Parents, community organizations, and advocacy groups all want assurance that schools use pesticides safely and judiciously. This concern stems from the special vulnerability of young children to environmental toxins. In addition, even more students may be affected, as student enrollment in primary and secondary schools will increase over the next several years, with almost 156,000 more students in 2005 than were enrolled in the 2001 school year. Also, schools spend considerable financial and human resources preventing and controlling pests—funds that might otherwise be used to enhance educational programs, school facilities or equipment. As a result, many of California’s public schools are reevaluating their pest management policies and programs.

In 1978, the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) began an initiative to encourage and facilitate the adoption or improvement of integrated pest management (IPM) programs and policies in both the agricultural and urban setting. In 1993, DPR conducted a study of pest management programs in California’s public school districts. Since then, as funding allowed, DPR has worked with school districts to implement reduced-risk pest management programs. Beginning in 2000, DPR received additional funding to provide school districts with information about IPM practices and to help them develop IPM programs for their schools. The enactment of the Healthy Schools Act of 2000 put many features of DPR’s existing school IPM program into law and added requirements for schools regarding right-to-know information about pesticide applications. As one of a growing number of such laws in the nation, it requires, among other things, that:

- Each year, schools provide written notification addressing expected pesticide use (some products are exempt) and reference DPR’s Internet site for more information about pesticides to all staff and parents.
- Each school provide interested staff and parents the opportunity to register with the district if they want to be notified of individual pesticide applications at the school before they occur.
- School districts post warning signs at each area of the school where pesticides will be applied (some products are exempt). These signs are posted 24 hours before pesticide applications and must remain for 72 hours after.
- Each school site maintain records of all pesticides used at the school for four years and makes those records available to the public upon request.

The preferred methods of managing pests at schools are effective, least-hazardous practices, consistent with IPM, a

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strategy that focuses on long-term prevention or suppression of pest problems by emphasizing good sanitation and maintenance practices.

Each school district designate an IPM coordinator to carry out the requirements of the Healthy Schools Act.

**Let the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) Help You Put IPM to Work**

We recognize the efforts school districts are making to follow the requirements of the Healthy Schools Act and to implement IPM. In fact, according to a recent survey conducted by DPR, 70 percent of the school districts responded that they have implemented all or part of an IPM program. To make it easier for school districts to meet these requirements, DPR offers a variety of resources and provides school districts assistance in developing their IPM programs.


Features include a summary of mandatory and voluntary components of the Healthy Schools Act, sample documents useful to schools for implementing the law's provisions, a health and environmental impacts section, a section on managing pests with links to fact sheets on specific pest species, links to DPR pesticide databases, a section of frequently asked questions, and references to legislative text applicable to IPM in schools.

Another valuable resource on the Web site is DPR's California School IPM Model Program Guidebook. For use by the school districts that choose to implement an IPM program, it serves as a resource to guide school districts as they develop their plans for pest management programs.

DPR recently established a California School IPM list server to quickly send useful information about school IPM. School IPM information may include training sessions, meetings, workshops, conferences, new IPM resources, and news related to school IPM. To subscribe to the list server, go to www.schoolipm.info and click on “School IPM Electronic Notification List.” The subscription form will open and you’ll be prompted to enter information in fields. Make sure you select the correct list—School Integrated Pest Management.

DPR provides these resources to make it easier for you to use IPM and to meet the requirements of the Healthy Schools Act. An IPM program in your school can minimize risks to children, school staff, and the environment, while also keeping school buildings and grounds pest-free.