
What is Integrated Pest Management?

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a common sense approach to pest control that seeks to reduce reliance on toxic pesticides. It uses a prevention-based system to manage pest populations, keeping them under control using the least-toxic methods possible.



An effective School IPM Program involves:

- a) **Educating** school staff, teachers, students, and administrators about their role in a successful IPM program;
- b) **Monitoring** the school building and grounds regularly to identify and manage pest populations before they become problems;
- c) **Preventing** pest problems through better sanitation and storage, pest-proofing waste disposal, structural maintenance, and good soil health;
- d) **Least Hazardous Approach** to pest management, using chemicals only as a last resort when preventative and mechanical controls have failed, and then choosing the least-toxic chemicals possible;
- e) **Notifying** school staff, students, and parents in writing before any pesticide is to be used on school grounds, and
- f) **Keeping Records** of pest occurrences and actions taken to establish trends that will help school staff to anticipate and prevent future problems.

Why is IPM Better for Schools?

IPM is more **COST EFFECTIVE** than conventional methods of pest control. Rather than controlling pests once they've already become a problem, the bulk of the effort in an IPM program is made in prevention. The majority of pest problems are avoided altogether by pest-proofing the school grounds, maintaining good sanitation and making regular inspections, thus eliminating the need for most control measures. In almost every case, the money saved on pest control more than makes up for investments in school maintenance, staff education, and sanitation.

More importantly, IPM is **HEALTHIER** for the school's students and staff. Pesticides have been linked to many health problems, including dizziness, headaches, rashes, and asthma attacks in the short term, and cancers, impaired neurological development, asthma, ADHD, increased chemical sensitivity, and reproductive disorders in the long term. Children, because of their size and rapid rate of development, are the most vulnerable to these types of negative effects from pesticides. An IPM system is clearly preferable for schools because it minimizes children's exposure to dangerous pesticides, more effectively controls pest populations, and improves the overall sanitation and structural integrity of the school building.



For more information, please see **Safer Schools: Achieving a Healthy Learning Environment Through Integrated Pest Management**, available from Beyond Pesticides at www.beyondpesticides.org/schools or contact the **Agricultural Resources Center and Pesticide Education Project** 206 New Bern Place Raleigh, NC 27601 (919) 833-5333 www.PESTed.org
