

School IPM 2015

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

School IPM 2015 Newsletter: January 2010

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Attention Superintendents!

Please circulate to facility managers and interested school staff.

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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, such as cockroaches, mice, dust mites and more.

School Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a prevention-based, highly effective approach to reducing the number of pests in your school without relying on pesticides. This 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.

→ Five Resolutions for Your IPM Program in 2010

Whether your district contracts for Integrated Pest Management (IPM) services or operates an in-house IPM program, there are some common challenges facing IPM programs in every district - and ways you can address them. Here are five simple "School IPM New Year's Resolutions" that your district may want to adopt in 2010.

1. Maintain an IPM policy and an IPM plan for your district.

An IPM policy is typically a brief, one-to-two page guidance document that explicitly states your district's commitment to IPM.

An IPM plan, on the other hand, is a detailed document that outlines how pests are managed in your district. The plan includes who's involved with pest management, their roles, including who can purchase and use pesticides, procedures for handling specific pest problems and pesticide usage guidelines (for example, what pesticides can be used and where, or how and when can they be applied). Some states require districts to have an IPM plan but even if it is not mandated in your state, it is good practice to create a plan and update it at least once a year. This can help clarify expectations in the event of staff transitions, when putting together bids for contractors and in day-to-day operations.

Examples of IPM policies and plans can be found on the School IPM 2015 [Resources](#) page. Additionally, the Safer Pest Control Project and the University of Florida offer helpful resources for developing IPM plans: an [IPM Plan Creation template](#) (.doc), an [IPM Program Evaluation template](#) (.doc) and a [School IPM Model Contract](#) (.pdf).

Upcoming Events

January 27-28, 2010:
School IPM Coordinator
Training; Weslaco Area,
TX. [More Information](#)

February 24-25, 2010:
Northern New England
Facility Managers
Conference; Laconia,
NH. [More Information](#)

March 3-4, 2010:
School IPM Coordinator
Training; Comal/Austin
Area, TX. [More
Information](#)

April 20-21, 2010:
School IPM Coordinator
Training; Brazoria/
southeast Houston area,
TX. [More Information](#)

May 16-19, 2010: National
Conference on Urban
Entomology; Portland,
OR. [More Information](#)

2. License and train any applicators in your district to use pesticides properly.

Even though school IPM programs often result in substantial reductions in pesticide use, they remain an important tool. Anyone applying pesticides in your school should be trained and licensed to apply pesticides safely. In addition, this training can help IPM coordinators better understand these requirements, even if they do not make applications themselves. Furthermore, anyone playing a key role in pest management should be knowledgeable about pest biology, sanitation and exclusion options. You can find a list of school IPM [training materials](#) and a [calendar of training events](#) on the School IPM 2015 [website](#).

3. Verify that any contractors providing pest management services are state-licensed and understand IPM.

One way to do this is to hire contractors that are certified by a third party program that promotes effective, prevention-based pest control while minimizing pesticide use and risk. Three third-party certifications, [EcoWise](#), [Green Pro](#) and [Green Shield Certified](#) are operating currently with certified practitioners in many states. If a certified pest management professional (PMP) is not available in your area, you can request that your local PMP become certified. Certification could be included in your bid specifications to emphasize that third-party certification is valued in your district and to alert potential contractors that your district demands a high level of expertise.

4. Restrict blanket purchase orders with vendors or local stores that sell pesticides to authorized purchasers.

The convenience of [blanket purchase orders](#) can lead to miscommunication when pesticides are purchased and used by coaches, athletic directors or other school staff without the knowledge of the IPM coordinator. In 2010, review all the ways that pesticides might be arriving on your campuses. Consider including restrictions in blanket purchase orders with pesticide vendors (including local stores) that no district staff may purchase pesticides without approval from the operations department or specify that only certain staff members may purchase pesticides.

5. Consider pest management in new building and renovation design and construction.

At one IPM workshop, the school district host recounted spending thousands of dollars to eliminate bird roosts that could have been easily avoided in the planning and design phase. Other pest-conducive designs fail to provide for tight door seals and sweeps which are extremely effective in reducing pest complaints, or place dumpsters too close to the building where they draw flies and stinging insects to entryways. To avoid this, licensed staff or pest management professionals should be included in any new building project, including site planning, design and construction. Remember, even with the most sophisticated designs, unless pest management is part of the construction process, pests can move in well before teachers and students. Many new buildings have opened with built-in mouse populations, for example. Changing landscape features can expose habitat for rodents and help drive them into buildings for shelter. Be sure to explicitly include IPM steps and roles in design and construction in your IPM plan to help avoid these

scenarios.

Coming soon...School IPM According to the Experts

What unresolved pest management challenges is your district facing this year? What will you be doing differently in 2010? If you have stories to share, we want to hear them! Send us your most perplexing questions and we'll see if we can get them answered in a future newsletter. Email your comments and questions to [Zach Bruns](#).



