

School IPM 2015

Reducing Pest Problems and Pesticide Hazards in Our Nation's Schools

School IPM 2015 Newsletter: August 2013

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Greetings from School IPM 2015!

Every day, 49 million children attend school in the United States, served by nearly seven million teachers and staff. But they're not alone. Schools are also frequented by a number of pests including cockroaches, mice, dust mites and more. Asthma is epidemic among children, impacting nearly 6% of school children nationally with rates as high as 25% in urban centers. Cockroaches are potent asthma triggers.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a prevention-based, highly effective approach proven to reduce pest complaints and pesticide use by up to 90% in schools and other public buildings. IPM practices such as sanitation and exclusion also improve food safety, fire safety and energy conservation. Our newsletter highlights real-life examples of IPM in practice and can help you start an IPM program in your school district. For more information, visit www.schoolipm2015.com.

→ Stinging Insects Are Getting Busy!

It is that time of the year again, when stinging insects are on the move! In late summer stinging insects, such as wasps and bees, hit their peak activity levels and their main focus is foraging for food. Nests and hives contain as many as 50,000 insects, all at work bringing food to the drones and queens. Honey bee colonies live in hives which contain living chambers and honeycombs. Yellowjackets, wasps and bumblebees live in nests. Hives and nests can contain as many as 50,000 insects, all at work bringing food to the drones and queens!

These insects have one goal: to feed and protect the queen as she lays an unrelenting series of eggs in preparation for the approaching colder months. Unlike honey bees, whose stingers will become detached, wasps, hornets and yellowjackets can attack their victim countless times with a stinger that stays intact after each sting.

The prevalence of these stinging insects on schools grounds is cause for concern, especially because school kicks into high gear around the same time these insects become their most active. This concern motivated a study conducted in 2001 by the [New York State Integrated Pest Management Program](#), led by Lynn Braband, Carolyn





Klass, Joyce Rodler and Jody Gangloff-Kaufmann.

The NYS IPM study focused on creating a proactive stinging insect management program tailored for schools and similar settings, and included techniques and learning tools that encourage the use of non-toxic stinging insect management.

One objective was to demonstrate to school officials and staff that stinging insects can be managed with IPM. Dr. Jody Gangloff-Kaufmann, a community IPM coordinator for New York State Integrated Pest Management Program at Cornell University points out that schools included in the study were receptive to using IPM, and were looking for effective alternatives to pesticides. This includes early-season scouting and nest removal, exclusion and discouragement techniques, such as ensuring trash cans are covered and areas are kept clean. These methods can be used by unlicensed facility staff for prevention and avoidance of pesticide use.

"One of the biggest challenges to IPM projects in buildings is the eventual turnover of people," stated Dr. Gangloff-Kaufmann. IPM efforts can remain effective as long as there are continual efforts to train new staff. To learn more read the full report, [click here](#).

Here are some helpful tips to help avoid stinging insects!

Inspect your home and lawn for nests. Become familiar with what the different nests look like. Some nests can be removed safely with little preparation or safety gear, and others require professional help. Don't take action yourself unless you are completely sure you can do the job safely.

Take extra precautions when dining outdoors. Keep food and drinks covered, especially if they are high in sugar. Be particularly careful when drinking from a can, or with a straw, which can hide stinging insects from view.

Avoid brightly colored clothing and perfume. These attract stinging insects, so if you are planning on spending time outside, wear darker colors and skip the perfume.



'Tis the Season for Mice in Schools

After humans, house mice are said to be the most successful mammal in the world, according to [Integrated Pest Management of the House Mouse in Schools](#) a fact sheet written by Tim Stock, Integrated Plant Protection Center, Oregon State University; Robert

Corrigan, RMC Pest Management Consulting; and Dawn Gouge, University of Arizona. Schools are the perfect place for house mice to take refuge; they are warm, easily accessible, and there is plenty of food. Keys to the success of mice include their ability to move along wires, run up vertical walls, survive an 8-foot fall and squeeze through extremely small openings.

Dr. Corrigan, a New York consultant specializing in rodent problems, says that "house mice are the number one urban pest in the majority

What's New This Month

Get the recognition you deserve by submitting an entry in AS&U's Green Cleaning Awards. Entries Due **September 6, 2013!** AS&U's Green Cleaning Award for Schools & Universities recognizes and honors education institutions and their partners that embrace green principles and practices in their maintenance operations.

