

PA IPM FACT SHEET SERIES

Community Approach to Managing Pests in Homes and Schools

The Philadelphia School and Community IPM Partnership



PHOTO SUPPLIED BY PA IPM

Education at community outreach events.

Who We Are

The Philadelphia School and Community IPM Partnership (PSCIP) seeks to empower individuals and communities to safely manage pests through education and training. Partners include state agencies, environmental groups, health practitioners, community groups, universities, schools, and childcare facilities. The partnership is administered by the PA IPM Program at Penn State. For more information on PSCIP's programs and partners, visit extension.psu.edu/ipm/resources/urbanphilly.

What Is a Pest?

Pests are unwanted creatures that invade our homes or yards. Some examples include:

- Ants
- Bed bugs
- Clothing moths
- Cockroaches
- Dust mites
- Fleas
- Flies
- Head lice
- Mice
- Mosquitoes
- Opossums
- Pantry pests
- Pigeons
- Raccoons
- Rats
- Squirrels
- Weeds

What Is Integrated Pest Management (IPM)?

Integrated pest management (IPM) uses information about the pest in order to choose methods of control that are safest and most effective. IPM methods include pest prevention, exclusion, and nonchemical tools first. If chemical pesticides are needed, products are chosen that pose the least risk to human health. With IPM, you start by asking, "Why is this pest here? How did it get here? What is allowing it to thrive?" Once you answer these questions and begin to resolve these issues, you can begin to solve pest problems rather than just treating the symptoms. This approach also reduces the need to use pesticides repeatedly.

Why Should We Use IPM in Schools and Communities?

- Children are especially sensitive to toxins of all kinds, including pesticides, because their bodies are still developing.
- Exposure to certain pests and pesticides can trigger asthma and spread diseases.
- Pests can also bite, sting, cause property damage, and be annoying.
- IPM approaches help solve pest problems in the safest, most effective way.

For Safety's Sake, Use These IPM Methods!

Communication and Collaboration

Share information about pest prevention methods with your community. Understand the habits of pests—they don't stay in one place! Because of this, anyone can have pest problems from time to time. Work together to get rid of these community pests.

The Pennsylvania IPM Program is a collaboration between The Pennsylvania State University and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

Sanitation

Keep living areas clean and uncluttered. Keep tight-fitting lids on garbage cans and fix water leaks. Don't leave food out overnight.

Exclusion

Repair and seal holes and cracks to keep pests out.

Mechanical

Use traps and swatters.

Biological

Use beneficial organisms to control some pests.

Less-Risky Pesticides

Pesticides are chemicals designed to kill pests, including insects, rodents, weeds, bacteria, and fungi. Some of these can also be dangerous to people by breathing in, accidentally getting on skin and/or eyes, or swallowing. If you need to use a chemical, try to match the pest with the right amount and type of pesticide. Ask yourself, "What chemical poses the least risk to my family?" More risky products include poison pellets for rodents, bug sprays in the form of aerosols, "bug bombs," or liquid concentrates. Remember, before using a chemical, always read and follow all label instructions. If some is good, more is not better!

PSCIP Projects

The partnership works with community members to identify priority pest issues and collaborate on programming to solve these problems together. We also work with partners to find funding for community IPM programming. Examples of pest management programs include:

- Pest-specific and general IPM education programs for diverse community partners and neighborhoods
- Healthy Homes and IPM training for community health workers and housing managers
- Indoor Air Quality and IPM training, consultation, and assessment assistance for early learning environments and K-12 schools
- Outreach to Spanish-speaking residents via phone, publications, and bilingual workshops
- Job training for entry-level pest control technicians
- Workshops and service-learning programs to help students and teachers meet the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Environment and Ecology, IPM section



Working with students to include IPM in biology lessons.



Working with partners for job training in IPM.



Service-learning students identify pest-conductive conditions at school.

Please contact us if you would like more information or have ideas for collaboration in your community.

If you suspect that a child has been accidentally exposed to chemicals, immediately call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.

For More Information

Pennsylvania IPM Program at Penn State

Phone: 814-865-2839

Email: paipm@psu.edu

extension.psu.edu/ipm

Pennsylvania IPM Program in Philadelphia

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