Voluntary IPM Gaining a Foothold in New Hampshire

New Hampshire's motto, "Live Free or Die", reflects the state's strong tradition of Yankee independence. Likewise, school IPM in the state is voluntary, not mandated. In the spirit of volunteerism, [Northeast School IPM Working Group](#) member Felicia

Motherway asked Ed Murdough at the NH Department of Education, Arife Ozkan with the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food and Dick Wendell, Exeter Schools facilities director to take on the state's first school IPM demonstration program in Exeter.



Motherway enlisted another community member, Kathleen White, to help. "After that, things sort of snowballed," said Motherway. "We brought together people willing to work and learn to build a sustainable school IPM program." To Motherway, sustainability means living on after the project's temporary infusion of grant dollars is expended.

To learn how others have succeeded, Motherway and White travelled to Maine where state law requires all schools to appoint an IPM coordinator, adopt an IPM policy and use IPM practices. Guided by Joe Stone, facilities director and IPM coordinator for Municipalities in School Administrative District (MSAD) # 35 in southern Maine, the NH pair toured several schools to see IPM in action. Stone advised Motherway and White to create a simple IPM plan that stresses the importance of training for facilities staff to keep them interested, updated and involved in the school IPM process.

Motherway and White returned to Exeter with a copy of the [Maine School IPM Toolkit](#) to help guide planning, notification, pest monitoring and record-keeping. Exeter Facilities Director Dick Wendell asked Motherway and White to help develop an IPM policy to lay a foundation for the program and explicitly state the district's commitment to IPM.

Lynn Braband, co-leader of the Northeast School IPM Working Group and IPM specialist with the New York State IPM Program, conducted an initial school building assessment to identify opportunities to improve sanitation and exclusion. Stan Swier and John Roberts from the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension assessed IPM needs for the turf and grounds. Swier and Roberts advised Dick Wendell to transition to an IPM approach to turf and landscape management, including natural, organic products, a better understanding of health soil biology and sound cultural practices.

Marc Lame from Indiana University travelled to Exeter twice to introduce the Monroe Model approach to school IPM and train the

Exeter IPM team. The Monroe Model focuses on facilitating IPM implementation by helping staff and administrators understand why improvements are necessary and providing them with tools to make the transition to IPM more efficient, without undue burden on their daily work. Lane also helped the team develop the Exeter Pest Press, a newsletter used to communicate IPM principles and techniques to the entire school community.

IPM specialist Arife Ozkan has played a critical role as local coordinator and liaison between the Exeter team and the working group. Recognizing the need for continued technical support, Ozkan convinced University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension to commit staff time to school IPM. Extension specialist Margaret Hagen is now on board to help other NH schools replicate Exeter's success.

"The school department is well on track toward establishing an effective IPM program," says Kathy Murray, Maine Department of Agriculture's School IPM Program Coordinator and working group co-leader. "They're working with their pest management contractors to establish a good pest monitoring and record-keeping system. And they have established an organic turf care program with the help of an organic turf care provider."

"We are committed to keeping this program going," says Motherway. "After all, it's about our kids and making sure their schools are healthy places to learn and grow."

Contacts: [Lynn Braband](#), Cornell University. [Kathy Murray](#), Maine Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources. [Felicia Motherway](#), Exeter School Department. [Arife Ozkan](#), NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food.



Non-chemical Methods for Fighting Bed Bugs

In [November's newsletter](#), New York Department of Education's Michael Siciliano and the Central Ohio Bed Bug Task Force refuted common myths surrounding bed bugs in schools. We were reminded that even though bed bugs do not transmit diseases, they often elicit reactions of disgust and panic which can lead to excessive and unnecessary pesticide applications.

If your district is facing problems with bed bugs, consider the following effective, non-chemical options:

- Thoroughly clean infested classrooms, including upholstered furniture, curtains, rugs and carpets with a commercial grade vacuum.
- Wash and dry clothes and empty backpacks using hot water and high heat—a temperature of about 122° F or higher is needed to kill bed bugs.
- Dispose of infested items that cannot be cleaned.
- Reduce clutter to make ongoing cleaning and inspection easier and faster.
- Seal cracks and crevices including those behind wall-mounted

equipment, along baseboards, etc.

- Repair or remove loose wallpaper or other wall coverings.

Additionally, vacuums or steaming with a commercial steam cleaner can effectively remove or destroy bed bugs of all life stages.

Dr. Changlu Wang, assistant extension specialist at Rutgers, directs a research program aimed at developing effective, least-toxic bed bug control techniques and monitoring programs for schools and other community settings. His efforts focus on early detection and non-chemical elimination, such as [homemade bed bug detectors](#). Dr. Wang's most recent collaboration project with fellow Rutgers researcher Wan-Tien Tsai.

For more information on bed bugs, please visit [Bed Bug Central](#).