



The Pennsylvania **INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**



News Release

IPM in Schools Now Law

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UNIVERSITY PARK, PA - The days when exterminators could spray pesticides in schools without notifying students and their parents are now over. New legislation at the state level requires schools to provide notification to parents, students and teachers in advance of pesticide applications and requires schools to adopt an integrated pest management (IPM) plan.

Schools all across Pennsylvania will now be achieving long term, environmentally sound pest management through the use of a wide variety of technological and integrated pest management practices. Integrated pest management (IPM) plans rely heavily on prevention, sanitation, maintenance, and monitoring to reduce the reliance on pesticides, says Ed Rajotte, associate professor of entomology at Penn State University and Pennsylvania IPM Program Coordinator. "Control strategies in an IPM plan include structural and procedural modifications that reduce the food, water, harborage, and access used by pests. Pesticides are used on an as-needed basis as determined by monitoring. When a pesticide is needed, it is applied in an enclosed trap or on a spot treatment basis whenever possible and targeted to the specific pest."

In addition, the least toxic, shortest duration effective material is used. Pesticides are not applied when students, teachers or staff are present in the affected area to assure the safety of the school-learning environment.

The bill also places responsibilities on the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) to assist schools in the development, planning and preparation of the IPM plan. Specifically, the department will maintain a Hypersensitivity Registry to assist in the notification of students and employees who are especially sensitive to pesticides and designate an IPM coordinator within the department to assist schools in adopting and administering IPM plans. The PDA will also prepare a standard structural IPM agreement and distribute it to schools, as well as provide other materials and support to schools to aid them in developing IPM plans.

Schools also must post a notice of plans to apply pesticides at least 72 hours in advance and for two days afterwards. In addition, the new legislation requires schools to give advance notice to parents who request it of plans to spray pesticides.

The notification law had the backing of parent, teacher, public health and environmental groups. The new legislation takes effect Jan.1, 2003, at which time every public school in Pennsylvania will be required to have its IPM and pesticide notification plan in place.

The Pennsylvania IPM (PA IPM) program is a collaboration between Penn State and the PDA aimed at promoting IPM in both agricultural and nonagricultural situations. The PA IPM Program's web site at <http://paipm.cas.psu.edu> contains a wealth of information and resources for schools adopting IPM programs. By clicking on the "Schools" link, visitors also can download "IPM for Pennsylvania Schools, A How-To Manual." The link also leads to information about the school IPM effort in Pennsylvania and to educational materials from across the country. In addition, the site offers an interactive database to assist teachers with IPM background information, lesson plans and support materials from throughout the United States.