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"MY SIDE OF THE STORY"

~BY ALLEN WILSON~

Allen Wilson from Westerville City Schools in Ohio wrote a column called "My Side of the Story" for his district's The Custodial Zone newsprint in fall of 2005. In it, Allen talks about his district's conversion to IPM methods, beginning with his own personal conversion. Allen's column illustrates how IPM is a process – not a miracle – and can begin with just one person taking the initiative, eventually leading to a district-wide program that reduces unnecessary pesticide use and saves the district dollars along the way...

It has been nearly two and a half years since Marc Lane (Indiana State University/Professor of Entomology) and his sidekick Jerry Jochim (Bloomington City Schools, Indiana/Environmental Technician) came to Westerville to present the Integrated Pest Management Program to our school district. The largest meeting that was held by Marc and Jerry was with our department—the entire custodial staff. I, like many of you who attended that meeting, had never heard of the IPM program. Yet, as I sat through the meeting, I found it to be both interesting and intriguing.

However, I was somewhat skeptical. A program to do away with pests without using pesticides in mass? Ideally that would be nice, but just how feasible would such a program be? How well could it work, and would such a program last? There were a lot of questions to be answered. Little did I know that while I was sitting in that meeting that I would become extremely involved with this program, many of those questions would be answered the more I became involved, and yet even more questions would evolve as time went on.

There are two sayings that come to mind; you learn as you go, and you learn by your mistakes. In my case, both apply. After I took and passed the Core course and the General Pest Control course in the 10a category, I felt that I was armed with all the knowledge to make this program run smoothly and efficiently. So I obtained my license and a small budget and went to purchase supplies and safer pesticides.

At about the same time that I received my license, the height of the pest season began and suddenly I felt as if I had been buttered on both sides and thrown into the frying pan. The phone started ringing off the hook,

emails started pouring in, and suddenly I was swamped! Suddenly I wished that I had a clone, or two, well maybe three. There were too many pest problems, at too many schools, and only one of me!

So how do I take care of all these problems in the shortest time possible? Use (safer) pesticides, right? Wrong! I began treating several schools on a weekly basis and after about a month I saw very little progress. In fact, other buildings started having similar problems, and I found myself even more behind in my work. So, I got in touch with Marc and Jerry and asked for their advise. They answered my questions and told other members of the national coalition about my problem. The response that I received from every one was EXCLUSION. Lesson number one learned, use your resources, and your support teams. Lesson number two - the fast and easy way (like pesticides) are not necessarily the best way to take care of pest problems. In some (not all) cases, they are just a waste of time.

Those lessons were just two of many that I would learn within the next several months, and as sure as this is my "rookie season", then there are yet numerous lessons to be learned.



Patience truly is a virtue, just as much as IPM is a process. It takes time for a program to run smoothly. It takes time for people to process change, and to think differently and to accept change. Lately, I have seen many of these changes starting to occur. People are having more faith in the program and they are really starting to take part in it. It really does work! Maybe it takes time, but it is time well spent as it is a lasting change - rather than a quick fix.

With the coming of this new year, we will see our first solo year under the Integrated Pest Management Program come to an end. So what has the IPM program accomplished, so far?

By having the IPM program in our schools we are all making a difference. The possibility of breathing toxins in our schools has been greatly reduced by the removal of pesticides from our buildings. A total of 72 pesticide products (and counting) were removed from our schools this past year.

Having a licensed applicator in our district saves building custodians from putting themselves (and others) at risk in using pesticide sprays and poisonous baits. Now when pesticides are used in a building, safer pesticides are being used, and in areas not easily accessible to students and staff. Having an "in house" licensed applicator also results in district savings and faster service. In the past 8 months, 146 service calls were made "in house" and only 2 were out-sourced by exterminating companies. This saved the district well over \$4,000.

By excluding pests from our buildings, the effect lasts much longer than that "quick kill" pesticide, and also can have an impact on heating/utility costs. That's two birds with one stone! In the last 8 months, 126 exclusion techniques and nest removals were made with out the use of pesticides. Only 7 pesticide applications were made in that same time period. Saving the district again over 2,000 dollars. In-house service calls, pesticide applications, and exclusion techniques combined to save the district well over \$6,000.

Through the efforts of the Custodial Department with the aid of the Maintenance Department, and the cooperation of Staff and Administrators we received the "Children's Environmental Health Recognition Award" from the Environmental Protection Agency.

It takes team players from all areas of staffing to receive an award like that and I would like to thank those that have chipped in for the program. {Space limitations here do not allow for the many people who Allen thanks, including principals, custodians, maintenance personnel, various school staff, and members of the national IPM Implementation group.}

As for the future, we plan to have all of our schools inspected for pest vulnerable areas and implemented into the IPM program by 2007. Power point presentations are in the works for educating teachers, students, and staff on what they can do to prevent pests. Mike Ward and I plan on going with Marc Lame on the 18th of November to implement the IPM program up in the Cleveland School District. Making Westerville City Schools the front-runner in promoting the IPM program throughout Ohio.

Once again thanks for your cooperation and support to keep our schools safe from pesticides.

Allen Wilson



Allen Wilson, IPM Specialist (right), and Mike Ward, Custodial Supervisor (left) Westerville City Schools

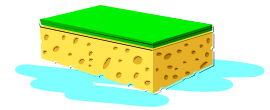
Arizona's Children's Environmental Health Program



FINAL CALL!

The Fifth National IPM Symposium is offering the first ever **IPM Achievement Awards**, which recognize the achievements of dedicated school staffers and service providers (such as your pest management company) for outstanding dedication to IPM efforts. Award winners will receive an all-expense paid trip to the IPM Symposium in St. Louis, MO, April 4-6th. Deadline for nominations is February 15, 2006. For more information go to <http://www.ipmcenters.org/ipmsymposium/> or contact Jennifer Snyder at 520-568-2273.

Switch your school to safer cleaning practices!



One out of three cleaning product ingredients used in schools pose student health or environmental risks. They are linked with neurological disorders, asthma, cancer, and other health problems, and might contribute to lower student test scores.

The good news is that many safer cleaning products are already easily available in the marketplace, and schools across the country are making the switch. The safer products are also highly effective and comparably-priced.

Help school officials, teachers, facility managers, and parents learn more about switching to safer cleaning products by checking out these websites:

- ✓ New American Dream website, with comprehensive lists on cleaning products and more: <http://www.newdream.org/clean/>
- ✓ Hillyard Green Select. <http://www.greentoclean.com/pdfs/GreenBrochLO.pdf>
- ✓ SC Johnson's Products offer wall-mounted auto-dispense units, which reduce the risk of exposure to concentrated cleaning liquids. <http://www.johnsondiversey.com/Cultures/en-US/OpCo/Products+and+Systems/Categories/JWP+Dispensing+Systems.htm>

For information on Arizona's IPM in Schools program contact Dawn Gouge or Jennifer Snyder 520-568-2273, dhgouge@ag.arizona.edu



Few bugs are bad! More than 95% of all insect species are beneficial to humans