

# **LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT PEST OF THE MONTH PROGRAM NO. 10.**

## **SOME FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS OF LAUSD IPM PROGRAM.**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Los Angeles Unified School District has adopted an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy with regards to pest management on District property. The District embraced this policy because it is the right thing to do to protect the health and safety of its students and employees. This policy also helps to conserve and protect the environment. Many people in the District are not clear on what IPM is. The purpose of this Pest of the Month Program is to provide District staff and other stakeholders with a basic explanation of IPM and how it functions.

Integrated Pest Management is an approach to pest control that uses regular monitoring and record keeping to determine if and when treatments are needed. It employs a combination of strategies and practices to keep pest numbers at low levels to prevent unacceptable annoyance or damage. IPM does not eliminate the use of pesticides, but instead uses reduced risk materials and formulations only when and where necessary and in a manner which does not pose an unacceptable health and safety threat to people and the environment.

There are many definitions of IPM. California Food and Agricultural Code Section 13181 defines IPM as:

**“...a pest management strategy that focuses on long-term prevention or suppression of pest problems through a combination of techniques such as monitoring for pest presence and establishing treatment threshold levels, using non-chemical practices to make the habitat less conducive to pest development, improving sanitation, and employing mechanical and physical controls. Pesticides that pose the least possible hazard and are effective in a manner that minimizes risks to people, property and the environment, are used only after careful monitoring indicates that they are needed according to pre-established guidelines and treatment thresholds.”**

At its very basic, IPM is a common sense approach that requires low risk methods, such as biological, cultural, physical, and educational to enhance pest prevention, and to build support for the IPM program. Chemical controls are used only when needed and low risk materials and formulations that are effective against the pest are employed only when necessary.

Pest prevention begins with the correct identification of the pest and knowledge of its biology, behavior, ecology, and its survival needs. Available food, water, hiding places, and entry points must be located and eliminated for long term suppression of a pest. Use

of low risk IPM has been shown to reduce the use of chemical pesticides, while providing better, longer-lasting, and more cost effective pest management.

IPM practitioners prevent pest problems by eliminating conditions that allow pests to flourish, detecting pests early before populations reach high levels, and keeping and maintaining good records so that pest outbreaks can be predicted. Other school concerns, such as sanitation, building maintenance, energy conservation, and efficient use of labor and other resources can be addressed with proper IPM practices.

Using fewer and less pesticides in an IPM approach addresses the growing concern for the health and safety of school children and other building occupants.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

### STUDENTS AND STAFF

Students and staff play major roles in keeping schools clean and free of pests. **Sanitation is not the sole responsibility of custodians.** Students and staff must understand the connection between food, garbage, proper trash disposal, improper storage practices and pests such as cockroaches, ants, flies, and rodents. The more people understand these relationships, the more likely they are to take sanitation measures seriously and comply with them.

It is critical to get support of representatives from all segments of the school community in order to make an IPM program successful. This includes site based administrators and their staff, teachers, students, parents, custodians, food service workers, building and grounds personnel, school nurses, and pest control professionals.

### TEACHERS

The LAUSD IPM program discourages the storage, processing, cooking, sale, preparation, dispensing, and consumption of food in classrooms. Any food and food materials held in classrooms for educational purposes must be kept in tightly sealed, pest-proof containers such as metal or glass. Be careful with glass in classrooms because they can be easily broken and cause injuries.

Food stored, prepared, processed, and consumed in classrooms have been a **MAJOR** source of pest problems within many LAUSD schools. Food wrappers, food trash, and food debris in classroom trash receptacles have been major sources of attractants for pests invading classrooms such as ants, cockroaches, and rodents. Everyone needs to do their part to keep classrooms pest free. Pests in the classroom disrupt the learning environment and distract the students from staying focused and targeted on learning.

The District's IPM policy only permits designated District Pest Management employees who are licensed/certified, trained, and knowledgeable about its IPM policy to apply pesticides for pest control on District property. LAUSD IPM pest management professionals are only allowed to apply pesticides for pest control that are on the **District's approved pesticide list.**

Any unauthorized person who brings, stores, and applies any pesticide (pesticides include rodenticides (rat poison), disinfectants and other antimicrobial agents) on District property is in violation of the District's IPM policy. If you are experiencing a pest

problem in your work area, please inform your plant manager who will place a trouble call to the District's Pest Management Department to get the problem rectified as soon as possible. It is not advisable, nor is it smart, to attempt to control pests on your own on District property using materials you may have brought from home.

Prepared by Dr. Hanif Gulmahamad, LAUSD IPM Coordinator

Date: 14 November, 2003

Issue: 10-11