



Dear Sir/Madam,

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 2, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the New York State Education Department (NYSED) have the common objective to increase environmental awareness of students, faculty, staff and parents regarding the benefits and potential dangers of pesticides used for pest control in school settings. The purpose of this letter is to emphasize and promote alternative **methods** of pest control.

Pesticides are powerful tools for controlling pests. Pesticides need to be used carefully and judiciously, especially in sensitive areas where children are present. Children are more sensitive than adults to pesticides. Children of all ages are vulnerable to pesticide exposure, because of their rapid growth and development. Young children may have greater exposure than adults to pesticides from crawling, exploring, or other hand-to-mouth activities.

We collectively strongly recommend that schools use integrated pest management (IPM) to reduce the risk of potential pesticide exposure to children. IPM provides a comprehensive, practical and potentially less costly option for effective pest management in a school. IPM is based on pest identification and monitoring as well as common sense strategies to reduce sources of food, water, and shelter for pests. An IPM program takes advantage of all pest management strategies, including judicious and careful use of pesticides when necessary.

Since children spend much of their day at school, IPM provides an opportunity to create a safer learning environment and reduce children's exposure to pesticides while effectively preventing and managing pests. EPA Region 2, NYSDEC and NYSED encourage school officials to adopt IPM practices to reduce children's exposure to pesticides. School administrators and others with decision-making and maintenance responsibilities for pest management in and around school buildings and grounds should be knowledgeable about safer IPM options.

Schools in New York State must develop a comprehensive maintenance plan which includes a least toxic approach to integrated pest management as required by

Commissioner's Regulation 155.4(d)(2). Development of this plan will reduce pests and contribute to improved indoor air quality. Here are some helpful websites that contain information on School IPM:

NYSED: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/>

NYSDEC: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/41822.html> and
<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/42925.html>

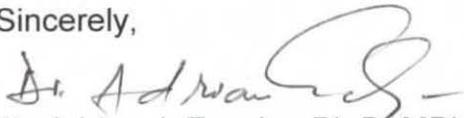
EPA: <http://www.epa.gov/pesp/ipminschoools/implementation.html>

Cornell: <http://nysipm.cornell.edu/>

Also, to help achieve the goal of increasing the use of IPM at schools, EPA Region 2 offers specific training and presentations about school IPM and general pesticide safety. For further information and/or to request presentations, please contact Mrs. Lynne Gregory, the EPA Region 2 Pesticides Outreach Coordinator at (732) 321-4391 or at gregory.lynne@epa.gov.

We hope the attached materials are helpful as you develop or modify your school's Integrated Pest Management program. Also, if possible, please send an email to gregory.lynne@epa.gov and let her know if your school is currently implementing an IPM program or if you are considering adoption of such a program. Your cooperation is much appreciated.

Sincerely,



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