



# Healthy Colorado Schools

## THWARTING NUISANCE PESTS

Warmer temperatures mean increasing insect activity including nuisance pests making their way into school buildings. Here are a few to watch for in the coming month.

### MILLER MOTHS

Get ready for the 2013 miller moth season. Dr. Whitney Cranshaw says that we could be in store for a "really good" miller moth year, at least in Northeastern Colorado and the Northern Front Range. (Reports from SE Colorado are sketchy so far, and that area was hit hardest by the droughts.) An

updated version of "Questions and Answers about Miller Moths" sheet can be seen at <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/insect/millermoths.pdf>



Watch Our Video for tips on dealing with ants!

### ANTS

Ant identification is very important. Different species can require different approaches. Some species are drawn indoors for food or moisture including

crumbs or sweet liquid spills. Prompt cleanup can stop problems before they start. If you are using baits to help manage persistent ant problems, eliminating other food sources will make the baits more attractive. Properly installing and maintaining door sweeps, and sealing cracks and crevices can make an enormous difference. Door sweeps alone have been shown to reduce pest complaints by 65%! For more information on dealing with common ant species, see: <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/insect/05518.html>

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### Special points of interest:

- ✓ Nuisance Pests & Ways To Deal With Them
- ✓ Welcome School District 11
- ✓ Mystery Bites & Itches Explained
- ✓ The Benefits of Green Deep Cleaning
- ✓ The IPM Wisdom of Matt Smidt
- ✓ Weed Of The Month: Common Purslane

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## WELCOME COLORADO SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT 11



The Colorado Coalition for School IPM is giving a big shout-out to District 11 for joining the School IPM team! District 11 is one of Colorado's largest school districts with 60 buildings. Environmental Life/Safety supervisor, Dan Moors, said "We have a lot of older

buildings that have a wide range of needs. We looked at the IPM strategy and decided that this would be one of the safest most effective avenues to invest in. We're constantly working to make our buildings better for our kids."

The Coalition SIPM team conducted pest audits at the end of March at three

of District 11's schools. When asked about the audits, Moors said, "It was great to walk along with the team and see what they observed in the schools. My team learned a lot, and the reports have been helpful in getting some necessary changes made."

## WHAT CAUSES MYSTERY BITES AND ITCHES?

We had a report recently of school employees and students with scabies. These microscopic mites burrow in the skin causing itching. Use of insecticide sprays and fumigants is not recommended. For information on treatment, see <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/treatment.html>.

Sometimes, however, we mistakenly blame 6-legged and 8-legged critters (insects and other arthropods) for inexplicable red spots, lesions, itches, or the sensation of being tickled or nibbled.

In rare cases, mystery itches attributed to arthropods becomes an extreme condition. Even when a medical doctor or entomologist concludes no arthropods are present, the sufferer fervently believes otherwise. Scientists call this condition *delusory parasitosis*.

IPM stresses the importance of identifying the critter before taking any control measures. Be sure to contact a medical professional if you have symptoms.

Here are a few examples of other skin afflictions:

**Folliculitis** – ingrown hair.

**Eczema and psoriasis** are types of dermatitis.

**Hives** are raised red welts typically caused by an allergic reaction.

**Shingles and chicken pox** symptoms include raised, red welts with intense itching (chicken pox) and/or pain (shingles).

**MRSA – Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)** is an antibiotic-resistant form of a common bacterium that can cause red, tender and persistent spots or lesions on skin.



IPM stresses the importance of knowing the source of bites before applying treatment.

Photo by Bart Drees

## SUMMERTIME MEANS DEEP CLEANING; WHY GO GREEN?

[The Healthy Schools Campaign](#), a project that started in Illinois has done extensive research on the benefits of [green cleaning for schools](#).

Why go green?

### 1. Green Cleaning Helps Students Stay Healthy and Learn:

EPA estimates that children miss more than 14 million school days each year due to asthma exacerbated by poor indoor air quality. Green cleaning can help reduce the environmental hazards produced from certain chemical combinations.

