

Pilot School Program Encourages Adoption of Integrated Pest Management

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Introduction

University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in Schools Program is working to reduce pesticide exposure by encouraging schools to adopt IPM. We have much to do — a survey showed that only 28% of Nebraska schools had an IPM plan and 27% of the personnel in schools that control pests were certified.

The UNL Extension IPM in Schools Program has surveyed school administrators; developed a website and guidebook; distributed survey results and guidebooks to all Nebraska schools; developed IPM learning modules; and conducted workshops and in-service training for schools. The Nebraska school IPM website: <http://schoolipm.unl.edu/>.

Purpose

Conduct pilot school assessments to help them implement IPM and showcase these pilot schools as successful IPM adopters.

Approach

Pilot school staff attended the 2005 Urban Pest Management Conference and the 2005 Nebraska Turfgrass Conference, and received a set of reference materials. UNL Extension's IPM in Schools Team members provided on-site assessments and created site-specific recommendations for each school.



Bat droppings on ledge



Look up there!



Bat roosting area



English sparrow droppings

Acknowledgements

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IPM Team inspected — High



— Low



— Every nook and cranny



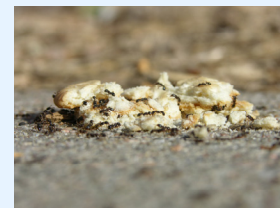
— Even on the roof!



Correct pest ID is essential



Live brown recluse on school wall!



Pavement ants on a cracker



Great learning experience for everyone involved!

Reference materials provided included:

- ✦ Handbook of Household and Structural Insect Pests
- ✦ PCT Field Guides for the Management of Ants, Flies, and Urban Spiders
- ✦ PCT Pest ID Series CD volumes I and II
- ✦ Rodent Control: A Practical Guide for Pest Management Professionals
- ✦ Integrated Turfgrass Management for the Northern Great Plains
- ✦ Guide for Weed Management in Nebraska
- ✦ The Illustrated Mold Handbook
- ✦ Recognition and Management of Pesticide Poisonings
- ✦ ID of Structure-Invading Ants in Nebraska
- ✦ 2005 Directory of Least-toxic Pest Control Products

Why did this memorial tree die?



IN MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS
OF THE BOMBING OF THE TRUSSARD
AT COLUMBIA HIGH SCHOOL
APRIL 20, 1994
"NATURE'S PURPLE ASH"



Mower-damaged trunk may have caused plant stress and allowed borers to attack — leading to death



IPM Team member explains how to grow healthy trees

Results

Participants said that adopting IPM would result in:

- ✦ Reduced use of toxic chemicals including pesticides.
- ✦ Less time lost due to pest-related distractions.
- ✦ Better learning environments in their schools.

Post-assessment surveys indicated:

- ✦ 67% would decrease their use of pesticides. None said they would increase their use of pesticides.
- ✦ 83% were better able to identify pest problems.
- ✦ 100% would recommend this program to other schools.
- ✦ Quality of reference materials was rated 4.2 on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5=very high quality.
- ✦ Relevance to their job responsibilities was rated 4.3 on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 = extremely relevant.
- ✦ Understanding of IPM gained from the pilot program was rated 4.5 on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5=extremely helpful.

All participants reported they either were currently or were likely to:

- ✦ Seal cracks, crevices and holes to exclude rodents and insects.
- ✦ Improve water drainage away from buildings.
- ✦ Use mulch in plant beds to improve plant health and prevent diseases and insects.
- ✦ Use IPM to reduce asthma triggers.
- ✦ Use lower toxic pesticides to protect human health and the environment.
- ✦ Identify pests before choosing a management strategy.

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