

# School IPM 2015

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

School IPM 2015 Newsletter: March 2012

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\*View this newsletter as a [PDF](#).

### 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](http://www.schoolipm2015.com).

### IPM Coordinators Vital to IPM Program Success

An IPM coordinator is an essential piece of the school IPM puzzle. They provide the leadership and networking to achieve pest complaint and pesticide risk reduction by working hand-in-hand with parents, students, teachers, staff members and pest management professionals.

According to Janet Hurley, extension program specialist with Texas AgriLife Extension Service, "The ideal coordinator is someone who is a key, influential person within the district who can motivate teachers, administrators, food service, custodial and maintenance staff." The coordinator should have the power to make decisions and effect change quickly. "If the coordinator doesn't have that power," says Hurley, "it can be a little like a Mario game. The issue has to jump up a level to the coordinator's boss for resolution, and then back down to the coordinator level. It's just not efficient."

IPM coordinators can be responsible for tasks including interpreting the district's IPM policy, maintaining the IPM plan, ensuring notifications of pesticide applications go out to the right people, conducting facility inspections and maintaining records of pest complaints and pesticide applications. Depending on the size of the district, the IPM coordinator may also be the pesticide applicator, facilities director and/or superintendent. Coordinators often wear many hats, so it is important for them to enlist strong support and cooperation of key staff.

Spring Independent School District (ISD), located in Texas, has worked hard to obtain cooperation with other departments like risk management, child nutrition and student health to implement IPM



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## What's New This Month

Washington State University released a new [pest press](#) on problem birds, including sparrows, pigeons and starlings.

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## Upcoming Events

March 27-29, 2012

7th International IPM Symposium  
Memphis, TN  
[More Information](#)

April 11, 2012

California DPR IPM Workshop  
Carlsbad, CA  
[More Information](#)

April 11-12, 2012

Texas School IPM Coordinator  
Training  
Angelo, TX  
[More Information](#)

May 20-23, 2012

2012 National Conference on  
Urban Entomology  
Atlanta, GA  
[More Information](#)

June 21, 2012

California DPR IPM Workshop  
Tulare, CA  
[More Information](#)

practices. David Henderson, IPM coordinator and lead certified applicator at Spring ISD, says it's incredibly important to build a rapport with key school departments so the entire IPM program is a success.

In addition to knowing key pests and appropriate solutions, Hurley suggests coordinators should also be trained on how to change human behaviors. "IPM is no different than any other behavioral science. Coordinators need to know how to change a teacher's belief that all bugs are evil and must be dealt with immediately using pesticides," says Hurley. IPM coordinators function as educators to teach staff their role in the IPM process.

Cecil Fueston, IPM coordinator with McKinney ISD in Texas, also stresses the importance of communication and education. When he became the IPM coordinator, Fueston made it a priority to stop by the schools regularly to introduce himself and explain his role. "Now I'm known as 'the bug man,'" Fueston says. Chris Mills, IPM specialist at Union County Public Schools in North Carolina, says it's important for him to make periodic visits to the schools because, "I'm constantly talking with the students and staff to train them on how they can help with pest management," says Mills.

State or regional workshops put on by organizations like [Texas AgriLife Extension](#), [California Department of Pesticide Regulation \(DPR\)](#), [University of Minnesota IPM3](#) and [Rutgers](#) can be a great source of information and often include continuing education credits for IPM coordinators. The [Facility Masters Webcast Series](#) hosts informative webinars, and professional listservs such as [Schoolbugs](#) provide an avenue for school IPM professionals to ask questions and get answers. "We attend trainings every year, despite the Texas requirement that training only needs to happen every three years," says Henderson, "because we want to learn new things right when they happen."

Mills comments that it would be useful to have more regional training opportunities strictly for IPM coordinators, like that handled by Texas Integrated Pest Management Affiliate for Public Schools (TIPMAPS). Fueston describes TIPMAPS as an avenue for training, networking, and problem solving. "It's really helpful to be able to bounce ideas off of others and talk about pest management techniques that work in a school system," says Mills.

Need a position description for an IPM coordinator for your district? Samples are available from the [California DPR](#), [Guilford County Schools](#) and [Texas AgriLife Extension](#).



**More Than 500 Facility Managers Hear Tips for Bed Bug and Lice Management**



## Facility Masters Webcast Series

### Quick Links

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[Facility Masters Webcast Series](#) recently highlighted IPM strategies in the webcast, "Effective IPM for Bed Bugs and Lice in the Educational Environment." Unlike rodents, ants and cockroaches, head lice and bed bugs do not establish reproducing populations in K-12 schools or childcare facilities. Rather, these insects are introduced by children or staff. Effective management depends on reducing transmission in schools and working with parents to resolve infestations at home.

According to Dr. Thomas Green, president of the IPM Institute of North America, head lice are a fact of life in childcare facilities and elementary grades, with some six to 12 million cases per year in the US. Cases are rare in the upper grades, high schools or colleges. For lice, pesticide applications in schools and childcare facilities are not appropriate or effective because lice do not survive long off of the human body. Lice eggs do not hatch unless they remain close to the scalp. Rather, effective approaches include hanging coats, hats, scarves, etc. on separated hooks to prevent contact, and educating staff and children to avoid head-to-head contact, or sharing combs, hats or other objects that contact the head. Alerting school health staff and all parents of children in classrooms where a case has been confirmed is essential so children can be properly checked. Parents should be provided information on how to resolve confirmed cases.

