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More Than Just a Firm Handshake: Bid and Contract Guidance for Securing IPM-Based Services for Schools Questions & Answers

More Than Just a Firm Handshake: Bid and Contract Guidance for Securing IPM-Based Services for Schools, one of a series of [school Integrated Pest Management \(IPM\) webinars](#) hosted by EPA's Center of Expertise for School IPM, was presented on February 21, 2017. Included here is information on the presenters and responses to participants' questions.

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Speakers

- **Claudia Riegel**, PhD, Director, New Orleans Mosquito and Termite Control Board
- **Paul Mitola**, Consultant, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- **Brad Miller**, Environmental Specialist, EPA Center of Expertise for School IPM

Questions and Answers

The questions below were posed by webinar participants. Responses may have been refined following the webinar for clarification or to include additional resources.

1. **In a remote/rural area, should we hire and train an IPM coordinator if there are no reliable IPM contractors in the area? Also, what is the best way to find an IPM coordinator for a very small district?**

(Dr. Riegel) I think that every school should have their own trained IPM coordinator, so that he or she is a part of that school system, the employee should be state certified and understand pests, pesticides and pesticide treatments and that person can be the liaison for the pest management contractor and the school district. There are many IPM training opportunities throughout the United States and online.

2. **Do you have an IPM checklist that you use with prospective IPM contractors during the interview process?**

(Mr. Mitola) Yes, it's important to have a checklist that you can go over with your vendors, before you put the work out for contract. In Florida, we have a pre-bid conference where the contractors go through a checklist before bidding on the contract. There are many IPM checklists out there, some are state-specific while others can be modified for your needs.

3. **Many of our schools are having rodent bait stations installed outside to prevent rodents from entering the buildings, has this ever been shown to be effective?**

(Dr. Riegel) The best thing to do is to keep the rodents out to begin with, filling in the holes in the walls, sealing up cracks, installing door sweeps. Yes, rodents will feed on the bait in bait stations, but rodent work is an active process and finding the rodent activity and solving the problem at the source is a better place to start.

4. **Do you have any material (training or slide presentations) for building support for procuring IPM services among tribal constituents to aid in avoiding the lowest bid situations?**

(Dr. Riegel) Work closely with your purchasing agent and let them know what IPM is and how it works. Tie IPM to cost savings for energy or another benefit (such as healthier environments)

beyond pest control. There are a lot of IPM organizations, websites, individuals, and the EPA that have materials that can guide you in procuring IPM services.

5. **Is IPM really less costly in the long run? If one looks at the pest services being required, IPM is never less costly, but it does provide superior benefits over treatment-based programs.**

EPA provides some information on [evaluating the costs of IPM in schools](#) as well as the [benefits of school IPM implementation](#). Chambers, et al. (2011) provide a more detailed look at [*The Business Case for Integrated Pest Management in Schools: Cutting Costs and Increasing Benefits*](#).