### 2. Green Cleaning Protects the Health of Custodial Staff:

Research shows that, [six out of every 100 custodians are injured on the job](#) each year. [Choosing safer products](#) and [training staff](#) in proper usage can help reduce the number of injuries caused by caustic chemicals, respiratory irritation and inappropriate or dangerous equipment.

### 3. Green Cleaning Increases the Lifespan of Facilities:

[Proper maintenance](#) and effective cleaning extends the

longevity and performance of school building materials and furnishings by preventing damage and premature aging. A square foot of typical carpet can hide as much as three times its weight in dirt and sand, which act like thousands of small knives, cutting and wearing out fibers in a few short years — long before its useful lifespan and before the district had budgeted to replace it.

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## THE IPM WISDOM OF MATT SMIDT OR "WHAT I WISHED SOMEONE WOULD HAVE TOLD ME ABOUT IPM"

"Education is better than any pesticide ever invented."

Matt Smidt

So begins the [YouTube interview with Matt Smidt](#), recently retired Senior Maintenance Supervisor, Facility Management, Denver Public Schools. A leading advocate for School IPM, Matt shared with interviewers: Clyde Wilson, VelRey Lozano and Deb Young his thoughts on what works when implementing school IPM.

Highlights from the interview include the following:

### How did you address cultural change?

It's really the most basic things – moving clutter from classrooms. Teachers are so busy setting up the next day's class and beyond. They end up having boxes of stuff everywhere (excessive teaching materials) and that creates the harborage area for mice. Custodial staff and lunch ladies don't realize that excessive

clutter is going to be a harborage for mice and insects.

In the mop closets, mops are hung from pegs instead of being on the floor. Roaches love to nest in a nice damp mop in the mop closet.

### What about meals in the classroom?

We have trained with lunch supervisors to deliver food in morning and remove all food from the classroom after breakfast, we haven't seen an increase in pest problems. The training plus sanitation practices have helped with all of the food in the classroom.



Matt Smidt, DPS

### Benefits?

Rodents are our biggest pest problem. Using rodenticides killed the rodents just fine, but a few weeks after we'd get a call that it smells funky in here. Who knows where the dead ones will be. It's best to remove them and prevent them going in. overall just the health issue is the main thing.

### Advice?

Get support from the principals and administrative level, including the school board.

From your perspective, on a scale of "1" to "10", with "1" indicating "no concern" and "10" indicating a "great concern," how important a concern is pest management in this school district?

**It's pretty high – up there at 9 or 10.** Nothing that disrupts classes more than a mouse running across a teacher's desk. Not to mention the health issues associated with the pest.

## WEED OF THE MONTH: Common Purslane

- A summer annual that forms a dense mat.
- One plant can produce 240,000 seeds
- Can be invasive in areas where the turf is thin or worn due to foot traffic.
- Keep mowers, planters and cultivation equipment clean.
- Hand weed and mulch.
- Hand pulled plants may re-root but turning upside down after pulling prevents this habit.

### IPM Recommendations:

- Prevent establishment by using weed-free planting stock and seed.
- Herbicides are not generally necessary if vigorous turf is maintained.
- **Eat it!** This weed is edible and contains lots of omega-3 fatty acids.



**For More Information About  
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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.



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[www.ccsipm.wordpress.com](http://www.ccsipm.wordpress.com)

## GREEN CLEANING CONT.

4. **Green Cleaning Preserves the Environment:** [According to ISSA](#), the cleaning industry consumes six billion pounds of chemicals, including non-renewable natural resources such as petroleum, and generates 4.5 billion pounds of paper products, requiring the cutting of 35 million trees annually.

Click on the link to obtain a copy of

[The Quick + Easy Guide to Green Cleaning in Schools](#)

## THWARTING NUISANCE PESTS CONT.

### FLIES

House flies, fruit flies, phorid flies and fungus gnats are often a problem in schools. Flies can transmit bacteria and disease-causing organisms to food and food preparation surfaces. To keep flies out, maintain window screens and weather stripping around doors and windows. Keep dumpsters covered, clean and away from buildings. Cover or put away foods whenever possible, and promptly clean up spills and crumbs.

For pictures and additional management information on flies, see : <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/insect/05502.html>

