

# COMPONENTS OF AN IPM PROGRAM

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IPM Technical Resource Center

Integrated Pest Management for Schools and Childcare Facilities

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Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is based on an understanding of pest biology and habits, and uses a number of strategies, not just pesticides, to control pests. Good communication between administrators, staff, and the pest management professional is *critical* to the success of any school or childcare IPM program.

## **IPM Program Checklist:**

1. **Adopt an IPM policy.** Adopt a policy and/or guidelines that state how pests will be managed in your facilities and on grounds. An important consideration in policy development is establishing a procedure for notification of pesticide use.
2. **Designate an IPM Coordinator for each building.** This person will act as a liaison between the building occupants and the pest management professional. Staff members should report any pest sightings to this person so that they can be communicated to the pest management professional. Any recommendations made by the pest control technician (for cleaning or repairs, etc) should be relayed by the IPM Coordinator to the administration.
3. **Inspect all buildings and grounds.** Inspections should be performed by a pest management professional or another person who is knowledgeable about pest biology and habits. The inspector will note situations that are conducive to pest populations and recommend repairs, sealing of pest entry points, clutter reduction, improved sanitation, and monitoring procedures.
4. **Perform repairs as needed** to prevent pest access to buildings or to hiding spaces in walls and equipment. Also, repair any leaks and eliminate standing water wherever possible.
5. **Review sanitation practices and reduce clutter.** Sanitation includes areas such as kitchen cleaning and maintenance, waste disposal procedures, and elimination of clutter. Clutter is an important harborage for many pests, including rodents, spiders, and cockroaches. Elimination of cardboard and conversion to “box-less storage” is recommended, particularly in food areas. Sanitation *is* pest control!

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6. **Set up a monitoring program for pests.** Monitoring means regular careful inspection of facilities to determine if pests are present. Monitoring programs focus on pest-vulnerable areas such as kitchens, teacher's lounges, and custodial closets, and use tools such as pest sighting logs and insect "sticky traps." Staff should report any pest sightings to the IPM Coordinator.
7. **Identify potential pest species found and determine a control strategy** (if one is needed). Control strategies may include improved sanitation, repairs, and targeted pesticide treatments, among others.
8. **Only apply pesticides when a known pest is present.** Preventive treatments are generally not an effective way to manage pest populations, and are not a routine part of an IPM program.
9. **If a pesticide is needed, select the least hazardous pesticide.** Among the products and application methods available, select the least hazardous option that will effectively control the pest problem. Target treatments to the areas where pests hide. *Never apply a pesticide when children are present!*
10. **Keep records of pest activity and control measures taken** (chemical and other control techniques).
11. **Evaluate the program on a regular basis.**
12. **Become a "Certified IPM" school or childcare center.** Once your facility is following all of the above practices, you will be qualified for recognition in as an IPM school or childcare facility.

Many pest control professionals provide inspection and monitoring services and will work with you to implement an IPM program. Be sure that contracted services are consistent with your IPM policy. For an IPM program to work, school must do their part to improve sanitation, reduce clutter, and implement repairs and exclusion techniques recommended by the pest management professional.

For specific questions about implementing these steps, call the Toll-free IPM Hotline at 1-877-668-8IPM.