

Keeping Students Safe: Protecting Environmental Health in Schools

IPM Resources

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IPM Roles and Responsibilities

A successful IPM program includes active participation by all members of the school community.

- Responsibility and authority for implementing the preventative tactics that minimize pest problems lies with all levels of district staff. It begins with design and follows through to daily cleaning and maintenance.
- Sustaining low pest levels through time requires attention to infrastructure. Cleaning schedules, and maintenance and repair work should be addressed as part of the IPM planning.
- Keep buildings healthy by using barriers to pest entry and movement, moisture controls and limitation of food sources.
- Keep landscapes healthy by using the right plants for the sun, water and soil conditions and keeping the soil healthy.
- Build pest control and maintenance considerations into the design of buildings and landscapes.
- Community values are important in establishing standards of maintenance for school district facilities. However, requests for establishment of threshold standards beyond the scope and capability of district standards and budgets should be minimized.

Hiring Outside Contractors for Pest Control and IPM Work

******* If using an outside contractor for IPM or pest control work, make contract specifications clear and unambiguous. IPM means different things to different people, make sure your contractors understand that they should be using your definition, not one that simply ascribes the best chemical to use in a given situation.*******

- Contract for regular inspections, pest identification and infestation evaluations. This is Integrated Pest Management. Don't contract for regular pesticide application.
- Contract for service during normal working hours, whenever possible. This will allow the pest control technician to observe typical working conditions and habits, allow free communication between the technician and those who regularly work in each area and help to discourage the use of sprays, fogs and area-wide treatments. In public schools it will allow you to pre-schedule, and pre-notify as required by law.
- Contract for service by licensed applicators only. Ask for the licensed applicators names and license numbers in the bid request.

- Contract for minimal reliance on pesticides. Require appropriate district level approval of any chemical application, based upon an evaluation of the alternatives available, their efficacy, their toxicity, and the manner in which they are applied.
- Performance standards should be based upon the elimination or control of infestations to tolerable levels, not on the completion of pesticide applications.

Pesticide Use in Schools -Posting and Notification Requirements

In 2002 a new law went into effect. The law requires public schools and licensed day-cares to notify parents, guardians and school employees of pesticide use on school grounds and in school facilities. Notification consists of two primary components: an annual notification and a notification prior to application (pre-notification). All pesticide applications must be posted and pesticide application records must be kept and made available.

The best way to minimize the costs and impacts of this law is to reduce the need to use pesticides by implementing IPM.

- Compliance Checklist for Schools:
<http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/Pesticides/docs/SchoolNotificationChecklistrevised2.pdf>
- Compliance Guide for the Use of Pesticides at Public Schools (K-12) and Licensed Day-Care Centers: <http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/Pesticides/docs/ComplGuidePub075.pdf>
- Request a Dept. of Agriculture Inspection for your school's pesticide use plan:
<http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/Pesticides/docs/SchoolPostingLetter2.pdf>

Pesticide Disposal

The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) collects unusable pesticides for proper disposal. Participants are able to eliminate the hazard of continuing to store aging and unneeded products. There is **no charge** for this disposal service and WSDA takes over legal responsibility for proper disposal. Events are typically scheduled in western Washington during the spring and summer months.

- Contact WSDA at 360-902-2056, 1-877-301-4555 or <http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/Pesticides/WastePesticide.htm> for more information or to sign up for an event.

King County Voucher Incentive Program

You may be interested in our Small Quantity Generator Voucher Incentive Program. This program can provide you with a voucher worth as much as \$500 to repay the costs your facility incurs when you implement solutions that reduce your use of hazardous materials and generation of hazardous wastes.

Please call the Hazardous Waste Management Program in King County to learn how you can take part in this program. 206-263-3080. A site visit is required before a voucher can be

issued. Each school in King County is eligible, although some have already been visited and have used up their voucher.

Mulch

Mulch can aid in moisture retention as well as weed suppression. It also greatly reduces “mower blight” when used around trees in turf. Organic mulches work best because they help build the soil in addition to saving water and reducing weeds.

- You can acquire arborist chips for **free** from local tree trimming services.
- The chips tend to be delivered in large quantities, up to 10 cubic yards or more.
- For a list of arborists, check the yellow pages for arborists in your area or contact the Natural Lawn and Garden Hotline, or PlantAmnesty for referrals.

