



Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in Colorado Schools

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Pest Newsletter

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The **Colorado school Integrated Pest Management (IPM) implementation program** started in two pilot school districts (Boulder Valley School District and Denver Public School District) in 2009.

The IPM implementation team includes representatives from the Colorado Department Agriculture, Colorado State University, the University of Colorado, the Colorado Department of Public health and Environment, the Colorado department of Education, school districts, pest management professionals and community members.

The purpose of IPM program in schools is creates safe learning environment by reducing pest problems and pesticide applications in schools.

IPM implementation activities in selected pilot schools by our team include the following:

- Initial inspection of pest problems and pest conducive conditions (perceived pests and observed pests)
- Developing written inspection report on pest problems and pest management recommendation (immediate, short term, intermediate and long term action plan) for the district
- School district identifies and appoints IPM Coordinator
- IPM training of pilot school staff (custodial, kitchen and maintenance personnel), faculty and students
- Follow up inspections of school (three-six months after the initial inspection)
- Final program evaluation by IPM team
- The district takes over the program in pilot schools and expands to other schools

In 2010, more school districts will be included in the IPM implementation program.

IPM is different from the traditional pest control in schools

IPM is a process for achieving long term, environmentally sound pest suppression through use of management practices. IPM uses of a combination of strategies including prevention of pest populations by using sanitation, exclusion, mechanical, cultural methods that reduce the food, water, living space, and access used by pests. Some of the major principles include,

- Monitoring and identification pests to verify a pest problem.
- Training and communicating with the school community about pest problems, pest identification, pest-conducive-conditions, and pest management strategies.
- Targeted application of "least hazardous" pesticides only "as needed. Pesticides will be applied by a certified applicator when students and staff members are not present, such as non-instruction time or school vacation periods.

Traditional pest control programs in schools have often relied heavily on preventative pesticide applications that kill pests and at the same time leaving residue behind which may last for several days, weeks or months.

What are school pests? Pests are living organisms (animals, plants, or micro organisms) that interfere with humans for school site. Among the common pest problems in schools are mice, cockroaches, birds, bees, ants, flies, wasps, spiders, yellowjackets, weeds, etc.

Pest-conducive conditions in schools: These are conditions to causing or maintaining pest infestations by providing food, shelter and protection for pests. IPM identifies and reduces pest-conducive conditions during implementation in schools.

Pest vulnerable areas in schools: These are areas where all of a pest's basic needs come together: food, water, or moisture, warmth, living space (harborage) and a way into the facility. In schools and children centers, pest vulnerable areas may include kitchens, teachers' lounges, custodial closets, locker rooms, Home Economics classrooms and classrooms where food and water are present and any cluttered closets or other areas. Pest management efforts should focus on these pest vulnerable areas during inspection and IPM implementation.

For more information about school IPM Program in Colorado, Contact

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