Award Category: International IPM Award of Recognition
Type of Nomination: Team/Group (Project)

Nominee Name of Individual or Group: StopPests Program

Improving economic benefits related to IPM adoption: Checked
Reducing potential human health risks: Checked
Minimizing adverse environmental effects: Checked

Brief Summary of Nominee's or Program's Accomplishments (500 words or less):

Pests are ubiquitous in public housing, with some of the most prevalent ones being ants, rodents, cockroaches, flies, bedbugs, and stored product pests. The presence of pests and the application of pesticides in urban environments can have significant social impacts related to human health. The use of integrated pest management (IPM) has been shown to be a low-risk, effective way to curb pests and pesticide use. Unfortunately, not everyone practices IPM. Nationwide, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has jurisdiction over nearly 1.2 million public housing units, and these are home to more than two million women, men, and children. Studies in the mid-2000s documented that many public housing authorities (PHAs) did not have 1) a written pest management policy whether or not this included IPM, 2) manager(s) trained in IPM, 3) guidelines for residents about pest management and pesticides, and 4) backing from major government agencies to promote IPM.

In 2007, the Northeastern IPM Center developed the StopPests Program with funding from HUD to promote IPM in affordable housing. The StopPests Program is national in scope contributing substantially to HUD's goals of strengthening communities and addressing housing conditions that threaten health as well as the Healthy Homes Initiative strategic goal of reducing allergens in housing units, and, correspondingly, reducing asthmatic episodes for children living in these units. By working directly with PHAs, the StopPests Program has accomplished the following over the past seven years: delivered free on-site training to public housing managers and maintenance staff; provided pre- and post-training technical assistance to housing authorities who implement IPM; developed and replicated an IPM implementation process for housing providers to follow; actively worked to eliminate documented obstacles to IPM in affordable housing; evaluated IPM in participating public housing authorities/properties; and gathered data needed to assess a return on investment (ROI).

Specifically, the StopPests Program has developed and published in print and online the manual "IPM: A Guide for Affordable Housing" to assist housing providers in planning and implementing an IPM program and to reach out to residents, local stakeholders, staff, and contractors with information about IPM; created a website and searchable database (www.StopPests.org) as a portal for PHAs and others needing important information on structural pest management; conducted 35 different training sessions for multi-family housing units across the country with plans for doubling this in the next two years; and become a network for hundreds of individuals in the private and public sectors to stay connected and up to date on the latest developments for IPM in housing.

Describe the goals of the program being nominated; why was the program conducted? What condition does this activity address? (250 words or less):

The goal of StopPest, which is based out of the Northeastern IPM Center, is to improve pest control in affordable housing by teaching everyone who works, lives, and plays in housing how to use IPM. Regional IPM Centers are an integral part of the national Extension system. As such, they bring a different perspective to the current efforts of IPM training in public housing, which to date has involved, primarily, partnerships between HUD, the Centers for Disease Control, the EPA, and non-profit organizations.

StopPests supports HUD's goals of strengthening communities and addressing housing conditions that threaten health as well as the Healthy Homes Initiative (HHI) strategic goal of reducing allergens in housing units, and, correspondingly, reducing asthmatic episodes for children living in these units. The reduction of asthmatic triggers

(allergens from mold, pests, and pets) is a principal focus of the HHI because over 20 million individuals, and 6.3 million children under 18 suffer from asthma in the US. Because the control of allergens from pests and pesticides is critical in the reduction in asthmatic episodes in sensitized individuals, HUD is interested in controlling these triggers in a safe and effective way and has included IPM as a requirement for its grantees performing unit interventions.

In addition, StopPests works with housing providers to create or improve bed bug management plans limiting costs, introductions and re-infestations. The training StopPests provides to residents and staff empowers them to take control of their bed bug management and use safe, research-based control methods.

Describe the level of integration across pests, systems and/or disciplines that was involved. (250 words or less):

StopPests was designed to include support from a wide range of professionals and practitioners. From the beginning, StopPests developed strong partnerships with HUD's Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control, USDA–NIFA, the four Regional IPM Centers, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the state-based Cooperative Extension System, private consultants, pest control operators, and nonprofit organizations, such as the National Center for Healthy Housing.

