Tom A. Green, Dawn H. Gouge, & Marc L. Lame, June 2009.

IPM implementation by 2015, a Pest Management Strategic Plan.

Development of the *SCHOOL IPM 2015: A Strategic Plan for Integrated Pest Management in Schools in the United States* is a stakeholder-driven activity that involves university faculty, pest management professionals, advocacy organizations, other NGOs, school, and federal professionals. http://www.ipminstitute.org/school_ipm_2015.htm

The school IPM pest management strategic plan (PMSP) identifies priorities identified and ranked by a diverse group of stakeholders, lists key sectors, and their roles in fully implementing IPM in all schools by 2015. The plan describes a process for changing behavior on a broad scale, and details key prevention practices and strategies for common pests in schools. The PMSP defines indicators for high-level IPM.

Numerous studies and surveys over the past 13 years have documented deficiencies in pest management in schools including hazardous pesticide use and uncontrolled pest problems. On-site evaluations of more than 29 school systems in more than 14 states indicated that nearly half were violating legal requirements or formal district policies related to pest management (Green et al., 2007) Three of the 29 districts had outdated, unregistered pesticides in storage, including DDT.

Asthma is epidemic among children in the United States and other countries, affecting nearly 6 percent of school children nationally, with rates as high as 25 percent in at least one urban center (Nicholas et al., 2005). Exposure to pests, pet dander, cockroach allergens, dust mites, fungal spores, and some pesticides, trigger asthma attacks. The Centers for Disease Control recommends reducing pest infestations and adopting IPM in schools as effective primary strategies for addressing asthma. Schools implementing IPM had lower pesticide residues on exposed surfaces, and costs for pest management were comparable to schools receiving regular pesticide applications (Williams et al. 2005).

Gouge et al. (2006) evaluated the use of the Monroe Model for establishing IPM in Schools. The model has been used in pilot programs nationally and combines social science innovation adoption strategy, with the science of progressive pest management. The model has resulted in districts with improved efficiency, and communication, as well as significantly better pest management and over-all risk reduction.

The IPM Institute of North America's IPM STAR school certification is a third-party certification program which, to date, has certified 42 school districts and US Army child development centers. For a complete list, visit http://ipminstitute.org/IPM_Star/ipmstar_schools.htm#School

The Monroe Model is named after the first demonstration done in Monroe County, Indiana. Key factors to the success of the Monroe Model include:

- Scouting out well managed school districts where the model can have the most success.
- Recognizing custodial staff as key personnel in any environmental health program.
- Informing parents and teachers about IPM.
- Inspections and monitoring for pests and pest conducive conditions on a monthly basis.
- Supporting school administrators, parents, and staff during IPM implementation.
- Offering technical support and evaluating the process, assessing the percentage of compliance, pesticides used, money spent, etc.
- Recognizing school districts when they incorporate real IPM into their districts.
- Professionalizing pest managers as IPM experts key to environmental health and safety.

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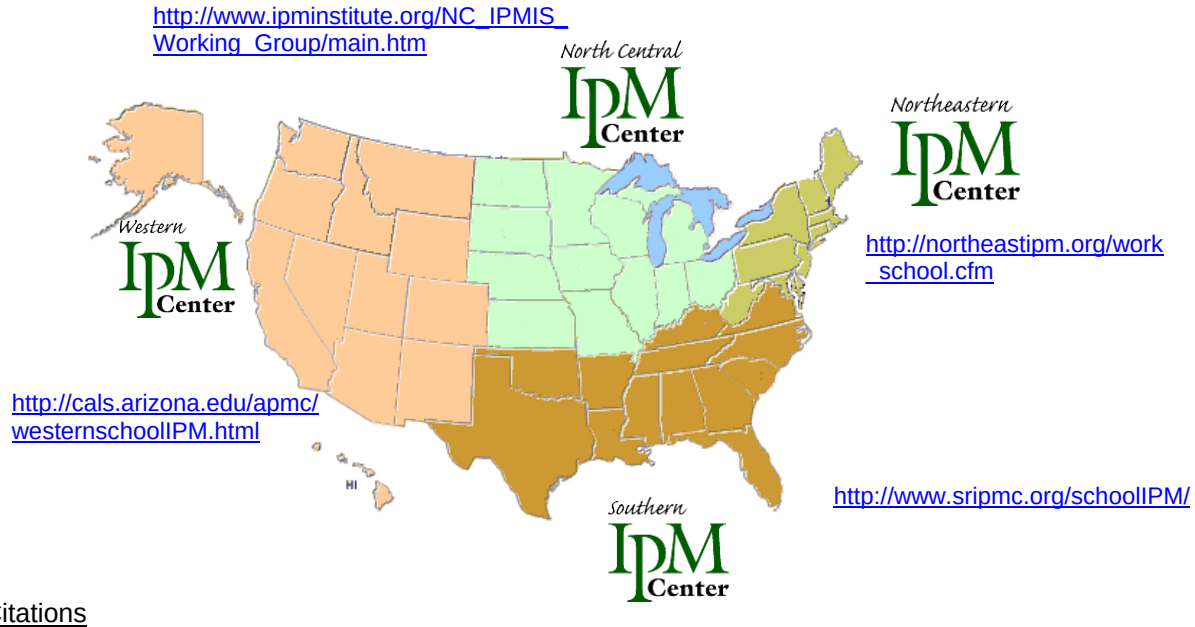
The Monroe Model pilot program proved to be a great success, resulting in an overall reduction in pest incidence as well as pesticide applications.

Regulations addressing pest management in, around, and adjacent to schools vary greatly between states. Requirements in some states include posting and notification of pesticide applications, expanded re-entry periods before staff or students are permitted in treated areas, qualifications for applicators of pesticides in schools, pesticide product selection, adoption of IPM policies or plans, and buffers between neighboring pesticide uses and schools. School district policies also vary widely. Most states have some legislation supportive of IPM.

Get involved! There is a National School IPM Network comprising of:

- Steering Committee - includes four US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Regional IPM Center School IPM Working Groups. Contact your Working Group, and get involved!
- Advisory Committee - USDA's Regional IPM Centers' Directors and EPA representatives.
- Standing Committees - Industry, Outreach, Metrics, Research, Regulatory, Extension, etc. A full list can be found at http://www.ipminstitute.org/school_ipm_2015/school_ipm_2015_Get_Involved.htm

Email lcrane@ipminstitute.org for more information if you are interested in joining a committee or participating in any way.



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