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School IPM 2015

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

School IPM 2015 Newsletter: January 2014

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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. House mice and 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.



Head Lice: A Lingering Pest

Background

It would be great if the onset of winter would bring an end to all pest problems, but this could not be further from the truth. Winter is prime time for head lice outbreaks. Contrary to popular belief, head lice are not a sign of poor hygiene; in fact, lice are perfectly comfortable on a clean head. Six to twelve million cases of head lice occur each year in the US.

Lice eggs, known as "nits," are firmly adhered onto hair shafts, making it especially difficult to remove them. Each louse can live up to one

month and produce one hundred offspring with regular meals of human blood. Head lice can be transferred by head-to-head contact, sharing hats, combs and pillows.



What's New This Month

Several Penn State University graduate students created a number of natural enemy videos as part of a USDA NE SARE grant project. They are posted as "[Pests and Natural Enemies](#)" Youtube channel.

Please check out this great IPM educational resource!

The Northeastern IPM Center has collected pages from the private diaries of pests and turned them into an annual report. We invite you to get to know some of the pests we face and learn about the Northeastern IPM Center's role in supporting IPM solutions. [Click here](#) to start reading!

Highlights

The Pesticide Research Center has a great new tool called The Product Evaluator. This online, hazard-ranking tool provides information on human health and environmental toxicity for over 20,000 pesticide products! To learn more, [click here](#).

EPA/NEHS Children's Centers 2014 Webinar Series, Protection Children's Health for a Lifetime.

Screening for head lice in schools is a very useful role for the school health professional. Active infestations need to be addressed individually. Parents of all children using the room with any child with confirmed headlice should be notified and provided with basic information including description, signs and symptoms; strategies to eliminate headlice. The information should include where to go for additional help.

School districts vary in adoption and enforcement of the controversial "No Nits" policy, which states that any student with head lice, even a single nit, should be forced to stay home from school. The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) and the [National Association of School Nurses](#) advocate that "No Nit" policies should be discontinued. Since lice do not spread disease or have any harmful effect other than an itchy scalp, requiring students to miss school is unnecessary and detrimental to their performance. The presence of nits alone is not a good predictor of infestations; only about 18% of children with nits alone will become infested with adult lice. Supporters of the zero tolerance policy, including the [National Pediculosis Association](#), state that the only way to control and stop the cycle of lice infestation is to keep kids out of school until all nits are removed.

How to Spot Head Lice



Lice have three pairs of legs and are grayish-white in color. Nits are oval white cylinders that are about a sixteenth of an inch long. Lice prefer to lay their eggs near the ears and the back of the head.

Prevention and Treatment

Children should be encouraged not to share combs, hats or other personal belongings. Once an infestation is detected, non-chemical treatment options include washing clothing, pillow cases, sheets, blankets and other bedding material in hot soapy water and drying on a high heat cycle to kill all lice and their eggs. Use of lice sprays on furniture and toys is not effective. Non-washable items can be sealed in plastic bags for seven to ten days.

Manual removal of nits close to the head is always recommended. Fine-toothed "nit combs" are helpful. Combing and brushing wet hair damages lice and eggs significantly. Additionally, use of a hair dryer further injures adults, nymphs and nits. Botanical-based lice removal aids such as Lice-B-Gone® and De-Licer® may ease removal.

To remove lice and nits,

1. Comb and divide hair into sections, use a metal fine toothed louse comb to remove nits and lice. After combing each section dip the comb in a container of hot soapy water to remove lice and nits.
2. Repeat if nits are still attached within 1 cm of the scalp.
3. Repeat until all the sections of hair have been systematically combed.
4. Clean nit removal comb, clips, brushes, headphones, hats, etc.

The mission of the EPA/NIEHS Centers program is to reduce children's health risks, protect children from environmental threats and promote their health and well-being in the communities where they live, learn and play.

Join the [webinar](#), Chemicals in Consumer Products Wednesday, February 12, 2014
1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. EST

Reminder! The 2014 National Environmental Leadership Award in Asthma Management surfaces and illuminates best-practices in delivering environmental asthma management!
[Applications](#) are due on February 3, 2014, 11:59 p.m. EST

Upcoming Events

February 4, 2014
IPM Coordinator Training
Lubbock, TX
[More Information](#)

February 5th, 2014
Bed Bug Workshop
Rockford, IL
[More Information](#)

February 5th, 2014
Re-certification Workshop on Food Processing Sanitation and Pest Management
Rochester, NY
[More Information](#)

Quick Links

For more information about head lice, download the [USEPA guide: IPM for Head Lice in Schools \(PDF\)](#).

