

## **PILOTING STRUCTURAL IPM IMPLEMENTATION AT A PUBLIC AGENCY**

For an agency that is just beginning to implement a structural IPM program, one option is to start with a pilot IPM program at one or a few facilities. Piloting IPM implementation will mean there are fewer buy-in issues at the beginning of the program and will allow all personnel involved to gain experience with a smaller and more easily managed project. Expansion to other facilities could then occur as resources allow and experience is gained.

Prior to developing and implementing the IPM program, an agency-wide IPM Coordinator must be designated. Piloting an IPM program will allow the Coordinator to better manage this new program, quickly gain experience and build success.

### **IPM Coordinator Responsibilities**

The IPM Coordinator should be a staff person with strong IPM knowledge and experience. If the Coordinator doesn't have sufficient IPM experience, it is strongly recommended that the agency hire an IPM consultant to assist the coordinator, particularly in the beginning. The Coordinator need not be a full time person, depending on the size of the IPM program.

The responsibilities of the IPM Coordinator are as follows:

- 1) Working with purchasing and other agency staff, if necessary, to develop clear and specific IPM contract language
- 2) Getting buy-in and cooperation from staff at the facility where IPM is implemented
- 3) Providing technical oversight for the IPM program
- 4) Ensuring adherence to the contract by an outside pest control company

In some agencies, pest control is done by in-house staff. In this case, the IPM Coordinator should provide in-house staff with the attached excerpt from the EcoWise Certified Standards for IPM Certification in Structural Pest Management (available at [www.ecowisecertified.org](http://www.ecowisecertified.org)) to ensure a high and uniform standard of IPM. The Coordinator should also help in-house staff to obtain adequate IPM training.

### **The Right Pilot Facility**

Below are some ideas that may help in identifying a facility to use in the pilot;

- Choose a facility that has the greatest chance for success. Initially you may want to select a facility that has no more than a moderate pest problem and is not a high profile public facility.
- Consider a facility where the pest problem may not be hard to resolve. For example, don't choose a facility that has a rodent problem where solving the problem involves a costly structural fix, unless you have sufficient budget.
- Look for a facility with employees and/or maintenance staff that are willing to cooperate.
- Get some advice from your pest control vendor on a good starting place and ask the vendor where employees have been cooperative.

## **Pilot Period and Measurements**

A year-long pilot period should allow enough time for the Coordinator and pest control vendor to establish good communication with the building occupants and staff responsible for building maintenance. It will also allow for any seasonal influence in pest populations.

Although it is important to track and measure success of the new IPM Program don't burden the pest control vendor or staff with unnecessary reporting. The data you collect should include the following:

- The types and quantities of pesticides used prior to implementation of the IPM Program
- The types and quantities of pesticides used during IPM program implementation
- The types of non pesticide products and techniques used such as rodent and insect traps, steam cleaning, vacuuming, building repairs for pest management such as caulking, adding doorsweeps, fixing screens , etc. Were they successful in managing the pest problem?
- Number and type of complaints before and after IPM program implementation
- Cost of pest control program before and after IPM implementation (track building maintenance costs separately from pest control)

## **EcoWise Certified IPM Standards Will Help**

It should be possible to modify the existing contract language used by your purchasing department to select one or more facilities where an IPM program modeled on the EcoWise Certified Standards is specified.

Vendors are generally capable of adapting to their customer's needs and desires; however, the key to successfully implementing an IPM program is clearly describing what is required and following up if expectations are not being met. Use the EcoWise Certified *Standards for IPM Certification in Structural Pest Management* to communicate the kind of IPM program you want from your pest control contractor and to measure the results you expect. These Standards were reviewed extensively by agency personnel and by pest control professionals and provide clear and appropriate guidance.