In addition, StopPests connected with project directors or results from recent urban-IPM projects funded by the USDA and IPM Centers (e.g., Design and Delivery of IPM Outreach Programs to Low-Income Urban Neighborhoods; IPM Education and Outreach in a Latino Urban Community; IPM of Pest Ants in the Urban/Suburban Landscape; Training School Purchasing Officers and Extension Agent Trainers to Increase IPM Adoption in Tennessee's Child-Serving Facilities; Reducing homeowner pesticide use and increasing consumer and student knowledge of IPM through public outreach/education; A Partnership for Developing IPM Protocols for Bed Bug Management; and even the National IPM in Schools Pest Management Strategic Plan). In addition, the StopPests Program reached out to the eXtension Community of Practice known as IPM In and around Structures: Urban IPM.

The extensive network created through each of these programs and/or individuals occurred through the committed work of Allie Taisey, who was the StopPests Coordinator for seven years, that went above and beyond the call of duty.

Describe the team building process; how did the program being nominated get partners involved? Education and awareness are essential in an IPM program. (250 words or less):

StopPests received funding from HUD and coordination through UDSA-NIFA that was instrumental in allowing for the initiation of the team of 6 individuals that has now grown to 37 people who serve on one or more advisory group sub-committees (Impact Evaluation, New Resources Review, Current Resources Update, Social Media/Communications, New Partnerships).

The team building process for StopPests has been able to capitalize on one critical element for success, which is by getting PHAs to take ownership of their pest management. As previously mentioned, many PHAs either did not have a pest management plan in place whether or not it included IPM and most did not know what IPM was. This knowledge by the initiators of StopPests and their method for addressing this deficiency through the development of curricula and implementation of on-the-ground trainings made the program an easy "sell" to HUD and USDA-NIFA. With these two agencies fully supporting StopPests, which is science-based, multi-disciplinary, and addressing a huge need that was not being met by anyone else, it quickly drew widespread interest. Now, StopPests is well-known and in a recent webinar hosted by the program, more than 3,000 people signed up, which was a record for Cornell University, which provided technical support through WebEx.

What outcome describes the greatest success of the program?:

StopPests has met a need in structural pest management and become a valuable resource for individuals and organizations that are looking for answers. The curricula, website with searchable and portal for PHAs, on-the-ground training sessions, and support from public and private sectors have all contributed to the success of

StopPests. Whether managers, residents, or administrators who are involved in multifamily housing deal with pests, the adoption of IPM through StopPests has been the biggest success of the program. When an IPM program is adopted by managers and housing authorities, then the 'spray schedule' that is all too common is avoided and long-term solutions can begin to be implemented. Ultimately, if a greater number of children and families have a safer, healthier environment to live in by reducing pests and exposure to pesticides, then a larger community has benefitted and that is the biggest success of all.

Provide evidence of change in knowledge, behavior or condition as a result of the program/individual. (250 words or less):

StopPests has successfully trained over 30 PHAs, which has resulted in the adoption and implementation of IPM. Along with the actual training, the pre- and post-training interaction with a StopPests training consultant has been critical. For example, in a recent conference in New Hampshire, Allie Taisey, former StopPests Project Coordinator, recounted a conversation with a participant about the changes he had made in his pest control operation as a direct result of StopPests. A year earlier, this person listened to what Ms. Taisey had spoken about related to implementing IPM and the need for PHAs to take ownership of their pest control. He took her advice, searched out the resources, and adopted an IPM approach. Now, he has seen dramatic declines in his costs, pests, and impacts on residents.

Another of the many documented changes from StopPests was the evaluation of the bed bug prevention protocol in the field to determine if implementation reduced the annual number of bed bug infestations and bed bug treatment costs. Data from before the bed bug prevention protocol was implemented (Dec. 2010 – Jun. 2012) compared to those records since (July 2012 – June 2013) showed that there was a 29.4% reduction in the total number of heat treatments and a 22.7% reduction in the total cost of remediation. This reduction is an improvement and contributes to the goal of StopPests, which is to provide pest management and housing industries with a proven bed bug management protocol that will make bed bug remediation costs more sustainable.

Who or what should receive the most credit for the success of this program?

The former Project Coordinator, Allie Taisey, of StopPests was part of the original team of 6 individuals. Her undying commitment to maintaining contact with any and all who were a part of or interested in structural IPM was the backbone that allowed StopPests to be so strongly supported and well-known. Her constant use of social media, ability to organize or speak at workshops and conferences, ease in conducting training sessions, and genuine interest in the application of IPM in housing has made the biggest impact on making people aware of and/or educating them about StopPests. Her tireless work on creating a StopPests implementation process, protocols and countless resources has resulted in an program which specifically addresses the needs of PHAs across the country.

If selected, suggested Citation for Award Certificate (40 words or less):

StopPests: Implementing IPM in Affordable Housing