

3. Changing Your School's Pesticide Use Practices and Policies

- Objectives:
- To encourage the independent design and conduct of a research project and build research skills.
 - To give the opportunity for student participation in pesticide use decision-making in their school (or community).
 - To build communications, media and public relations skills.

Note: This project is designed to follow Activities 1 and 2. It presumes that the research in those has activities has been done. It can also be done as a role play. Students can play a school principal, grounds manager, doctor or nurse, and parents on a citizen advisory committee. The principal seeks advice and recommendations on school pest control. Have the committee come up with a draft policy.

Activities:

- Initiate** a dialog with your school administration about pesticide use in the school and on the school grounds. Based in part on pesticide use and alternatives research done in Activities 1 and 2, research and write a report recommending changes in your school's pest control policy and/or practices. Be sure to propose pest control alternatives if you recommend reduced use of pesticides. Include ways that students could be involved in implementing the suggestions (e.g., by helping with sanitation, by doing experiments on grounds or building pest control or prevention strategies, or in other ways).
- Present** your report and recommendations to other groups in your class, and to a larger school or community audience: your school's PTSA; school principal; school board or school board association; teacher's union; school or district building, grounds and custodial maintenance staff; school nurse; cafeteria workers; student government leaders; other classes; and more. Be sure to suggest specific and appropriate steps and roles for each of these groups in carrying out your proposal.
- Write** a news release and invite the local media (e.g., TV, radio, and newspapers) to your presentation, including your school paper. Provide them copies of your report.

School Pesticide Policy Models:

- Check NCAP's Web site for *Elements of a Successful School Pest Control Policy* (www.pesticide.org/ElemSuccSchPMPol.html), model school IPM policy language (www.pesticide.org/modipmpol.html), and other materials and links (www.pesticide.org/schools01.html)
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publication, *Pest Control in the School Environment: Adopting Integrated Pest Management*, also contains a sample school pest control policy and is available (while the supply lasts) from the U.S. EPA, Public Information Center (3404), 401 M Street SW, Washington, DC 20460.

School Pesticide Use Policy Considerations:

Be sure to consider the following elements in any school pesticide use policy you propose:

- Pest prevention
- Pesticide use decisionmaking authority
- Consideration of non-chemical alternatives
- Restrictions on pesticide use (e.g., types of chemicals, timing of treatments, etc.)
- Student/teacher/parent/public involvement
- Public accessibility of pesticide hazard information
- Posting of pesticide-treated areas
- Parental, teacher and student pre- and post-application notification
- Appeals process for challenging proposed pesticide uses
- Recordkeeping (pest locations and control treatments, pesticide use)
- Local, state and federal pesticide laws/requirements
- Emergency management plans (for spills, accidents, drift from neighboring applications, etc.)

