

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**Report to the Joint Standing Committee on
Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
126th Maine State Legislature**

**In Response to Resolve 2011 Chapter 59,
To Enhance the Use of Integrated Pest
Management on School Grounds**

**Submitted by the
Maine Board of Pesticides Control
February 1, 2014**

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SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the early 1990s, scientific studies indicated that children are more susceptible than adults to the risks of exposure to environmental toxins. As a result, policy makers began instituting measures to reduce childhood exposure to pesticides and other potential toxins. Regulating the use of pesticides in the school environment quickly became a central component of that effort. According to the National Pest Management Association:

“... 39 states and the District of Columbia now have some type of school pest management law or regulation in place. Twenty-three states have a school law or regulation requiring the use of Integrated Pest Management or IPM; 31 states and the District of Columbia have a minimum competency standard in place for persons using pesticides at schools; 25 states require schools to prenotify parents and staff of upcoming pesticide applications; 18 states have reentry requirements or other beyond label requirements for pesticide applications at schools; and 31 states and the District of Columbia mandate the posting of signs for the application of pesticides at schools.”

Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which is widely accepted as the most cost-effective and least-risk approach to managing pests, also stresses strategies that minimize risks to humans.

The Maine Board of Pesticides (BPC) promulgated Maine’s School IPM rule in 2003. A comprehensive assessment of the rule was conducted in 2011 pursuant to Resolve 2011, Chapter 59 and the results were provided to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry in a report in February 2012. The assessment indicated that the rule has been very effective in improving the way Maine schools manage pests and in virtually eliminating higher risk pesticide applications, thereby reducing risks of childhood exposure to pesticides. The report included specific suggestions for improving the effectiveness of the rule and for reducing pesticide use in schools. This report details steps taken in the last two years.

SECTION II: MAINE’S SCHOOL INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT RULE

CMR 01-026, Chapter 27, Standards for Pesticide Application and Public Notification in Schools, is Maine’s School IPM Rule. The rule contains three fundamental components designed to minimize the risks of pesticide use in a school setting:

1. Each school must adopt an IPM Policy governing pesticide use in schools and follow specified IPM practices that promote non-chemical approaches to managing pests;
2. Schools must provide advance notice of higher risk pesticide applications and post notices for most other pesticide applications; and
3. Schools must appoint one person to oversee and coordinate all pest management activities in the school, maintain pest management records, and ensure that notification requirements have been met.

The 2011 assessment of Chapter 27 revealed that the rule had been very effective in reducing pesticide use at schools and encouraging an IPM approach to pest management. Of note, the five-day advance notice requirement for higher risk applications has served as a strong incentive for schools to favor lower risk approaches to pest management, including sanitation, maintenance, pest trapping, exclusion, and sound horticultural practices on turf and landscapes. Indoor pesticide use is generally limited to targeted applications of non-volatile pesticides only into areas that are inaccessible to children and staff. However, the 2011 assessment also revealed areas of the rule that could be strengthened. Those areas were highlighted in the 2012 legislative report, and later became the focus of a rulemaking initiative that culminated in Legislative authorization for final rulemaking adoption on June 22, 2012. The BPC voted to finally adopt the rules in July of the same year.

The amended rule featured the following improvements:

- All K-12 schools must keep and make available a 'Pest Management Activity Log'
- IPM Coordinators must sign off on pesticide applications, including those made outside of the school, on school grounds
- Commercial applicators must provide records of applications
- All schools must annually notify the BPC of the name and contact information of IPM Coordinator
- Mandatory training for IPM Coordinators:
 - Initial training within one month of first appointment as IPM Coordinator
 - Comprehensive training within one year of first appointment
 - One hour of continuing education annually
- An annual IPM notice must be published in the school's policy manual or handbook
- Advance notice to parents and staff before non-exempt pesticide applications are made while school is in session rather than only to those who request notification

SECTION III: CONTINUING EFFORTS TO EDUCATE AND WORK WITH SCHOOLS TO MINIMIZE THE USE OF PESTICIDES

In addition to the improvements that were made to Chapter 27, the BPC staff and the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) IPM entomologist have continued to work, cooperatively with Department of Education (DOE) staff, with schools to implement their IPM programs and minimize the use of pesticides. In the last two years they have:

- Worked with a group of stakeholders, and using expertise from across the northeast, developed best management practices (BMPs) for school grounds and athletic fields; distributed BMPs¹; provided training to assist schools in implementing BMPs;
- Developed and made available on-line the required overview training;
- Developed the required comprehensive training; provided at free workshops held at schools across the state. To date, three workshops have been completed and four more are scheduled. Presentations and materials are accessible on the website (www.maine.gov/schoolipm);
- Revised and improved the Maine School IPM Program website (www.maine.gov/schoolipm);

- Revised school IPM guidance documents and reporting forms;
- Implemented processes for collecting names and contact information of school IPM Coordinators, including partnership with the DOE to utilize their staff reporting system for public school systems;
- Worked with the DOE to ensure schools are aware of the requirements;
- Collaborated with the Maine chapter of the Educational Plant Maintenance Association (EPMA), a nationally recognized association of school facilities directors and staff, to establish an IPM peer-support group for school IPM Coordinators. The DACF facilitates and provides space for monthly meetings;
- Provided three training sessions at the annual Maine EPMA conference. Additional training will be held at this conference in 2015;
- Continued to work with the IPM Council on ways to assist IPM Coordinators;
- Provided regular announcements of new resources, workshops, webinars and other timely information, to IPM Coordinators;
- Provided technical assistance to schools and organizations serving schools;
- Provided IPM education and teaching resources to current and future K-12 teachers via workshops, educational events, exhibits, and classroom visits. The DACF maintains a website dedicated to making free IPM teaching resources readily accessible. The DACF IPM entomologist also shares announcements and resources to teachers via listservs and social media;
- Continued to provide compliance assistance to school staff and licensed applicators as part of routine inspections;
- Continued to provide compliance support to commercial applicators through regular announcements and training at continuing education events.

The BPC, the DACF IPM Entomologist and the DOE staff continue to work collaboratively with schools, service providers, and other state agencies to promote adoption of effective, low-risk pest management practices in Maine's private and public K-12 schools. These outreach efforts have been well received and our surveys, inspection visits, and feedback from IPM Coordinators indicate that the training has helped them become more adept at utilizing IPM. Using techniques such as prevention, sanitation, exclusion, good horticultural practices and trapping as the first line of defense against pest problems also improves indoor air quality, provides safe buildings and grounds, saves energy and controls costs. The BPC plans to continue these activities and to monitor their impacts, and will also continue to exploit new opportunities and collaborations to promote adoption of IPM practices that protect health and safety of Maine's K-12 students and staff.

¹ BMPs for school grounds and athletic fields distributed through the Maine School Management Association, Maine Municipal Association, Maine Principals Association, Maine Educational Plant Maintenance Association, Maine Department of Education Commissioner's Update, Maine Private School Association and sent to all School IPM Coordinators and Commercial Applicator Companies