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## National Healthy Schools Day Provides Opportunities for IPM

Spring is a great time to take on new challenges. With National Healthy Schools Day (<http://www.nationalhealthyschoolsday.org/>) just around the corner on April 24, 2012, March is a perfect opportunity to both prepare for the inevitable increase in pest activity that comes with warmer weather, and take your IPM program to another level.

Districts looking to implement a new IPM program can start with developing an IPM policy to formally state their commitment to IPM. Next steps can include designating an IPM coordinator, providing training for the coordinator and key custodial, maintenance and food service staff, and beginning to assemble an IPM plan. Districts with existing programs can evaluate schools using an audit checklist. Particular attention should be paid to potential sources of food, water, harborage and access for pests. The most cost-effective measures you can take include installing door sweeps under exterior doors, sealing cracks and crevices around baseboards, and trimming vegetation back to reduce pest access and leave a clear inspection path around buildings.

National Healthy Schools Day graphics, flyers and posters are available to download and print. Email [info@healthyschools.org](mailto:info@healthyschools.org) for more information.

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## IPM Spring Checklist:

Refer to this list as the weather warms up and pest sightings become more common. Be ready for the most common spring pest problems found in Colorado.



**Check all door sweeps for light.** If you can see any light peeking through, remember mice and ants consider that an open door invitation to your building. Replace any door sweeps that can see the light!

### Check for gaps in walls where electrical and water pipes enter and near baseboards, where the building may have shifted.

Both of these serve as common entry and exit ways for mice and other pests. Use escutcheon plates around water pipes; fill openings with copper mesh and caulk/seal to prevent entry.



### Check to make sure any staff cleaning up small amounts of rodent droppings\* are taking the following precautions:

1) Feces should not be swept up, or vacuumed because this can cause the excrement residues to become airborne and be inhaled.

2) Wear rubber or plastic gloves (disposable gloves are usually purchased in boxes of

- 2) Wear rubber or plastic gloves (disposable gloves are usually purchased in boxes of 100 by pest professionals, and building custodians).
- 3) Spray the droppings and affected area with disinfectant until wet.
- 4) Use a wet paper towel to pick up the disinfected droppings.
- 5) Place the droppings and paper towel into a ziplock bag and seal the bag.
- 6) Dispose the bag in a dumpster or garbage can.
- 7) Dispose of the gloves in the trash, or for re-useable gloves, spray the outside of the gloves with disinfectant, then remove the gloves and wash hands with soap and water.

Note: For employees wishing to maximize personal protection, and/or when removing rodent feces in enclosed spaces, and where a large amount of rodent feces are present, coveralls, and a respirator with a HEPA (NP 100 to NP 400) filter should be worn.

\* Adapted from:

- 1) CDC Hantavirus preventative Recommendations ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov))
- 2) Army Pest Management Bulletin, 2001. Vol. 22 (4)
- 3) Communications from Bobby Corrigan, Ph.D. RMC Pest Management Consulting.

**M**ice and cockroaches are triggers for asthma in children. Make your school healthy and clean by taking these simple steps to prevent pest entry into your building.

**Check to make sure that all foodstuffs in the classroom are properly stored.**

Encourage staff and students not to eat in the classrooms. If they do, make sure that all food is stored in pest proof containers.



**C**orner crud can feed cockroaches and ants for weeks!

**Check the landscape next to the building.**

Maintain the landscape next to buildings as a barrier to prevent pests; use rock, clay, concrete or pavement. Don't use mulch next to the building. Extend the barrier three feet away from building to prevent rodents from digging burrows next to buildings. If using rock, a diameter of one inch or larger and at least a 2 inch depth all around is recommended.



**T**his type of landscape design discourages

This type of landscape design discourages pests such as mice, and helps move water away from the building.

**Check for wasp nests in common locations such as; open ended pipes, dumpsters, trash can lids, underneath outdoor bleachers and trees located close to the building.**

Remove old nests that are found on school grounds. Place bait traps to lure new queens before they build new nests.



**S**tings are a defensive response, so don't harass the wasps.

**B**y consistently following the steps outlined in this simple checklist you can eliminate/reduce the majority of pest problems in a way that is safe and healthy for the children and staff.



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## ?????? about PESTICIDES

Do you want to know more about the pesticides used in your school? The National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC), a cooperative project of the U.S. EPA and Oregon State University, is dedicated to providing science-based information about pesticides and pesticide-related topics to the general public. Its Web page ( <http://npic.orst.edu> ) is the most comprehensive and reliable source of pesticide information for consumers in the United States.

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**For more information contact:**

**Colorado Coalition for School IPM**

Colorado State University  
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1177  
970-491-1377



***Happy Spring—Don't  
forget that 95% of all  
insects are beneficial!***



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

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