

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

# *Promoting Successful, Sensible, and Sustainable Pest Management in Washington Schools*



by Pernell



20 years of patience, persistence and project proposals to cultivate a school IPM culture in Washington.



The Urban Pesticide Education Strategy Team (UPEST) is an interagency committee focused on school and household IPM outreach.



Bringing stakeholders together creates synergy.







We focus on IPM  
education and  
technical  
assistance.

School districts want hands-on IPM training.





School facility directors and IPM coordinators  
are peer educators at coalition events.





# IPM resources are available for all the school IPM team members...



## Rats and Mice in Schools

ISSUE 1

IPM IN SCHOOLS

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House mouse (photo by G. Sullivan)

### WHAT IS IPM?

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a strategy for pest control which utilizes various tools and control methods to achieve long-term pest prevention and control. Control is achieved with minimal impact on human and environmental health. Tools used for IPM include prevention strategies, monitoring, assessment, treatment (using least-toxic means whenever possible), and evaluation. Look for more information on IPM in future issues of this newsletter.



Droppings of house mouse (left), roof rat, and Norway rat (right). Used with permission, University of California Statewide IPM Program (photo by M. Gilling).

Rodents are common pests in and around structures occupied by humans. Rats and mice will damage and contaminate stored foods, nibble on structural materials including electrical wiring, and may carry pests and diseases which can be transmitted to humans. Fleas, mites, tapeworms, and ticks are among the pests which can be carried by rodents. In addition, rodent activity can spread serious illnesses such as Lyme disease, plague, leptospirosis, or salmonellosis, as well as Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome, which is transmitted by deer mice.

### KNOW YOUR ENEMY

There are four common rodents which can be problem pests in the Pacific Northwest: Roof rats, Norway rats, house mice, and deer mice. Mice and rats are generally nocturnal (more active at night) and if they are seen during the day it might indicate a heavy infestation. Rats range in overall length from around 13 to 18 inches. However, while roof rats are relatively slender and light (about 12 ounces), Norway rats are both stockier and heavier (up to 21 ounces). Norway rats are widely distributed, but the roof rat may be more abundant near coastal areas.

The house mouse is a frequent indoor pest throughout the region, while the deer mouse is mainly a problem in rural areas. House mice average 5 to 7 inches long; deer mice are slightly larger. Deer mice are distinguished from house mice by their white bellies and proportionally large eyes and ears. Young rats may also be confused with mice, but have large heads and feet compared to their body, while mice have comparatively small heads and feet.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST SCHOOL IPM CONSORTIUM

...including the students.





The Goal of our work has been to increase verifiable IPM in Washington school districts.





Next steps?





Stop School Pests

Increase IPM  
implementation  
through  
campaigners,  
stakeholders,  
coalitions, and  
incentives.

# School IPM Project in WA State

Juliann Barta, EPA Region 10

&

Carrie Foss, WSU Extension



# Resources

- Support from
  - PPDC IPM Workgroup
  - EPA's CoE & Regions
  - WA's UPEST
- Funds into WSDA cooperative agreement for coalition events

# Goal – Create a Model for Statewide Diffusion of School IPM

## Objectives:

- Increase SIPM state partnerships
- Increase SIPM implementation at K-12 public schools
- Document what works and what doesn't, lessons learned

# Mechanisms

- Create school district focus groups
  - Organize a “core of champions” from existing SIPM districts
    - Pilot different tools
    - Use as a coalition panel for peer-to-peer mentoring
  - Meet with districts at the annual Washington Association of Maintenance and Operation Administrators (WAMOA) meeting
  - Get input from these school districts on the most important resources and incentives we can provide schools
- Create a “Stop School Pests” Recognition Program
- Create new state partnerships



# “What assistance from EPA or Extension would you find most useful for your school’s pest management program?”

- Conducting a walkthrough at your school and free technical assistance (non-enforcement)
- Speaking to your school board about supporting pest monitoring and maintenance activities
- Awarding your pest management program
- Providing educational materials/training for your teachers
- Providing educational materials/training for your kitchen staff
- Providing free pocket guide(s) for pest ID and management (including weeds)
- Providing information on how to hire an integrated pest management contractor
- Providing a pest management self-assessment package (w/ example action plans to improve your program)
- Providing an integrated pest management policy template
- Providing demonstrative pest management workshops/trainings
- Providing free pest management supplies- snap traps, insect sticky traps, plastic bins for decluttering and food storage, copper mesh, sealant, pest manual, etc.

# “Stop School Pests” Recognition

- What's going to motivate people?
- Provide recognition for schools that are progressing along the spectrum
- Use existing tools to create standards
  - Indian Health Service guidance document
  - Texas A&M Cost Calculator
  - IPM Star and other environmental school health recognition programs
  - StopSchoolPests curriculum

# Increase SIPM State Partnerships

Possible ways to increase SIPM In WA State?

- Increase IPM outreach to kitchen staff or other school staff through a partnership with WA Department of Health (ex. EPA R7)
- Create a letter of support in partnership with other state agencies to encourage/support recognition (ex. EPA R2)
- WSDA enhanced partnership – continue to support UPEST, workshop meetings, and inspections at schools



# Next Steps?

- Begin creating new partnerships
- Bring a core of school district IPM champions together
- Design a national recognition program
- Schedule WA state coalition meetings for next school year
- Begin documenting process