
2. Finding Alternative Pest Control Strategies for Your School

- Objectives:
- To build awareness of ecosystems and environmentally sound alternatives for managing pest problems.
 - To encourage the independent design and conduct of a research project and build research skills.
 - To develop writing and analysis skills.

Note: This project can be combined with Activities 1 and 3 into a comprehensive school pesticide use reduction project. If you are examining pesticide use and pest control alternatives for your own home, instead, be sure that the report gets home for your family to see.

Activities:

- Identify** the major weed or insect problems at your school. This will likely involve interviewing building and grounds maintenance staff. Try to determine where the pests originate.
- Research** pest control alternatives and pest prevention strategies for those pests. If there are too many to consider at once, focus on the pests that are most commonly or heavily treated with pesticides. Refer to the list of terms and concepts below for some ideas that may be useful in your research.
- Write** a report comparing alternative control methods, and present it to your class. Be sure to discuss the relative hazards to people and the environment, and the practicality and economic feasibility of the pest control alternatives you identify. Also be sure to cite your references and sources.
- Ask** your school's ground or building maintenance staff to make comments on your report, and to consider trying some of the alternatives. With their cooperation, help set up demonstration or pilot projects.
- Summarize** your report in an article for your school paper and/or your PTSA's newsletter.

Pest Control Alternatives Research: The following organizations and publications can help provide you with information about pest control alternatives.

Bio Integral Resources Center (BIRC)
PO Box 7414
Berkeley, CA 94707
(510) 524-2567

NCAP
PO Box 1393
Eugene, OR 97440
(541) 344-5044

Your local county agricultural
Extension agent or university
Cooperative Extension specialist.

www.pesticide.org/factsheets.html#alternatives

- Common Sense Pest Control*. Olkowski, Daar and Olkowski. 1991. 715 pgs. Available from BIRC, PO Box 7414, Berkeley, CA 94707, (510) 524-2567. Also available from NCAP (address below).
- Dan's Least-Toxic Home Pest Control*. Dan Stein. 1990. 87 pgs. Available from Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides (NCAP), PO Box 1393, Eugene, OR 97440, (541) 344-5044.
- Natural Insect Control: The Ecological Gardeners Guide to Foiling Pests*. 1994. 112 pgs. Available from Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Inc. 1000 Washington Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11225, (718) 622-4433

Useful Terms and Concepts:

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
Conventional pesticides
Physical controls
Threshold "pest" levels (economic or aesthetic)
Short and long-term costs (economic, human or environmental health)

Biological controls
Mechanical controls
"Least-toxic" chemical controls
Pest prevention
Short and long-term benefits
Natural landscaping

