

Summary of School Visits/Surveys

Overall findings

- Wide variation in interest/ability of IPM coordinators
 - Some, especially if they are the facilities director, coordinate well on both indoor and outdoor situations.
 - Smaller school districts seem to have less difficulty, in general, with communication.
 - Some have no knowledge of, or control over, what happens on school grounds. School athletics program staff are sometimes making decisions about athletic fields rather than IPM coordinators.
 - School district consolidations may have impacted IPM programs.
 - Some coordinators are only record keepers right now, not decision makers.
 - Some IPM coordinators don't even realize they have the job; some know but don't understand what it means.
- Different pest management professional for structural versus grounds.

Findings re indoor applications

- Schools have a mechanism for communicating pest problems which works. About half of schools use an electronic work order system which keeps records but in a different setting, not specifically as Chapter 27 records. Other schools use email or direct communication, but do not keep records.

Findings re lawns, playgrounds and playing fields (including fence lines):

- Most pesticide applications involve playing fields. Rarely is a lawn application done. There is no evidence of applications on playgrounds; all the schools visited had some type of mulch around playground equipment to block weeds.
- The pesticide applications we found are:
 - Preemergent herbicides on highest value playing fields
 - ◆ football, soccer - once/year
 - ◆ baseball, softball diamonds - twice/year
 - Broadleaf herbicides to middle and high school playing fields once every 2 to 5 years
 - Grub control mainly as needed but annually where there is a history of infestation
 - Some schools apply glyphosate around fence lines every 2 years
- Cost is one of the primary considerations behind grounds management decisions
 - Determines level of service (ie number of aeration, fertilizing, herbicide applications vs what is recommended) and on which fields
 - Schools are generally more willing to pay for services to varsity athletic fields
 - Some schools think it is less expensive to hire everything done by contracted grounds management professionals, other schools think it is less expensive to buy equipment and have staff do what they can (aerating, fertilizing, seeding)

- Some schools prefer to leave everything to grounds management professionals so as to limit their own (perceived) liability and/or level of expertise needed
- Aesthetics and playability of varsity sports fields are also major considerations in grounds management decisions:
 - Varsity athletics attract parents, fans and revenue
 - The frequency of use and type of play is hard on the turf, and requires more maintenance than other turf areas
- Records are generally poor
 - Schools rely on grounds management professionals to keep application records but this is not always a reliable method
 - Most schools have no IPM records for grounds management
- Most schools rely on professionals for recommendations; many provide a schedule even if the school is actually doing the work (eg. aerating, fertilizing, overseeding).
- Records and interviews indicate that schools often try to schedule pesticide applications during vacations when fewer students are present and 5-day advance notice is not required. This is done both to avoid the notice requirement and to reduce exposure.
- Confusion remains regarding notification exemptions. Some schools think it is okay to do applications over a weekend without doing the 5-day notice, while others deliberately schedule applications during summer vacations. There is also confusion around the posting requirements.

Findings re gardens, greenhouses, nature trails

- There was no evidence of pesticide use in greenhouses and gardens, however, records are poor.
- The only issue noted about a nature trail was a spot of poison ivy which was clearly marked with a sign and left alone.

Examples of Pest Issues and how they were dealt with (other than calling contractor) (these are largely anecdotal)

- Rodents near garage where they were storing returnables – stopped storing returnables
- Field mice in courtyard - live trapping, cutting grass more often, planning to replace grass with stones
- Stinging insects near trash – made sure containers were consistently covered
- Field mice inside building – determined it was caused by doors being propped open during sporting events, made sure doors were kept closed
- Weeds in flower gardens – annual event to have kids pull weeds by hand
- Poison ivy on school grounds – dug out
- Skunks on fields – live trapped, plan to deal with grubs in the spring
- Insect pests in greenhouses – release of natural enemies
- Infested plants in greenhouses – discard
- Weeds along fence lines — use weed whacker

Survey Data

Number of School Districts visited	9
County	
Aroostook	1
Cumberland	2
Kennebec	1
Knox	1
Lincoln	1
Penobscot	1
Somerset	1
Waldo	1
Number of Schools in District	
3	2
5	1
6	2
7	1
8	1
10	1
13	1
Public School Districts	8
Private School Districts	1
Number of Students in High Schools	
725 or more (class "A")	3
400-724 (class "B")	3
200-399 (class "C")	3
0-199 (class "D")	0
Job Title of IPM Coordinator	
Facilities Manager of Director	5
Grounds Supervisor	1
Director of Buildings, Transportation and Grounds	1
Director of Finance & Projects	1
Operations Director	1
Services Contracted with Grounds Management Professional	
Pesticide Applications	9
Aerating	5
Fertilizing	5
Seeding	7
Pesticide Applications	

Pre-emergent varsity football/soccer fields once/year	4
Pre-emergent baseball/softball diamonds once/year	6
Pre-emergent baseball/softball diamonds twice/year	1
Broadleaf herbicide to all fields	
Once/year	3
Once every 2-3 years	1
Once every 2-5 years	1
Once every 5 years	1
Organic fertilizer/control mix twice/year to all fields	1
Fence lines every 1-2 years	3
Grub control once/year	2
Poison ivy control once/year	1

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