipt of your report and confirming that your report has been successfully processed will be sent to the email address you provide here.

Validating PRL Report Forms

The Option C program is designed to validate ASCII text files only. Other file types cannot be checked. Files are checked for compliance with the ASCII PRL Text File Specifications. You can read a summary of these specifications from the Option C Help menu item “File Format Guidelines”.

Validating a Single File

To validate a file

1. Select one of the form types in the “Select Form to Open” frame.
2. Select the “Validate File” button (or the menu item `Validate - File`).
3. You will be prompted with a standard Windows dialog box to select a file to validate. The list of files is filtered to show only those with the correct initial letter (see [APPENDIX A: File Naming](#)). Although you can change which files are shown by picking another entry in the “Files of type:” dropdown, files whose names have the wrong initial letter *will* fail validation.
4. Pick the file you want to validate and select the “Open” button.
5. When file validation is finished, you will see a message box telling you whether or not the file passed validation. If the file did not pass, you may choose to open the exception report.

The exception report is created *only if* there are problems with the file. You may view the exception report at any time, although it will be overwritten the next time you validate that file. The exception report is stored in the same folder as the file you validated. The exception file's name is "exception_" followed by the name of the file that was validated. For example, the exception report for file `A01234.txt` is named `exception_A01234.txt`.

Validating a Report Folder

You may validate all of the PRL report files in a single folder in a single operation, instead of selecting each file individually.

1. Select the menu item `Validate - Folder`.
2. You are asked whether you saved your files in the current report folder. If you answer "Yes", the program proceeds with validation. If you answer "No", you are shown a dialog box to select the folder that contains the report files.
3. When validation is finished, a message box informs you:
 - How many files were checked
 - How many of those files passed validation
 - How many files have *warnings* ("Warnings" are minor issues that should be corrected but are not serious enough to cause the file to fail validation.)
 - How many files failed validation

Only text files whose names start with one of the recognized "Prefix Letters" (P, A, M, or S) are checked. See [APPENDIX A: File Naming](#) for details about file naming conventions.

Exception reports are created for any files with either Warnings or Errors. The exception reports are stored in the same folder as the files you validated. Each exception file's name is "exception_" followed by the name of the file that was validated. For example, the exception report for file `A01234.txt` is named `exception_A01234.txt`.

Other Operations

There are several buttons and menu items available on the Registration form that can help you prepare and submit your PRL report. Those additional controls are described here.

Save Identity

- File – Save (or Alt-F, S)

Saves the contact and identity information on the Registration form to the `identity.txt` file in the Current Folder for Report Files. Contact and identity information is automatically saved when you exit the program, open a PRL Form, or start Upload Report, but this menu option lets you save the identity information whenever you want.

Change Report Root

- Tools – Change Report Root (or Alt-T, R)

The Report Root is the parent folder for your PRL reports. It contains a folder for each Report Year; the sub-folders are named PRL_{YYYY}, where “yyyy” is the report year. For example, if you set the Report Root to C:\PRL and create reports for 2011 and 2012, the C:\PRL folder will contain two subfolders: PRL2011 and PRL2012. The initial Report Root was set when you installed Option C; unless you change the default setting, the installation package set Report Root to C:\. However, you can change the Report Root at any time.

Why change the Report Root? Most users will not need to change the Report Root from whatever choice they made during installation. However, some users might desire more than one Report Root. For example, if you need to enter PRL reports for more than one business (*e.g.*, if you complete PRL reports for several clients), you might find it convenient to create a separate Report Root for each business. This approach will help you to keep the identity information and report files for each business separate.

When you select the “Change Report Root” command, a standard Windows dialog opens to let you select the Report Root folder. You can create a new folder at this time or pick an existing folder. If the PRL_{yyyy} subfolder does not yet exist for the current report year, it is created. If the `identity.txt` file already exists in the Report Year folder, it is opened and the contents loaded into the contact and information boxes of the Registration form; if the `identity.txt` file does not exist, the contact and identity entries from the Registration form are saved to a new file.

