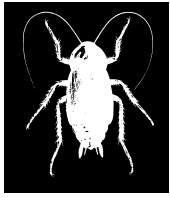




PROVIDING QUALITY PEST CONTROL SOLUTIONS FOR SCHOOLS AND INDUSTRY



School Pest News

A Program of Texas AgriLife Extension Service — The Texas A&M System

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Texas School Districts Make Pest Control ‘Dean’s List’

Mike Jackson, AgriLife Communications Program Specialist

Two North Texas school districts, with help from Texas AgriLife Extension Service, have earned national recognition for controlling pests safely and efficiently from the IPM Institute of North America.

The Carrollton-Farmers Branch and Plano school districts earned Integrated Pest Management Star certification, according to the institute. The suburban-Dallas districts are the first in Texas and among only 33 others in the country with the distinction.

“The districts have been working long and hard since 2002 to meet the rigorous standards set by the institute,”

said Janet Hurley, an AgriLife Extension program specialist in Dallas who works with the districts on pest management. “IPM Star certification is the highest praise a district can get for managing pests.”

Though the certification comes without a cash prize, it can be a badge of honor and proof to parents that the districts are doing their best to maintain healthy environments, said Victor Melton, environmental specialist for Carrollton-Farmers Branch.

“We take IPM very seriously,” Melton said. “It’s become a part of our culture.”

Carrollton-Farmers Branch officials will receive

formal certification at a school board meeting on June 26, said Hurley, who will make the presentation. Plano officials will receive their certification at a meeting to be scheduled for August.

“The key to our success has been our employees’ willingness to take IPM training to heart and apply what they know at their facilities,” said David Lewis, who coordinates Plano’s pest management program.

Danny Roberts, the Carrollton-Farmers Branch coordinator, said the program runs counter to traditional approaches. He cited a problem with swarms of crickets at an

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IPM Pride is Back

School IPM a Focus of TDA Rules Changes in 2008

By: Michael E. Merchant, AgriLife Extension Entomologist

On July 4, proposed changes to the rules that govern school IPM and the structural pest control industry were posted on the *Texas Register* website. The new rules are available online at

<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/texreg/sos/index.html> (Scroll down to the section on the Texas Department of Agriculture--you can go directly to the sections of interest to you).

As a member of the Structural Pest Control Advisory Committee, I first had an opportunity to provide input on proposed changes to the Structural Pest Control rules on May 22, the last committee meeting date. At that time it was obvious that a major focus of proposed

changes in the structural pest control rules would be Texas school IPM regulations. In my opinion, one of the most important things any of us involved in school IPM can do this year is to read through these regulations and make our viewpoints known to the Department of Agriculture.

It’s important to understand the rules of the game. To have the most impact you should write a letter. Even if you plan to attend the next Advisory Committee meeting, email your comments, or call the SPCS personally, a letter delivered by snail mail will carry the most weight in the long run. Your letters should be addressed to Jimmy Bush,

Assistant Commissioner for Pesticide Programs, Texas Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 12847, Austin, Texas 78711. According to the *Register*, written comments must be received no later than 30 days from the date of publication of the proposed amendments in the *Texas Register*, which means your response must be received by August 1, 2008 if you want to be heard.

Before you link, be prepared. The rules are long, complex and (let’s face it) boring—at least on the surface. In order to help you get through to the meat of the changes, I’ve prepared a

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Texas School Districts Make Pest Control 'Dean's List'

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athletic stadium last year.

"The traditional approach would have been to spray pesticides in the stadium and on the fields used by our students, but that would have been a temporary solution," Roberts said.

"Instead, we inspected the area and nearby buildings and found that the crickets were nesting and feeding in elevator pits," he said. "We got them out; and keeping the pits clean has made an enormous difference."

The IPM Institute of North America, a non-profit organization based in Madison, WI, sets pest management standards and consults with companies and public agencies nationwide, said Dr. Thomas Green, president of the institute.

Practitioners of integrated pest management learn pest biology and use the knowledge to reduce pest-control costs and hazards, Green said. The program relies on regular inspections to detect and correct conditions that attract common pests, such as mice, rats, raccoons, ants and roaches. They use pesticides only when necessary, and use the least-hazardous chemicals possible.

The districts earned certification

after passing a 48-point inspection of their policies, programs and facilities, Green said.

"Despite everyone's best intentions, pest problems are bound to crop up even in the most well-managed facilities," he said. "The difference is that good managers know when and where pest trouble is likely to come from, and can fend off pests with smart solutions."