→ Cockroaches: A Cause for Concern

There are a number of reasons cockroaches demand attention; they contaminate food with their droppings and decaying bodies, and transfer bacteria to food and food preparation surface. Cockroaches can multiply quickly, and cockroach debris is an allergy and asthma trigger.

Stealth behavior

Cockroaches have a reputation for evading human capture through their quick maneuvers and ability to squeeze through small cracks. Did you know that cockroaches have another survival trick? Like an acrobat, the cockroach can propel itself beneath a ledge by running at full speed, diving off the edge and then, at the last moment, grasping to the edge of a surface with hook-like claws on its back legs. The cockroach uses its momentum to swing like a pendulum and cling beneath the ledge, upside-down. This pendulum swing has a similar effect to bungee jumping, subjecting the cockroach to three to five times the force of gravity! Read more about cockroach stealth behavior [here](#).

Identifying the American cockroach



The adult American cockroach is typically two and one-eighth to two and three-eighths inches long and has a glossy, reddish-brown appearance. Males have wings that extend past the abdomen, whereas females have shorter wings. They prefer dark, damp, warm locations such as floor drains, basements, sewers or storage areas. They are generally found in ground-level food storage areas and places where food is prepared.

Identifying the German cockroach

The adult German cockroach is typically one-half to five-eighths of an inch long and is light brown in color. They are best identified by their small size and two dark parallel lines that run from the back of the head to the wings. Although their wings are fully developed, unlike the American cockroach, they cannot fly. The German cockroach is usually



found in kitchens near dishwashers, stoves or sinks, preferring to hide in cracks and dark places where it is warm and humid.

IPM for cockroaches

The most effective way to control cockroaches is to prevent them from entering buildings and eliminate sources of food and water. Caulk and seal all holes and gaps that could serve as entryways or harborage, particularly in food service areas. Improving sanitation and making repairs are small steps that go a long way. Place sticky traps in infested areas instead of spraying in order to track movement and identify locations of harborages to seal up. Use a HFPA-

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movement, and identify locations of harborages to seal up. Use a HEPA filtered vacuum to remove cockroaches and debris from harborages. Setting action thresholds, like those below, is one way to help determine appropriate actions.

Average number of cockroaches per zone	Action
0	None
1-2	Bait stations, check sanitation
3-6	Spot treat, add or replace baits, review sanitation
7-15	Thorough bait and crack and crevice application, revisit in two weeks
15+	Close facility and conduct thorough crack and crevice inspection and sanitation

To learn more about cockroach behavior, biology and IPM tactics, check out the University of Florida's [IPM for Cockroaches in Schools](#).

Photo credits: [University of Florida IFAS Extension](#)

New Year, Deep Clean, Fresh Start!

It is that time of year when we spend more time indoors. This can lead to more clutter, which can provide a perfect winter home for pests. Signs of infestation include droppings, holes chewed in pest-edible materials, and paper stashes in corners or behind and under appliance and fixtures. Here are some great tips for custodians and teachers to keep pest presence to a minimum:

1. Identify, inspect and clean if necessary **hard to reach places**. These are often dark, hidden areas that require looking under and behind furniture, equipment and fixtures. Periodically inspect for food debris or signs of pests, moving items as needed for a thorough inspection.
1. **Untidy storage areas** lead to accumulations of debris and hiding places for pests. Keep shelving and storage closets neat and orderly. Dispose of cardboard shipping containers when new shipments arrive and store pest-attractive materials in clear containers off the floor.
2. **Trash bins** should be lined with thick trash bags that fit properly to ensure that trash goes directly in the bag, and that bags will not leak. Regularly wipe down trash bins and wash out the bottom to remove any build up of food for pests.
3. Restrict **food and drink** to designated areas and clean up spills immediately after they occur. If food is kept in classrooms, dispose of perishable food at the end of each day and store non-perishable food in sealable containers. Make sure to report to

cleaning staff any spills on carpet or in hard-to-reach areas as soon as possible. Implementing a school-wide locker clean out every month is a great way to ensure that food and drinks are not forgotten.

4. **Monitoring, inspecting and reporting** are crucial to the success of an IPM program. Take notice of pest vulnerable areas (PVAs) which typically have potential access to food, water and harborage. PVAs are areas prone to infestation and require more intensive monitoring and inspection than other areas of a facility. Report pest-friendly conditions, or signs of pest infestation to the person in charge of receiving and taking the proper steps to resolve.

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