Report files are *not* automatically moved from the previous Report Folder to the newly selected one.

Change Report Year

- Tools – Change Year (or Alt-T, Y)
- Change Year button (or Alt-Y)

The Report Year is the year in which the pesticide applications or sales that you are reported occurred. The current Report Year is prominently displayed near the top of the Registration form and each PRL data form. The current folder for report files is the PRL_{YYYY} subfolder of the Report Root, where “yyyy” is the Report Year.

To create or edit PRL form files for a different Report Year, choose the Change Year button or menu item. You will be prompted for the year to which you want to change. You may not enter a future year.

If the Report Year folder (PRL_{yyyy}) for the new year does not exist, it is created. If the `identity.txt` file already exists in the Report Year folder, it is opened and the contents loaded into the contact and information boxes of the Registration form; if the `identity.txt` file does not exist, the contact and identity entries from the Registration form are saved to a new file.

Report files are *not* automatically moved from the previous Report Folder to the newly selected one.

Upload Report

- Tools – Upload Report (or Alt-T, U)
- Upload Report button (or Alt-U)

Start the Upload process. See [How to Submit Your PRL Report to NYSDEC](#) for details.

Help

The Help menu on the Registration form gives you access to several documents.

- **How to Submit Files to DEC** — opens an HTML file with detailed instructions on submitting your report.
- **User Guide** — opens *this* document
- **About** — open a simple dialog box with information about the version of Option C you are running.

Exit

- File – Exit or Alt-F, x
- Exit button or Alt-x
- Close window button (top right corner of the Registration window)
- Window menu (click the icon in the title bar) – Close

Exits the Option C program.

If there is no missing or invalid contact or identity information, the entries are saved to the current Report Folder. If contact or identity information is missing or invalid, you will be given a choice to correct the deficiencies or exit without saving.

Contact Info

We have tried to make these electronic PRL Form templates as easy to use as possible. If you encounter problems installing or using them, please contact the Pesticide Reporting Service Bureau:

By Phone: 800-281-7538 (toll-free in New York State) or 607-257-5707 (a toll call outside of New York State)

By Email: prlsupport@nysprl.com

Or visit the website: <http://www.nysprl.com/>

The site's Frequently Asked Questions section may be useful:

http://www.nysprl.com/nysprl_faq.htm.

If you have questions regarding the Pesticide Reporting Law and reporting requirements, contact the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Pesticide Reporting and Certification Section:

By Phone: 518-402-8748

By Email: prl@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Or visit the website: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/27506.html>.

APPENDIX A: File Naming

File names should follow the naming convention described below.

The **Form Prefix** is a single letter associated with each PRL Report Form type. The first letter of the file name **must** be the correct Form Prefix for that form type, as shown below:

- P - Form 44-15-26 (Applicator/Technician Pesticide Annual Report)
- A - Form 44-15-26A (List of Commercial Applicators and Technicians)
- M - Form 44-15-25 (Annual Report for Restricted Pesticides Sales)
- S - Form 44-15-27 (Annual Report for Pesticide Sales to Certified Private Applicators)

The next 5 to 8 characters of the generated file name are ID numbers which represent either your Registered Business number, Certification ID Number, or Commercial Sales Permit Number. Which ID number is used depends on the form; Forms 25 and 27 use the Commercial Permit Number, Form 26 uses the Certification ID, and Form 26A uses either the Business Registration Number (if any) or Certification ID.

The next two digits are an (optional) unique sequence number between 00 and 99.

The last part is the Extension of ".txt", which identifies the file as text.

The pattern used for the file names is Form Prefix + ID Number + Sequence Number + Extension. For example, a Form 26 for an applicator with ID number C1234567 is given the default name of PC123456700.txt.

Some other examples: PC55555501.txt, SR3333301.txt, MR3333302.txt

The ID Number and Sequence Number parts of the file name are not critical. You can change those parts and your files will still be acceptable. The *Form Prefix* and *Extension* **must** follow these conventions.

Credit

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