

Alabama School IPM Program

IPM indoors and **OUTDOORS**

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What kinds of pests are we dealing with outdoors?

Many! Everything from mice and yellowjackets to weeds and fire ants. If it is an unsightly weed or something that can harm children such as a wasp nest, it is a pest.

By keeping the outdoor school grounds maintained using IPM you are also preventing pest problems indoors. Problems that schools have with pests indoors, such as roaches and mice, often start outside before viewed as a problem within the building.

What can be done to keep all of these pests away from the school?

This is a big task and requires cooperation from the IPM coordinator, ground keepers, teachers and students. The goal is to eliminate conditions that are pest friendly in the school yard.

By eliminating the homes, food sources and water sources the pests need to survive, you are making your school grounds an undesirable place to live. With consistency and cooperation, this big task can readily become manageable.

Okay, lets get more specific. Have you ever picked up a cardboard box that has been sitting outside for a few days and shuttered as the roaches that were under it scurried away? It didn't take long for that cardboard box to become prime habitat for pests did it?

Here are a few specific IPM practices you can do for your school's exterior.

General school grounds cleanup

- Keep the grass mown and trimmed on a regular basis.
- Keep leaves and grass clippings raked and removed from around the foundation of the school buildings
- Clean out all drains and gutters on a regular basis. This is one that often goes unnoticed and any leaves, garbage or standing water in these areas make excellent homes for a variety of pests.
- Check school yards for pooling water. These pools are ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Organic acids can be applied to improve soil drainage.

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- ☑ Prune shrubs, tree limbs and plants and keep them from touching the school. This helps to eliminate entry points for pests.
- ☑ Plant flowers in beds away from the walls of the building. This will help to encourage many beneficial insects. For example, the annual flower, alyssum, attracts flower flies and that eat harmful pests. Wildflowers and native shrubs are an effective and attractive addition to a school yard.

Parking lots, sidewalks, loading docks and dumpster areas.

- ☑ Regularly remove all waste and paper debris from these areas.
- ☑ Regularly steam clean or rinse out dumpsters and trash cans.
- ☑ Repair cracks in pavement and sidewalks.
- ☑ Use "pest resistant" trash cans. Make sure the lids are self-closing with a tight seal.