

# ***Integrated Pest Management***

## ***for Iowa Schools***



### **How does an administrator Get school IPM implemented?**

A school administrator is often forced to make critical decisions about sensitive issues. There are many variables that influence popular opinion, depending on each school's particular situation. Whether your school is large or small, in an urban or a rural setting the information below should aid in modifying your current pest control program into an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program.

**1) Educate Yourself.** The first step in the IPM implementation process is to educate yourself as much as possible about the subject. Although you may be familiar with IPM and convinced of its benefits, you must be able to answer various questions about IPM and be able to convince others of its value. This sourcebook is a great starting place for information on School IPM. As an administrator, the faculty, staff, students, and other administrators will expect you to be knowledgeable about IPM.

#### **2) Communicate with Pest Managers.**

***In-house Pest Control.*** If in-house staff in your school handles pest control, contact the supervisor of pest control. It is important to convey your deep interest in IPM and that you have completed background research on the topic. Discuss with the pest management supervisor all the benefits of IPM, including the reduced health risks associated with IPM implementation. Be sure to provide some of the School IPM references to the pest management supervisor. Upon completion of the initial contact allow for a short period for the pest management supervisor to review the materials you provided and research it. Offer to meet with the pest management supervisor and even walk through your school discussing IPM strategies while pointing out specific areas of concern.

***Contracted Pest Control.*** If a private pest control operator handles pest control, contact the person listed in the school's pest control contract as the supervisor or "contact" person. This information can be found by contacting the school district's purchasing agent. Discuss with the supervisor the overall method of pest control currently being used in your school. Let the supervisor know that you are interested in getting IPM implemented into your school. More than likely, the supervisor will possess considerable knowledge about IPM and should be willing to cooperate with your efforts depending upon certain contractual obligations.

**3) Contact Neighboring Schools.** There is no sense in "re-inventing the wheel". Contacting school administrators from neighboring schools or neighboring districts can be extremely helpful. Your counterparts may have already gone through the process of converting to an IPM program and be able to offer valuable suggestions. If they haven't, they may become interested in IPM and be willing to combine their efforts with yours.

**4) Inform the School Board.** It will be important for you to make a brief presentation to the local school board and initiate the process of establishing an official School IPM Policy Statement. An example of a school IPM policy statement is available in this sourcebook. Adoption of an official policy statement is important because it gives school officials the authority to make decisions regarding pest management. In the case of an IPM Policy, it provides administrators the foundation from which to implement IPM.

**5) Establish Contacts with Local Authorities.** There may be many local resources available that you are unaware of. Your local county extension office should have considerable expertise in insect pest identification and pest management. Iowa State University Extension may also be able to provide assistance in developing and supporting an IPM program. Because the Cooperative Extension Service is also a state and federal resource, the extension office has the ability to contact outside experts on IPM and bring them to the local level. There may also be individuals within the county administration that could provide expertise. Many local resources such as the county health department or environmental services department employ professionals who possess experience in pest related health risks, pest management, and sanitation. All of these individuals can provide support for an IPM program in schools.

**6) Ensure Sustainability.** It is important to create a mechanism through which the IPM program can be maintained. The best method of accomplishing this is to create a School IPM Advisory Committee. This committee should have representatives from pest management (whether in-house or contracted), teachers, school administration, sanitation staff, and concerned parents (PTA). Because IPM is a process it will be important for this committee to help make decisions on pest management that may be unique to your school or school district. Additionally, periodic feedback from these individuals will help improve the IPM program.