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KICK OFF 2006 WITH AN IPM POLICY!



Today, school districts are competing to establish good enrollment. Your district should be competitive not just in terms of grades and extra curricular activities, but also from an environmental health standpoint.

Integrated Pest Management is a children's environmental health issue, so having a district policy on IPM is very important; it can be a useful tool when dealing with local media or concerned, inquisitive parents who often want to know more about this "IPM thing". School district personnel themselves – from teachers to superintendents – are typically unprepared to field questions on IPM, or perhaps even unaware of the program altogether. The IPM Policy is therefore not a document which, once drafted, should be immediately placed in a file drawer and forgotten about along with insurance policies and expired work orders.

The IPM Policy should be a well known, and circulated document.




As a children's environmental health issue, the IPM policy should be brought to the attention of your entire district staff, circulated, sent home to parents, and introduced to the school board. It should be used as an informative tool which recognizes the district's commitment to providing a safe and healthy learning environment.

An IPM Policy is a document which represents a school district's commitment to improve the health and safety of students and staff

A district's IPM Policy should be short and sweet: a statement of goals that runs no longer than a page or two at most. (an *IPM Plan* is a separate document which details how the IPM Policy is to be implemented). So kick off 2006 by reviewing your existing policy or creating one – and when you're done, share it! Below is a quick-reference guide to the critical components of an IPM Policy.

Critical components for an IPM Policy:

1. Define "Pest". This may seem like a no-brainer, but consider things like weeds and feral cats, not just bugs. Organisms commonly used in clarifying the term "pest" include those which:

-  compromise a building's structural integrity;
-  pose an increased threat to environmental health and safety;
-  detract from a productive learning environment.

2. Determine your definition of "Integrated Pest Management". You can use the following, modify it, or use it to launch your own bright ideas:

IPM is a strategy for managing pests using simple and effective principals that everyone can understand. School IPM utilizes a combination of techniques including education, sanitation, maintenance and habitat manipulation, bio-control methods, and reduced-risk pesticides.

3. Create a simple statement on the district's commitment to using IPM practices, note any goals (i.e., improved environmental health, fewer missed school days by asthmatic children, reduced pest sightings). A side effect of good IPM is reduced pesticide exposure of students and staff. Chemically sensitive students such as those with asthma, ADD/ADHD, and autism benefit enormously.

4. Lastly, determine what your IPM practices will consist of. Put your thinking caps on and spend a moment checking out some of the websites listed as references on page 2.

An effective, sustainable IPM program includes at least the following:



- ✓ Pest monitoring is used to detect pests before numbers become a problem; scheduled monthly sprays are **not** employed as part of any kind of IPM program;
- ✓ The district will use least-toxic options when chemical control is necessary;
- ✓ Pests are correctly identified prior to remediation action;
- ✓ Pest sighting logs are used by school inhabitants to record the presence of pests;
- ✓ Action thresholds are employed to determine when pest numbers exceed allowable limits, thus requiring action;
- ✓ There is an emphasis on education of school staff and their role in pest management;

- ✓ Records are kept on amount and type of pesticides used, pest sightings by staff, monitoring trap results, and pest management related work orders
- ✓ An existing district-level staff member or contracted pest management professional is appointed as the "IPM Specialist"; this title designates him or her as a contact person and educator on pest management topics
- ✓ A commitment to evaluation of the IPM program
- ✓ All state laws governing pesticide use and notification are followed



Adoption Strategies

Find out what's already there! If you have an existing IPM policy, look it over for the critical components listed here and re-address it if necessary. If your district does not have a policy, consider this as an opportunity to formalize what you've been doing already. Arizona schools who belong to the Children's Environmental Health Coalition and who have adopted the Monroe IPM Model already know that this program stands out as unique among others in the nation; it is based on demonstration, evaluation, and verification. In other words – you have to walk the walk. Many school districts have an IPM Policy on file, but do little in the way of implementing real IPM.

Once you've got a policy that represents your district IPM program, **introduce** it to the school board at the next meeting (the University of Arizona School IPM folks are often available to attend and corroborate your district's efforts in the program). **Circulate** the policy among school staff and bring it to the attention of your superintendents and administration – they like knowing what's going on in their district, particularly when it's about children's environmental health! **Include** the IPM Policy in your parent mail-out information. Promote it as an environmental health policy in outreach mailings; parents and PTO groups will be glad to have this information, and the district as a whole will benefit from program awareness. Include the IPM Policy as a standard document in new-hire information packets, and encourage staff to talk to new-hires about it.

Finally, consult the information sources below and utilize your UA school IPM resources to help you craft a policy that is representative of your district's IPM program.

For Information on IPM in Schools & IPM Policy examples:

1. National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities, Resources list: <http://www.edfacilities.org/ri/pests.cfm>
2. Safer Pest Control Project website: <http://spcpweb.org/>
3. University of Arizona Cooperative Extension – Urban IPM website: <http://cals.arizona.edu/urbanipm/insects/bees/>
4. University of Florida School IPM website: <http://schoolipm.ifas.ufl.edu/>
5. US EPA IPM in Schools: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/ipm/>

Arizona's Children's



Environmental Health Program

The Fifth National IPM Symposium is offering the first ever **IPM Achievement Awards**, which recognize the achievements of dedicated school staffers and service providers (such as your pest management company). Awards will be presented at the Symposium in St. Louis, MO, April 4-6th. Awards include free registration and travel to the Symposium. For more information on how to nominate an individual, industry partner, or organization for the IPM Achievement award, check out the IPM Symposium website:

<http://www.ipmcenters.org/ipmsymposium/>. Deadline for nominations is Feb. 15th, 2006.

The University of Arizona IPM in Schools website is coming! Dawn & Jennifer are working with a campus webmaster to update existing school IPM information and drastically expand the UA website to include a variety of IPM resources for school folks.



The major overhaul will be completed in spring 2006; however, all Pest Presses are currently accessible on the site (in Adobe and Word formats).

<http://ag.arizona.edu/urbanipm/>

In recognition of Martin Luther King Day this month, we share with you one of our favorite quotes:

"All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence."

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

**For more information on IPM in Schools program contact Dawn Gouge or Jennifer Snyder
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Few bugs are bad! More than 95% of all insect species are beneficial to humans