Awards will be presented to exemplary programs and winners will be profiled in a special section in the December issue of American School & University.

[Submit your entry today!](#)

Highlights

To Learn more about IPM strategies for mice and rats check out the Pest Press newsletter: [Mice and Rats in Schools](#)

Upcoming Events

September 18-19, 2013
Texas School IPM Coordinator
Training
Tyler, TX

[More Information](#)

October 15-16, 2013
Texas School IPM Coordinator
Training
Katy, TX
[More Information](#)

October 22-25, 2013
NPMA PestWorld 2013
Phoenix, AZ
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November 10-13, 2013
Entomological Society of
America (ESA) National
Meeting
Austin, TX
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November 13, 2013
TIPMAPS Annual Conference
Austin, TX
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says that house mice are the number one urban pest in the majority of schools across the USA, and are among the top three pests for all urban buildings in general." A primary focus of Dr. Corrigan's work is the use of monitoring and tracking baits within a comprehensive IPM program to better control pests, specifically rodents. He advocates the use of non-toxic baits to monitor the channels that rodents use throughout a building in order to effectively combat them.

Non-toxic baits are placed in tamper-resistant bait containers and checked regularly for any sign of feeding. If feeding is detected, a closer inspection is necessary in order to identify rodent conducive conditions, such as sanitation and exclusion issues. Tracking baits will change the color of the rodent's droppings and is one way to check if the rodent is consuming the bait. Non-toxic fluorescent powder can also be used in tamper resistant bait containers to aid with tracking. When the rodent enters the container powdered fiber balls will coat the rodent's fur making their movements easier to track using a fluorescent light.

Preventing these pests from entering buildings is crucial to reducing potential allergens and rodent-borne diseases. By sealing all gaps and mouse-proofing, a school can effectively manage mice and other pests. Mice tend to enter buildings as temperatures decrease from mid-October to November in temperate climates. "Once their food supply of seeds, insects and other items decline with the autumn months, mice begin dispersing from building exteriors to interiors seeking food and warmth," says Dr. Corrigan.

As always, taking preventive measures to control mice infestation is the best management strategy. By taking small steps, such as ensuring the building is sealed and food is stored properly mice will have to work that much harder to make themselves at home.

Check Your Facts!

The [California Department of Pesticide Regulation](#) (DPR) has a number of informative fact sheets for mice, rats, Argentine ants, cockroaches and bed bugs for school and childcare facilities. The fact sheets include recommendations for staff (teachers, food service, custodial/maintenance and grounds staff), a checklist for managing infestations, and treatment options. Results from a 2013 survey conducted by the National School IPM Working Group show the most

popular resource for school districts implementing an IPM program are fact sheets (43.3%), followed by a school IPM manual for pest management practices.

[Mice and Rats](#)

The snap trap, a commonly used device, works well for both mice and rats when placed with the trigger end against the wall. The best option is always prevention through exclusion and sanitation. For more about house mice, check out the above article: 'Tis the Season for Mice in Schools.

[Argentine Ants](#)

Identifying the ant species is the first step to a successful

Identifying the ant species is the first step to a successful management strategy. Argentine ants are the most common ant in California, and their colonies are found in most areas of the state. They obtain some protein from insects, but tend to prefer honeydew, a sweet secretion produced by aphids, mealy bugs and whiteflies. Ants come indoors during the summer and fall when honeydew production declines. Even a few ants indoors are cause for concern. These scouting ants report a new food source back to the colony, and within hours there may be a steady stream of ants. Vacuum or use soapy water to clean up trails.

Cockroaches

Cockroaches look for food, shelter and water in schools. Removing these will tremendously limit the probability of an infestation. Use a flashlight and small mirror to check behind cabinets and appliances and flush them out using a hair dryer. A few cockroaches by an outside garbage area is tolerable, but action should be taken if even a single cockroach is found in the kitchen or common area, one female can produce up to a thousand offspring!

Bed Bugs

Bed bugs are on the rise and continue to infiltrate homes and schools. These blood-sucking insects travel by attaching themselves to clothing, blankets or soft toys. Bed bugs do not spread disease, but their bites cause swelling and itching. If you think you have bed bugs, call a professional. Remember, you do not have to throw anything away! You can usually clean bed bug-infested items by vacuuming, washing with soapy water, and placing the items in a hot dryer for 20 minutes.