During training, district employees learned a wide variety of pest-control measures to deprive the unwanted creatures of the food, water and shelter they need to thrive in a building, Hurley said.

Some measures include: screening attic vents; sealing utility conduits; repairing cracks in pipes, walls and foundations; trimming tree branches away from roofs; and diligently cleaning food remains throughout buildings.

Formal policies and consistent, thorough recordkeeping help districts stay on task, she said.

Hurley coordinates the Southwest Technical Resource Center for IPM in Schools, which is housed at AgriLife Extension in Dallas. The center was

established in 2001, with help from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, to promote awareness of integrated pest management and provide technical support to schools and childcare facilities in Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico.

For more information, visit <http://schoolipm.tamu.edu> and www.ipminstitute.org.



From right to left John Tepper, President of the School Board, Victor Melton, Environmental Safety Coordinator, behind Victor is Danny Roberts, IPM Coordinator, Janet Hurley, Texas AgriLife Extension Program Specialist, Johnny Hibbs, Director of Maintenance and Scott Behner, Grounds IPM Coordinator.

School IPM a Focus of TDA Rules Changes in 2008

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guide to those aspects of the new rules that will likely affect you the most. First, however, let's go over a little background.

Background

If you recall, these big changes started last year with the former Structural Pest Control Board (SPCB) underwent [Sunset Review](#). This is a process that all state agencies must go through every 12 years in order to identify and eliminate waste, duplication, and inefficiency in government agencies. As it turned out, the old SPCB was being widely criticized at the time by the pest control industry it regulated. The industry felt that laws were not being enforced fairly or uniformly. As a result of political pressure, the Sunset Commission abolished the SPCB and created a new Structural Pest Control Service

(SPCS) under the much larger Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA). Leadership of this group is provided by Jimmy Bush, Assistant Commissioner for TDA, and Jim Muse, Executive Director of the SPCS.

Fortunately, the TDA is no stranger to pesticide regulation. It has served as lead agency for pesticide registration for Texas, under FIFRA, for over 30 years. In addition, the TDA has been responsible for licensing of agricultural pesticide applicators, herbicide applicators on rights of way and for pesticide applicators servicing parks and outdoor urban landscapes.

In order to complete the transition from SPCB to the TDA, many of the rules and regulations that refer to agency names had to be revised. In addition, several changes to the laws governing pesticide use in schools were made last year. These too, had to be reflected in the rules governing school IPM under

TDA. Now, approaching nearly a year after the abolition of the SPCB, the proposed rules have been revealed.

Before TDA can formally establish and begin enforcing these rules, the state requires the agency to publish them for public comment for 30 days. That's where we are at the moment. You will never have as much opportunity to influence the shape of these rules as you do right now.

Major Proposed Changes

Most of the changes you will see in the proposed rules are simply administrative, to make sure everything makes sense and refers to the correct agency. These changes should make no substantial difference to you or me. Others are highly significant and will affect the way school IPM is conducted in your school district and throughout Texas for many years. Some of these more important changes include the following:

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School IPM a Focus of TDA Rules Changes in 2008

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Sections §7.135 (a)(r)(1), §7.144(a), §7.150 (b)(3) state that training and pesticide use **records must be kept a minimum of 5 (rather than the previous 2) years**. This change was needed to comply with the new inspection requirements and the Open Records Act.

§7.146 relates to pest control signs, including wording to allow more flexibility in the 48 hour posting sign rules. Section §7.147 relates to consumer information sheets and the rights of parents to request in writing prior notification of pesticide applications in their children's schools.

§7.149 requires **the SPCS to inspect schools no less often than once every five years**, and more often based on prior history of violations, complaints or poor inspection results. The section sets up a risk based inspection schedule for high, moderate and "concerned" risk schools.

§7.150 is the section dedicated to rules specifically pertaining to schools and school IPM. This section bears close inspection due to its relevance to schools and the numerous changes proposed. This section spells out what IPM means, and holds the school district responsible for the IPM Coordinator's compliance with rules. Paragraph (b) requires the school to keep a copy of its policy in the central files as well as in the office of the IPM coordinator. New requirements are included to **require the use of non-chemical management strategies (such as pest proofing and building maintenance) as a "first option for control whenever practical and feasible."** This requirement is repeated in paragraphs §7.150(a),(c) and (d). In paragraph (d) it says that "pesticide applications may be made on district property only after the use of non-chemical pest management strategies have been considered." This wording is new.

