Healthy Colorado Schools

School IPM Newsletter– August 2012

working with you to create a safe and healthy environment

Find Out About HEAD LICE

September is National Head Lice Prevention Month (www.headlice.org). In the US, there are between 6 to 12 million cases of head lice each year, most commonly among children three to twelve years of age. During the fall months (August to November) it's advisable for parents to do home head inspections weekly. **DON'T PANIC! IT CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE!**

The American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Association of School Nurses (http://www.nasn.org/Default/tabid/62.aspx) discourage "no nit" policies in schools. There is no need to send students home. To find out about YOUR school's policy and procedures for children discovered with lice, check with your school nurse's office.

Many families with young children have at least one encounter with the head louse, *Pediculus capitis*. Tips for parents can be seen at http://www.youtube.com/. Head lice are not a sign of uncleanliness and do not vector disease organisms. The most common symptoms are itching and sleeplessness. Scratching can lead to secondary bacterial skin infection. Head lice cases can result in extreme anxiety, embarrassment, and unnecessary days lost from school and pesticide exposure.

Lice are usually spread through head-to-head contact. They feed on their host by injecting small amounts of saliva and removing tiny amounts of blood from the scalp every few hours. The saliva may create an itchy irritation. A first case of head lice may not result in itching for four to six weeks. Head lice usually survive less than two days away from the scalp, at normal room temperature. Laundering and drying clothing and bedding at 130°F will kill all stages. Head lice are not found on animals or household pets, and are not transmitted from pets to humans.

The presence of active lice in a child's head is the only definitive indication of an infestation that requires proper head treatment. If an active infestation is noted, the child's parent or guardian should be notified immediately. Other members of the family should be examined soon after along with children who frequently sleep-over or share hair apparel (hair clips, head-sets, hats, brushes, etc.)

Steps for controlling head lice:

- Perform inspections often. Individual lice are more easily controlled than advanced infestations. Infestations are normally found on children, but can be spread to adults. Inspect children's heads, particularly near the ears and above the neckline.
- Provide information to parents on head lice control, which may include using a metal-nit comb and/or head lice shampoos. Special nit combs are effective in getting rid of head lice infestations only if used diligently each day for up to two weeks. Drying and brushing the hair with a hair dryer will kill many lice, which are very delicate and prone to desiccation. When using a head louse shampoo, wash the infested person's hair in a basin or sink so insecticide residues do not reach other parts of the body. The person applying the treatment should wear rubber gloves. Never apply an insecticide to anyone who has open cuts, scratches, or inflammations, and never use these materials on infants without consulting a doctor. In all cases, follow label directions completely and carefully.
- Encourage children **NOT** to share brushes, combs, hats, barrettes, towels, and bedding.
- Clean carpets and furniture in classrooms frequently. Cleaning may prevent the spread of lice because sometimes lice and/or nits may get into these areas.

  What needs to be done in the home? Once an infestation is detected, all clothes should be washed in hot soapy water. Pillowcases, sheets, blankets and the bedding material should also be washed and placed in the clothes dryer on the "high heat" cycle to kill the lice and their eggs. Any non-washable items should be dry cleaned or sealed in plastic bags. **Lice can only survive 48 hours without a human host.** Vacuuming the home will remove shed hair and nits. Continue weekly head checks of the whole family.

  For more information, see our fact sheet at: **http://coloradoipmcenter.agsci.colostate.edu/Communities/**

Pest Identification Is VITAL To IPM

"Proper pest identification is very important, because if you don't know what kind of pest you're dealing with, it's very difficult to come up with a successful management plan," says Janet Hurley, school IPM extension specialist with Texas AgriLife Extension Service. If you are unsure about what kind of insect you have, always check with an extension agent, entomologist or other expert before taking action.

In Colorado, you can send digital photos or samples in a vial or small container with some rubbing alcohol or hand sanitizer to the county extension office. For your county's contact information please visit: http://www.ext.colostate.edu/cedirectory/countylist.cfm/

Websites such as bugwood.org or bugguide.net house libraries of insect images and make great aids for pest identification. Commercial identification services are also available, such as IdentifyUS, LLC, founded by Dr. Richard Pollack. IdentifyUS provides identification of both physical specimens and digital photos, as well as guidance on pest management.

There is a mobile app, Suburban Pest ID (99¢ on iTunes), that can help with on-the-go pest identification. The app allows users to take a picture of a pest and send it to the staff entomologists at Suburban, who will respond with an identification of the pest. An image gallery is also included in the app, which contains pest photos and basic information.

The app is designed for users from all over the US. "We've gotten photos from people all over the world, including England and Canada," says Lynn Frank, technical director for Suburban. "A few of the identifications have been a little challenging, because they are pests that we haven't seen in a long time."

"Make sure you include something in the photo that gives an idea of the scale of the insect, like a yard stick or a penny," recommends Frank. He requests that the picture include as much contrast as possible, to make the insect easier to see. "Occasionally we get a photo of a boy, like a rubber spider. I also suggest that people check to make sure it's a live insect before sending it to us for identification."

The app is in the iTunes store and is currently only available for Apple users. Suburban plans to release an update that will include Android users soon.

No endorsement of products mentioned is intended, nor is criticism implied of products not mentioned.

Japanese Beetle In Colorado

According to Laura Pottorf, the Colorado Department of Agriculture has been trapping and monitoring populations of Japanese beetle for many years. There are areas along the Front Range that have small populations but it is very important to note that our state is not infested with the pest. Most Coloradans have never seen a Japanese beetle. We have known about populations of this beetle near Cherry Hills CC, Denver CC and Wellshire for several years. Denver Botanic Gardens also is reporting beetles, which appeared to be new this year. There is also a population in Pueblo near the zoo. We know of a few more areas and if anyone would like more information, please contact :

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Surveys Distributed To Colorado School Districts

School facility managers recently received a request from us to complete an on-line survey. This survey is part of a grant issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. We would like the survey to be completed by the person responsible for coordinating the control of pests and other pests for your school district; it should take about fifteen minutes. We want to learn more about how you are using integrated pest management (IPM) in your school district, and what additional IPM resources (education and programs) are needed. If your school district did not receive the survey, please contact me at deborah.young@colostate.edu. As a token of our appreciation, we also have posters on pest-free schools.

Colorado State University Extension programs are available to all without discrimination.

For more information contact:
Colorado Coalition for School IPM

schoolipm
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The Colorado Coalition for School IPM is an effort by Colorado State University, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Colorado Department of Agriculture, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Colorado Department of Education, school districts, National Environmental Health Association and private pest control professionals.