



✓ Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Let's take a closer look at Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and School Pest Control issues. Since the pest control laws were enacted in September of 1995 by the Texas Structural Pest Control Board (SPCB), the goal has been to minimize the usage of pesticides while maximizing the benefits of lower costs and pesticide exposures through preventative measures and building surveillances.

The following topics present a few of the more frequently asked questions about Integrated Pest Management and how it relates to school operations:



What is Integrated Pest Management?

Technically, IPM is an effective and environmentally sensitive approach to pest management that relies on a combination of commonsense practices. IPM programs use current, comprehensive information on the life cycles of pests and their interactions with the environment. This information, in combination with available pest control methods, is used to manage pest damage by the most economical means, and with the least possible hazard to people, property, and the environment. IPM programs take advantage of all pest management options possibly including, but not limited to, the judicious use of pesticides.



Do the Texas Structural Pest Control Board regulations apply to private schools and church schools?

According to the Texas Structural Pest Control Board, "The integrated pest management program (IPM) only applies to public school districts, however, private and parochial schools are encouraged to follow the IPM standards when it comes to applying pesticides. The private and Parochial school are not required to follow IPM procedures but are recognized as accredited schools by the State Board of Education and are required to either meet the noncommercial applicator licensing requirements or contract the pest

control work to a commercial pest control business.ö



What are some components of an IPM management plan?

Although not legally required of private schools in the state of Texas, the basic components of a school IPM plan include information about the IPM coordinator such as his/her training information, address and emergency contact number. The school's policy statement concerning IPM should be included as well as copies of all public notification of pesticide applications and dated annual notifications. A hard copy of all Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS's) on all pesticides should be kept on hand in case of an emergency. Computer generated MSDS sheets are not acceptable. Other components in a school IPM plan typically include: pest sighting & observation logs for every school or area, action thresholds for various pests, and lists of needed building or maintenance improvements to enhance the IPM program.



What about IPM training requirements?

The Texas Structural Pest Control Board requires that public schools from the date of appointment of an IPM coordinator, training must be accomplished within 12 months. Private schools are not legally required to obtain this training, however it is usually recommended that your school IPM coordinator attend some type of IPM training in order to keep up with any changes in the regulations every 2-3 years.



If we sub-contract out our Pest Control Operations and IPM applications to a local company, is that the end of our responsibilities as a private school and IPM coordinator?

The IPM coordinator is still responsible for record keeping & retention functions, obtaining MSDS sheets for Hazard Communication (HAZCOM) purposes and making sure the notifications are submitted to parents, guardians & students.

A critical component in your school IPM program is to notify and document that your school staff that may not apply pesticides or herbicides. Placing this information in an employee handbook or similar document is a good idea because the document is signed by the staff member. Only properly licensed individuals may apply or even possess pesticides or herbicides.



Besides actual pesticide applications, what else are we doing to prevent pests?

Documenting building repairs is a common oversight in IPM programs. Repairs or

modifications to the structure or landscape are equally as important as the actual baiting for pests. Understanding pest needs is essential to implementing IPM effectively. Pests seek habitats that provide basic needs such as air, moisture, food, and shelter. Pest populations can be prevented or controlled by creating inhospitable environments, by removing some of the basic elements pests need to survive, or by simply blocking their access into buildings. Pests may also be managed by other methods such as traps, vacuums, or pesticides. An understanding of what pests need in order to survive is essential before action is taken. Tailoring your IPM program to your schools specific needs can save your school time and money, reduce liability and improve the overall learning atmosphere in the classrooms.



For Further Resources & Information on Integrated Pest Management Contact:

**Texas A&M Dallas Agricultural Research and Extension Center
IPM In Schools: Southwest Technical Resource Center**

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The Southwest Texas Resource Center is staffed by IPM specialists from Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico Cooperative Extension agencies. The staff includes experts in the field of entomology, turf grass, plant pathology, soil sciences, pesticide and health exposures and most of all, professionals concerned with children's health issues and effective pest management.

Texas Structural Pest Control Board

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New Mailing Address:

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Newslist Email:** newslist@spcbtx.org
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