In paragraph (a)(2) school districts are now required to **report the name and contact information for the IPMC to the SPCS within 90 days**. This is one of the changes mandated by law passed during the last legislative session, and will facilitate communication between the SPCS and all school IPMCs in the state. In districts with multiple IPM coordinators, one of the coordinators must be designated as the responsible (lead) coordinator.

In §7.150(b) the responsibilities of the IPMC are spelled out. Significant changes include the requirements that **IPM coordinators have 6 months (instead of previous 12 months) to complete an approved course (like those offered by the SWTRC) after appointment. Also, all IPMCs will be required to obtain at least 6 continuing education hours of credit (CEUs) every three years**. This requirement was passed by the legislature last year, and is mandatory for the SPCS to have in its rules.

In §7.150 (b)(4)(I) the IPM Coordinator is required to maintain pesticide use records in files when an outside contractor is used. This means that **pest control invoices that do not include detailed information about services rendered and pesticides and amounts used are explicitly no longer sufficient** for records. This will require you to have a service report, in addition to (or as part of) an invoice, for each service visit your contractor makes to your district.

Paragraphs (d) and (e) of this section contain some of the most significant additions and modifications to the school IPM rules.

In (d)(2) it states that, in addition to 48 hour pre-posting of indoor areas to receive pesticide applications (a current requirement) **it will also be necessary to post outdoor areas at least 12 hours prior to application**. Students and personnel non essential [sic] to the application shall not be allowed into the area during or after the application (during time when reentry is prohibited). This is a significant change because it restricts any school employees **Minimum reentry times have been redefined in (e) as 6 hours (a reduction from the previous 12-hour reentry time)** or longer if specified by the pesticide label.

Another significant, related change pertains to applications of Yellow and Red category products (§7.150 (e)(2) and (e)(3)). **Whether these products are used indoors or outdoors**, the treated areas must be "secured" during the restricted reentry period. In sub paragraphs (e)(2)(C)(iii) and (e)(3)(c)(iii), **"treated areas must be clearly marked and secured using a locking device, a fence or other practical barrier or monitored to keep individuals out until the allowed reentry time."** This would include fencing of any treated outdoor areas for any pesticide not in the green category, and keeping all personnel (in addition to students) out of indoor and outdoor treated zones. In areas that could not otherwise be secured, a human monitor would be required to ensure no one enters a treated area.

The definitions of Green, Yellow and Red category pesticides have changed in the rules. **While retaining the language of green, yellow and red, boundaries have been changes and, in some cases, confused**. Green category pesticides are defined in the new rules as "...general use pesticides which may have a Caution signal word or no signal word (EPA toxicity categories III and IV) that's [sic] active ingredients are derived from borates; silica gels; diatomaceous earth; non-volatile insect and rodent baits in tamper resistant containers; pesticidal soaps; gels, paste or baits for crack and crevice treatment only; microbe-based pesticides; pesticides made with essential oils but without synthetic pyrethroids, with 5% synergists or less."

Previously, the green category included inorganic pesticides (containing boric acid, disodium octoborate tetrahydrate, silica gel or diatomaceous earth), insect growth regulators, insect and rodent baits in tamper-resistant containers, or for crack-and-crevice use only, microbe-based insecticide, botanical insecticides (not including synthetic pyrethroids) containing no more than 5% synergist, biological (living) control agents, pesticidal soap and natural and synthetic horticultural oils.

Note that **the new definition has somewhat different wording regarding inorganic pesticides, does not include IGRs, and wording that seems to exclude pyrethrins and some other botanical insecticides** (botanicals that are not essential oils). It has also been debated whether 25b (exempt) pesticides will be allowed under the new rules, since 25b products are exempt from signal word requirements and hence are not technically assigned a toxicity category by EPA. For this reason, if you think it important that schools retain the right to

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use 25b products (e.g., Ecosmart products, others), it is important to explicitly say so.

Exemptions allowing pest control technicians to use certain baits and botanical pesticides in a room where students are present are no longer permitted. All green category pesticides have the same reentry rules: no students or employees may be present in the room (or outdoors within 50 feet) at time of application, but immediate reentry is allowed (§7.150(e)(1)(C)).

Another change is that **the certified applicator will no longer be able to approve the use of yellow category products.** Yellow category pesticides, which are used much more frequently in schools than Red category products, will now require signature approval by the IPMC (§7.150(e)(2)(B)). Previously only the most hazardous pesticides required explicit

The requirements for use of red category products (§7.150(e)(3)(C)) differ from those of Yellow category products in minimum reentry time requirements (12 hours instead of 6) and outdoor buffer zones (100 feet instead of 50 feet). from being present in an area during and after pesticide applications. Previously only school children were excluded from reentry. This means that custodial staff, kitchen staff and others will be required to stay out of treated areas. As with Yellow category products, the IPMC must give prior, written approval for a red category pesticide to be used in the district.