[EnviroSafe](#), a Michigan-based pest management service provider, supplies bottles of De-Licer, an enzyme-based shampoo made by EnviroSafe's sister company [Safe Cleaners](#), to its school district clients to give out to parents. Bob Stoddard, president of EnviroSafe, says, "We understand that head lice are a huge issue and we also feel that head lice treatment is one of the major ways children are exposed to pesticides." Stoddard believes that when parents are given lice shampoo that works, they feel as though the school is being proactive. EnviroSafe also vacuums and cleans classrooms where lice have been confirmed.

Similarly, education to resolve infestations at home is essential when dealing with bed bugs. Non-boarding K-12 schools lack a food source for bed bugs at night and so infestations do not develop. Wayne Walker, senior pest control technician with University of Florida Department of Housing, recommends that schools provide basic information to parents including how to deal with luggage after travel, such as not placing suitcases on the bed to unpack, discouraging bringing used furniture into the home, and how to look for bed bugs or signs of bed bugs, in the home and in hotels. Bed bug adults are about the size and color of an apple seed. Immature stages and eggs are smaller. Low populations are very difficult to detect. Areas around and behind headboards, and along seams of mattresses, box springs and dust ruffles are good places to check for bed bugs and their fecal smears, which are small, dark stains the color of dried blood.

Universities or boarding schools that include dorms or apartments may harbor bed bugs. Walker suggests equipping technicians with an inspection kit, including a flashlight, collection bags, magnifying glass, a crevice tool such as a cut credit card and black light flashlight, because bed bug eggs fluoresce under black light. Heat is the most effective treatment against bed bugs. Walker advises heating infested items to at least 120 degrees Fahrenheit for 20 minutes, which kills all

bed bug stages. Other good treatment options are vacuums, steam and pesticides containing diatomaceous earth, which causes the bugs to dehydrate.

Additional resources for bed bug education can be found at [K12 Masters](#), [US EPA Bed Bug Information](#) and [University of Florida Bed Bug IPM](#).

Roger Young's [Facility Masters](#) offers excellent information for schools to develop and optimize their IPM programs. This and other previous webcasts conducted by Facility Masters are available [online](#). In addition to the webcasts, Facility Masters created a FREE nationwide listserv to help educational professionals ask questions, get answers and share best practices for operating and maintaining quality learning environments that promote student health and achievement. To subscribe to the listserv, send a blank email to [join-facilitymasters@talk.netatlantic.com](mailto:join-facilitymasters@talk.netatlantic.com).



## National Healthy Schools Day Provides Opportunities for IPM

Spring is a great time to take on new challenges and with [National Healthy Schools Day](#) just around the corner on April 24, 2012, March is a perfect opportunity to both prepare for the inevitable increase in pest activity that comes with warmer weather, and take your IPM program to another level.

School officials, staff and parents can use materials like [Kick the Pesticide Habit: Children, Learning and Poisons Don't Mix](#), [The Business Case for Integrated Pest Management in Schools: Cutting Costs and Increasing Benefits](#) and [IPM Standards for Schools: Tactics and Resources for Reducing Pest and Pesticide Risks in Schools and Other Sensitive Environments](#) to look for opportunities for improvement.

Districts looking to implement a new IPM program can start with developing an [IPM policy](#) to formally state their commitment to IPM. Next steps can include designating an IPM coordinator, providing training for the coordinator and key custodial, maintenance and food service staff, and beginning to assemble an [IPM plan](#). Districts with existing programs can evaluate schools using an [audit checklist](#). Particular attention should be paid to potential sources of food, water, harborage and access for pests.

The most cost-effective measures you can take include installing door sweeps under exterior doors, sealing cracks and crevices around baseboards, and trimming vegetation back to reduce pest access and leave a clear inspection path around buildings. Our [Building Out Pests](#) article series, published in October, November and December 2011, gives more tips for structural pest management.

National Healthy Schools Day [graphics, flyers and posters](#) are available to download and print. Contact [Healthy Schools Network, Inc.](#) for more information.



## Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides and Oregon State University Team up for Oregon Schools

Last month, we reported on the new state school IPM law in Oregon. Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides (NCAP) has been playing an active role, working with Oregon State University (OSU) to create pilot programs with Bethel and Beaverton school districts. "With or without laws, it's important to have model districts to show what a successful IPM program looks like," comments Stock. Aimee Code with NCAP adds that, "Some school districts are daunted by having to create IPM policies. The model school districts act as leaders, able to help their peers and also simply to show that it is both possible and preferable to use IPM." Stock plans to start new pilots in smaller districts in the near future. "Many districts in our state have three or fewer schools," says Stock. "They will implement IPM differently than larger schools."

NCAP and OSU also secured funding from the Western IPM Center to create video curriculum on house mouse control in schools. According to an OSU survey of schools, mice are the top reported public health pest. The short videos will cover key components of mouse control including the biology and habits of mice; sanitary and exclusionary measures to prevent mouse infestations; proper trap setting techniques to control mice; and how to properly dispose of dead mice.