



Background Information for Integrated Pest Management Checklist

OFFICIAL POLICY STATEMENT

Developing an official policy statement for integrated pest management (IPM) provides a useful first step in changing from a conventional pesticide program to an IPM program. A policy statement goes beyond simply stating a commitment to support and implement an IPM approach. It also provides guidance on how to incorporate the IPM program into existing services, education, record keeping, notification, and pesticide storage and purchases. See **Appendix B: “Developing Indoor Air Policies”** in the *IAQ Coordinator’s Guide* and EPA’s *Pest Control in the School Environment: Adopting Integrated Pest Management*¹ for sample IPM policy statements.

Instructions

Read this section before completing the Integrated Pest Management Checklist.

DESIGNATING PEST MANAGEMENT ROLES

Determine the respective roles of everyone affected by the IPM program to ensure its success.

- Designate a **pest manager** who will observe and evaluate each site after receiving pest management training. The pest manager decides what needs to be done and directs others to take the necessary actions to prevent and resolve pest problems.
- Involve **decision makers** in the IPM program. These people may need to authorize the program, and they will definitely control the money for IPM projects.
- Encourage **students and staff** (the occupants of the building) to be responsible for cleaning up their areas (for example, cleaning up food

leftovers and paper clutter, keeping food out of lockers, and removing gum from underneath desks).

- Educate **parents** about IPM practices in schools and homes. Parents also need to be aware of current pest management practices in their children’s schools and, when appropriate, should share their knowledge of and experience with pest management with the school.
- Ensure that **pest management professionals** (PMPs) incorporate IPM into their contract language and work.

SETTING PEST MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Set appropriate pest management objectives for school buildings and outdoor sites. Tailor objectives for each situation. Objectives for indoor sites may include:

- Protecting children’s health (from pest problems and excessive or unnecessary pesticide applications).
- Maintaining the integrity of building structures.
- Eliminating injury to students and staff.
- Preventing interference with the learning environment of students.

Objectives for outdoor sites may include:

- Providing the best possible turf in athletic fields.
- Ensuring safe play areas.

¹*Pest Control in the School Environment: Adopting Integrated Pest Management*. (August 1993) Prepared by U.S. EPA. EPA 735-F-93-012. To order, call NSCEP at 1-800-490-9198.

INSPECTING, IDENTIFYING, AND MONITORING

An IPM program consists of a cycle: inspect, identify, monitor, evaluate, and choose the appropriate management methods. After inspecting the school for signs of pests, accurately identifying the type of pests and their location, monitoring to determine the extent of the problem, and evaluating the situation, choose an effective management method. To ensure the method is successful, routinely monitor the areas for evidence of pests, potential pest habitats, and size of the current population. The information obtained through routine monitoring can be used to evaluate current prevention measures and to determine if modifications are necessary.

SETTING ACTION THRESHOLDS

Although the presence of a certain number of pests may be tolerable, when the population exceeds the set threshold, take action. The pest manager and occupants of the building should work together to set a threshold when pest control becomes necessary. It is important to consider the needs of sensitive individuals when establishing a threshold and to use all available data obtained through inspecting, identifying, and monitoring.

PREVENTIVE STRATEGIES

Preventive measures are an essential component of IPM programs to reduce the need for pesticide applications. Strategies exist for both indoor and outdoor sites.

Indoor Strategies

- Install or repair screens in windows.
- Caulk and seal openings in walls.
- Clean lockers and desks routinely.
- Keep areas as dry as possible (for example, remove standing water and water-damaged or wet materials immediately).
- Store food and waste in containers with tight lids.
- Rotate stored foods to remove the older items first.
- Wash lunch areas and kitchen floor frequently.
- Place screens on floor drains.
- Repair leaks and plumbing problems promptly.
- Empty standing buckets of water.
- Allow food only in designated areas.
- Clean trash cans regularly and use plastic liners.
- Keep school pets and pet cages clean.
- Eliminate clutter by removing excess paper, packaging, and boxes from classrooms and storage areas.



Outdoor Strategies

- Clean trash containers and gutters regularly.
- Store trash away from doors.
- Repair cracks in pavement and sidewalks.
- Provide adequate drainage away from building structures.
- Select a mixture of turf types (such as certified seed, sod, or plugs) that are best adapted for the area.
- Raise the mowing height to enhance the turf's competitiveness against weeds.
- Apply fertilizer appropriately, avoid excessive fertilizer, and use with aeration techniques.
- Prune branches of ornamental shrubs and trees to prevent access by pests.
- Select plant material from disease-resistant types of ornamental shrubs and trees.

Refer to *Pest Control in the School Environment: Adopting Integrated Pest Management* for a complete description of indoor and outdoor sites and strategies for pest prevention.



PESTICIDE USE AND STORAGE

When the use of pesticides is necessary, apply them judiciously. Encourage PMPs and school staff to choose the least toxic chemicals available as well as the most effective and efficient application techniques. Avoid dust and spray formulations if possible; baits, traps, or granules are the preferred formulations. Never treat rooms when children are present; schedule applications after hours or on weekends. Minimize pesticide exposure to occupants by storing pesticides in areas that are locked and inaccessible to undesignated personnel or are located offsite. Ensure that storage areas have adequate ventilation and flammable liquids are stored away from ignition sources. The school should notify staff, students, and parents of impending pesticide applications through posted notices or letters. Be prepared to provide more specific information to concerned individuals.

EVALUATING RESULTS AND RECORD-KEEPING

Accurate records of pest activity monitoring and pest management are critical to a successful IPM program. Record-keeping allows schools to evaluate the results of IPM practices and to determine if they are meeting their pest management objectives. Schools should maintain an accurate pest management log for each building in addition to records that fulfill state, school board, and local requirements.