

School Pesticide Monitor

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Beyond Pesticides / National Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides
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Schools Across Nation Adopt Safer Pest Management Programs

Another Virginia School District Begins IPM Implementation

The Albemarle County Public School System in Virginia has begun implementing an integrated pest management (IPM) program. Last May, the school district began a pilot IPM program at the Agnor-Hurt Elementary School. The elementary school IPM program reduced pest problems using non-chemical means first and least-toxic chemical control method only on an as-needed basis, the district has begun phasing-in IPM at the rate of two schools per month. IPM will be in place in all 26 of the district's schools by August 2008.

The IPM implementation process was kicked off by an IPM training workshop in October for all lead custodians and a group of child nutrition staff. According to the training materials presented by Dini Miller, Ph.D. from the Virginia Tech cooperative extension, "The Virginia Pesticide Control Board recognizes a need to modernize pest control practices in Virginia schools. The ultimate goal of the state School IPM program is to protect school children, faculty, and staff from unnecessary exposure to both pests and pesticides. We believe that the best way to do this is through the adoption of [IPM]."

Albemarle's IPM program focuses on four principles: (1) prevention (includes sanitation and exclusion); (2) monitoring (used in place of preventive pesticide applications); (3) least-toxic control methods (focuses on non-chemical means first and the least-toxic chemical controls, such as boric acid baits and gels, only on an as-needed basis); and, (4) recordkeeping.

Although the district had been looking into IPM for some time, the district's environmental compliance manager and ex-

ecutive director of support services told the *Daily Progress* newspaper that the IPM program was pushed into action sooner due to public pressure lead by activists from the group Friends and Advocates for Children, Teachers and Schools.

Albemarle County schools' IPM program is part of their larger Environmental Management System, which is set up for the school district to "reduce its adverse environmental impacts and increase its operating efficiency." For more information see <http://schoolcenter.k12albemarle.org/>. For more information on 15 of Virginia's 134 school districts that have already adopted IPM programs, see <http://www.ext.vt.edu/schoolipm>.

Ohio Schools Begin IPM Implementation Statewide

Public, private and parochial schools in Ohio have begun implementing IPM programs as the states new school health and safety law, known as Jarod's Law, goes into effect. The new law requires the Department of Health to annually inspect school buildings and grounds for dangerous health and safety conditions. The minimum standards and inspection procedures established by the bill were adopted this fall.

All schools in Ohio are required to adopt a written IPM policy by June 30, 2008. The IPM policies include "identification of pests and conditions that attract pests; prevention techniques such as sanitation, vacuuming, structural repair and sealing; monitoring; education and training; approved least-toxic chemical use; and pre-notification of chemical use."

Although the pesticide industry is trying to weaken the law's implementation, state-wide grassroots organizations like

Ohio Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides (OCAMP) and local school districts like the Shaker Heights School District are proving that an IPM program that eliminates the use of hazardous pesticides is possible. Contact your local legislative representatives and school district officials and demand that strong IPM programs be put in place. For more information, contact OCAMP at 216-961-3424 or ocamp@neo.rr.com.

New Jersey Community Joins Others in Banning Pesticides at Parks and Playgrounds

The borough of Fairlawn, New Jersey has joined 11 other boroughs throughout the state that have banned pesticides from public play areas. The borough declared its parks pesticide-free and will post a "pesticide-free zone" sign at every playground in the borough. Although the states school IPM and pesticide notification legislation went in effect in 2004, residents are concerned about pesticides contaminating play areas in other parts of their communities. For more information contact the New Jersey Environmental Federation at 732-280-8988 or see <http://cleanwateraction.org/njef/>.

North Carolina School Districts Receive IPM Awards

Twenty-one North Carolina public school districts' IPM programs were recognized in October by the North Carolina State University School IPM Program. Three categories of awards were presented, recognizing different levels of achievement for the school districts. Leadership Awards went to five school districts that have long-standing model IPM programs and have assisted other schools' IPM programs. Program Awards went to six school

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Best Wishes for a Healthy New Year!

Study Links Household Pesticide Use to Childhood Cancer

A new study published in *Environmental Health Perspectives* (Vol. 115, No. 12) finds that children born to mothers living in households with pesticide use during pregnancy have a twofold increased risk of developing cancer, specifically acute leukemia (AL) or non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL).

The study, "Household Exposure to Pesticides and Risk of Childhood Hematopoietic Malignancies: The ESCALE Study (SFCE)," investigates the role of household exposure to pesticides in the etiology of childhood hematopoietic malignancies, using the national registry-based case-control study ESCALE (Etude sur les cancers de l'enfant) conducted in France from 2003-2004.

The researchers evaluated maternal household use of pesticides during pregnancy and paternal use during

pregnancy or childhood which was reported by the mothers in a structured telephone questionnaire.

Insecticides (used at home, on pets or for garden crops), herbicides and fungicides were distinguished. The researchers estimated odds ratios (OR) [the amount above or below the norm] using unconditional regression models closely adjusting for age, sex, degree of urbanization, and type of housing (house or apartment).

The research included a total of 764 cases of acute leukemia (AL), 130 of Hodgkin lymphoma (HL), 166 of non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL), and 1,681 controls. Insecticide use during pregnancy was significantly associated with childhood AL (OR = 2.1), both lymphoblastic and myeloblastic, NHL (OR = 1.8), mainly for Burkitt lymphoma (OR = 2.7), and

mixed-cell HL (OR = 4.1).

The researchers conclude that the study findings strengthen the hypothesis that domestic use of pesticides may play a role in the etiology of childhood hematopoietic malignancies. The consistency of the findings with those of previous studies on AL raises the question of the advisability of preventing pesticide use by pregnant women.

Children can be exposed to pesticides in utero or during childhood at schools and playing fields, through their parents' work, domestic use, or the general environment (residues in food, water, air, and soil). This study supports numerous other studies that link household use of pesticides with elevated rates of childhood cancers. For more information, go to <http://www.ehponline.org/docs/2007/10596/abstract.html> or contact Beyond Pesticides.

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districts that have newly implemented a strong IPM program. *Initiative Awards* went to ten school districts that are currently in the process of implementing an IPM program.

These districts demonstrate that schools can manage pest problems while curtailing the use of pesticides. According to James Reuter, an award winner from Nash-Rocky Mount Schools and past president of the NC Public Schools Maintenance Association, "Every opportunity we get, we should reduce kids' exposures to toxic chemicals."

"Because children are more vulnerable than adults to pests and the pesticides that many schools districts rely on for pest control, it is important for schools to adopt safer pest management methods that do not rely on toxic pesticides... North Carolina... school districts have taken the lead in implementing creative, cost-effective programs that ensure clean, safe learning environments for children. The [IPM] Program at NC State University works with these districts to provide trainings and technical resources on pest management. The program also has the support of state agencies, professional

associations, local schools and community groups in implementing IPM programs across the state," states Dr. Godfrey Nalyanya with the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service.

In 2006, the North Carolina Legislature passed a law that requires the state's 115 school districts to implement an IPM program by the 2011-2012 school year and immediately begin providing prior notification of pesticide applications. For more information, contact the Agricultural Resources Center at 919-833-5333 or see <http://www.ibiblio.org/arcl>.