

Tools or Schools



Integrated Pest Management

Awareness of the health and environmental risks of pesticides have made pest management a necessary part of the Tools for Schools program. Effective and safe measures to control pests in our schools are consistent with and complement measures to ensure good indoor air quality.

What is IPM?

Integrated Pest Management, or IPM, is a system of controlling pests that does not depend on automatic application of pesticides such as insecticides, herbicides and fungicides but creates an inhospitable environment for the pests. Current information of the life cycles and their interaction with the environment is studied. The pests are monitored by regular and careful inspections. The use of these non chemical means: inspect, identify, sealing entry and harborage points, trapping, and removing all possible pest harborages; along with improving the environmental conditions (keeping food sources only in designated areas with food containers sealed, keeping carpet areas free of food residues, cleaning drains and repairing leaks and other plumbing problems to deny water to pest) are used to decrease the use of chemicals. Pesticides can be used if all mechanical means have not resolved the pest issue. They are to be used only in a way that minimizes exposure to occupants and the environment. Notification must be provided at least 48 hours prior along with warning signs.

The HCPS Pesticide Department has developed an IPM program for each school and office. Every building has an employee on both shifts who has received training through the pesticide department. Training in the safe and efficient application of "general use pesticides" has been approved by the Maryland Department of Agriculture. These registered individuals and certified pesticide employees within the pesticide department are the only employees within the pesticide department allowed by law to apply any type of pesticide on school grounds. Certified contractors may also be used under the direction of the pesticide department if necessary.

The Harford County Public Schools pesticide department's approach to controlling unwanted pests works in conjunction with Integrated Pest Management (IPM) principles, State Mandated Integrated Pest Management and Notification of Pesticide Use in a Public School.

The Pesticide Department is a very integrated and vital part of the Harford County Public Schools education process. Their ultimate goal is insuring that all occupants and visitors of our buildings have a safe and pest free environment.

'Tools for Schools' is an Indoor Air Quality program designed by the Environmental Protection Agency to provide practical guidance to help prevent IAQ issues in our schools.