You can also mulch with grass clippings, compost, old leaves, fertile-mulch, or shredded bark (preferably composted). Apply mulch 1-2 inches thick around smaller plants and 2-4 inches thick around all trees and shrubs. Leave a few inches of breathing space around the stems and trunks of your plants to prevent disease. Mulch out to the dripline of your plants or cover the entire planting bed where applicable.

Arborist chips: a mulch consisting of the chipped wood, barks, twigs and leaves, obtained during tree-trimming operations. Aged, composted chips are best.

Chip storage: find a location that is accessible to the tree companies during business hours without the need to call you or other staff to unlock it.

- Put a sign up. “Chips - YES!” or “Chips – NO!”. Make it easy for them to help you.
- Stockpile enough for several weeks or months use before calling off the tree companies, it may take a few weeks or months to get them to come back.
- Stockpile enough chips that you have a supply of aged chips to use.

Cardboard: not all beds need to be sheet mulched. A layer of mulch alone is adequate for beds that are the right size and have been kept reasonably weed free by other means.

- Find cardboard at your school cafeteria, or your district warehouse
- Find cardboard at local bike shops, auto repair and autobody shops, and appliance shops. Shops that are too small to own a compactor are often looking for ways to get rid of their cardboard.

Online Resources

- Landscaping Resources:
http://www.seattle.gov/util/Services/Yard/For_Landscape_Professionals/LANDSCAP_IN_200311261705383.asp

- ProIPM Factsheets:
http://www.seattle.gov/util/Services/Yard/For_Landscape_Professionals/Integrated_Pest_Management/index.asp
- Pesticide Tier Tables:
<http://www.seattle.gov/environment/TierTablesFriendlyFormat.xls>
- Yard and Garden Topics: <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/topics/yard-and-garden/>
- Pest Control in the School Environment: Adopting Integrated Pest Management:
<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/ipm/brochure/> (includes a section on cost evaluation)
- Integrated Pest Management for Schools: A How-to-Manual:
<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/ipm/schoolipm/index.html> (contains basic information about IPM in schools, details on developing an IPM Program, and IPM strategies for managing common pests in schools)

Classes and Training:

If you are not familiar with these classes please feel free to contact Lisa Niehaus at 206-263-3046 or lisa.niehaus@metrokc.gov for more information.

- Green Gardening Professional IPM Seminars:
http://www.seattle.gov/util/Services/Yard/For_Landscape_Professionals/Integrated_Pest_Management/COS_005314.asp
- City of Seattle Municipal Gardener IPM Seminars: contact Lisa Niehaus
- WSU Pesticide Recertification Classes: <http://wsprs.wsu.edu/Applicator.html>
- ProHort Classes at Center for Urban Horticulture, UW:
<http://depts.washington.edu/urbhort/html/education/planpro.htm#autumn>
- Arthur Lee Jacobson: <http://www.arthurleej.com> (hands on training, very good website information)
- PlantAmnesty: <http://www.plantamnesty.org> (classes, events, great pruning information)
- Natural Lawn and Garden Hotline: 206-633-0224, info@lawnandgardenhotline.org.

More:

- Walt's Organics: <http://www.waltsorganic.com>
- Dr. Earth Organic Fertilizers: <http://www.drearth.net/>
- DF Marks: <http://www.dfmarks.com/> (wildflower seed) (DF Marks is a responsible supplier, but watch out for cheap "wildflower" mixes – if there isn't a complete species list you could easily end up growing several species of noxious weeds.)
- Soil Food Web: <http://www.soilfoodweb.com/> (compost information)
- Sound Horticulture: <http://www.soundhorticulture.com/> (compost information)
- Keep It Simple, Inc. Compost Tea Brewers: <http://www.simplici-tea.com/>
- Weed Wrench: <http://www.weedwrench.com/>
- Flame/Radiant Heat weeders: <http://www.chemfree-weedcontrol.com/index.shtml>
- Flame/Radiant Heat weeders: <http://www.rittenhouse.ca/asp/Product.asp?PG=526>
- Goats: http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/234984_ncenter03.html