

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PEST OF THE MONTH PROGRAM NO. 27

SOME FUNDAMENTALS OF INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT FOR LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT CAFETERIA MANAGERS

INTRODUCTION

Pests such as cockroaches and rodents can pose serious problems for foodservice establishments. Besides being unsightly, they damage and contaminate foods, supplies, and facilities. The greatest danger from pests comes from their ability to transmit diseases and food-borne illnesses.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

IPM programs use preventive measures to keep pests from entering the establishment and reduced risk control measures to eliminate any pests that do infest a foodservice facility.

Prevention is critical in IPM programs. If you wait until pests enter your building and establish themselves, then it becomes difficult to eliminate them. There are two basic rules to a successful IPM program. These are:

- Deny pest access to the establishment
- Deny pests access to food, water, and hiding or nesting places (harborages).

DENY PESTS ACCESS TO YOUR CAFETERIA

Pests can enter a building in one of two ways. They are either brought inside with deliveries, or they enter through openings in the building itself. To prevent pests from entering your cafeteria in deliveries, check all deliveries **BEFORE** they enter your facility. Refuse any shipment in which you find pests, pest damaged merchandise, or evidence of pests such as rodent feces, cockroach egg cases, or insect parts (legs, wings, etc.)

Holes and cracks in the exterior of a building allow pests to get inside and hide. Pests can also use other avenues of entry.

Doors, windows, and vents

- Make sure that your windows, doors, and vents have properly installed sixteen mesh screens. **Keep doors and windows closed. Because of emanating food odors, doors which are left open invite flies into a food facility.**
- If your kitchen/cafeteria doors do not already have them, request installation of self-closing devices or door sweeps on all doors. Repair gaps and cracks in door frames and thresholds. Use weather stripping on the bottom of doors with no threshold.
- If you have air curtains (also called air doors or fly fans) on your kitchen doors, make sure that they are adjusted correctly and they are functioning properly.
- Keep all exterior openings closed tightly.

- Keep all doors closed when not in use. **DO NOT PROP OPEN DOORS.**

Floors and Walls

- Make sure that floors and walls are in good repair. Seal all cracks in floors and walls. Report damaged floor tiles and other floor coverings so they can be fixed.
- Make sure that your floors and floor drains are cleaned properly and regularly.
- Make sure that all foods, food debris, paper, and plastic materials, etc. are regularly removed from under equipment, stoves, etc. in your cafeteria. **Get down on your hands and knees and look under equipment in your kitchen. Use a good flashlight to inspect.** Contact the appropriate personnel to get hard to reach places in your cafeteria cleaned thoroughly and properly.
- Report and get water leaks inside your facility fixed promptly.
- If you see holes in your walls or around plumbing and electrical penetrations in your floors and walls, report them promptly so that they can be repaired.

Deny Pests Access to Food and Water

Pests are usually attracted to hard to clean, difficult to reach, damp, dark, dirty places. A clean and sanitary establishment offers pests little in the way of food and shelter. The occasional pest that gets in cannot survive and reproduce in a clean kitchen. Besides adhering to your master cleaning schedule, follow these additional guidelines:

- **Dispose of garbage quickly and correctly.** Garbage attracts pests and provides them a breeding ground. Keep garbage containers clean, in good condition, and tightly covered at all times. Clean up spills around garbage containers immediately. Wash and rinse trash containers regularly.
- **Do not store recyclables in your kitchen/cafeteria.** If you are holding recyclables, store them in pest-proof containers as far away as possible from your building. Bottles, cans, paper, and packaging materials provide shelter and food for pests.
- **Store all food and supplies promptly and properly.**
 1. Keep all stored foods and supplies away from walls and at least six inches **off the floor.**
 2. Refrigerate foods such as powdered milk, cocoa, and nuts after opening.
 3. Rotate products so pests do not have the opportunity to establish themselves and breed. Remember **FIFO – First in, first out.**
 4. **Promptly remove cardboard boxes from your facility** as they provide excellent harborage for cockroaches and other stored product pests.
 5. **Remove miscellaneous clutter from kitchens and adjoining areas.** Boxes and other paper goods provide harborage and protection for cockroaches, mice, stored product pests, and other insects. Baits and sticky

traps are not nearly as effective in terms of control and prevention of pest infestations in a high-clutter environment.

6. **Get rid of unwanted materials.** A well-run kitchen is never cluttered. Many culinary schools now require students to take classes on kitchen management, organization and efficiency.

Clean your establishment thoroughly. Careful and diligent cleaning eliminates the food supply, destroys insect eggs, and reduces the number of places where pests can take shelter.

1. Clean up food and beverage spills immediately including crumbs and scraps.
2. Ensure that adjoining toilets and restrooms are cleaned regularly and properly.
3. Train employees to keep lockers and break areas clean. Food and dirty clothes should not be kept in or around lockers. Break rooms should be cleaned promptly after use.
4. Keep cleaning tools and supplies clean and dry. Store wet mops on hooks, rather than on the floor since fruit flies and cockroaches frequently breed and hide in them.
5. Empty water from buckets and other containers to keep from attracting rodents.

Grounds and Outdoor Dining Areas

- Ensure that grass outside the cafeteria is mowed regularly. Have the weeds pulled and removed from around your cafeteria. Get rid of standing water, and promptly pick up litter.
- Do not allow anyone to store miscellaneous materials, especially along the outside walls of your establishment.
- Cover all outdoor garbage containers.
- Remove dirty serving trays, food wrappers, food scraps, food debris, and uneaten food promptly from tables. Clean the tables as quickly as possible.
- **Do not allow employees, or anyone else, to feed birds, cats, dogs, or wildlife on the grounds.**

Be proud of the work you do. Show professionalism in your work. Take pride in the fact that you are preparing clean, good, wholesome food in a clean, sanitary facility and serving it to the children.

Do your part to help. Always be willing to follow sanitation recommendations given to you by the District's pest management professionals. Also, be cooperative in preparing areas for treatment if asked to do so by the District's pest management professionals.

Please remember that we share the same goal. And that goal is to store, prepare, process, display for sale, and serve good, clean, wholesome foods to the children under good sanitary conditions at all times.

This document has been prepared by Dr. Hanif Gulmahamad, B.C.E., Urban and Structural Entomologist.
Dated: 6 January, 2006