Calling All IPM Coordinators

Recently, Texas AgriLife Extension school IPM program was awarded a grant by the U.S. EPA to Host an IPM Coordinator Statewide Symposium and Facilitate the Adoption of a Professional Association for IPM Coordinators.

The purpose of this project is to help create a state association that would raise the profile of school IPM coordinators, provide a new venue for communication, and give IPM coordinators more say in the regulatory process. A periodic statewide conference, not a regional mandated training, would provide new learning opportunities and allow IPM coordinators to discuss issues of mutual interest. The conference would allow you to plan your own training meetings and arrange for topics that you want to learn more about.

A professional association would raise the professional status and visibility of school IPM coordinators. An association provides a new venue for recognition by your supervisors and district administrators. A professional association would make this group less dependent on outside groups for leadership and help you to learn from others in the state. An organized association of IPM Coordinators could better influence political decision-making and more effectively inform regulatory policy, rather than what is currently in position now.

What do we need from you?

Are you interested in sitting on the first ever planning committee? We need individuals who are committed to school IPM and would like to plan for this first ever IPM Coordinator Symposium. We understand your time is valuable, so the first meeting would be in person with follow up planning meetings either conducted over the phone or teleconference. This meeting is for you, AgriLife Extension will be acting as your facilitator, we want you to develop something that can grow and become a valuable resource for today and the future.

If you are interested you can contact Janet Hurley at 877-747-6872 or email ja-hurley@tamu.edu

Suggestions for Making Comments on Proposed Rules

Remember, these posted rules are still a draft and can be changed by you. Nothing is permanent until the public response process is complete. The ball is in your hands.

Remember, comments posted in writing will have the most impact. Don't assume that because you made your opinions known to your pest control contractor or TDA inspector, that you've had your say. One good thing about writing comments is that it forces you to think through your position and state your reasons clearly. Here are a few suggestions for your comments:

- Be *specific* in your praise and criticism. Cite exactly which section, paragraph or sub-paragraph you are commenting on, and say what you like or dislike about it and why. Take the reference paragraph sections from this article, or cite them from the website when writing your letter.
- State what the negative (or positive) impact of each rule will be for your school district or the school children in your district. The TDA is required to address specifics in letters. A comment means a lot more when a concrete impact is mentioned by a school. No one wants to see schools burdened with unfair or unnecessary rules.
- Read the proposed rules carefully to see whether their meaning is clear and not subject to different interpretations. If a rule could have multiple interpretations it is probably not a good rule.
- Is it enforceable? Is it likely that schools will follow a rule, and if they do not, is it likely that the rule can and will be enforced? If not, it is not a good rule.
- What will it cost you? If you can offer a reasonable estimate of the cost of a new rule to your district, do. If this is unreasonable, or will pose an undue burden, say so, and say why.
- Is it necessary? If you think a rule is needed, or unnecessary, explain why you think so. Have you had complaints about something pertaining to a rule? Has anyone been hurt or impacted personally by one of the issues in question? The TDA needs to know.
- Can you offer an alternative? If you would rather a rule be written differently, offer an alternative. You might be surprised and see your own wording become law.
- Talk about what you know. Most of us have at least one personal experience with an aspect of school IPM rules. Don't feel obligated to comment on everything; comment on the one or two things you feel most strongly about.
- Don't forget to be positive. Regulators are people too. They work hard to make fair rules that will protect the people of our state. Thank them for their efforts and don't forget, "you catch more flies with honey than vinegar."

Insecticide Updates

Termidor Approval Received for “Crazy Raspberry Ant” in Houston Vicinity

Residents in several upper Gulf coast counties have a new treatment option to combat the “crazy Raspberry Ant,” a recent Texas invader. According to an email recently posted by the Texas Department of Agriculture, a crisis exemption (also called a Section 18 exemption) has been granted by the agency to allow the use of a popular termiticide, Termidor®, to be applied as a barrier treatment outside buildings.

“We’re happy,” said Dr. Bob Davis, research scientist for BASF, manufacturer of Termidor®. “This will allow pest control professionals to create an expanded killing zone and get better control of these ants.”

The new label allows applicators in seven counties to apply a band of the insecticide three feet up the side of a building and 10 feet out into landscape beds, soil or grass, instead of the one foot up and one foot out on the standard label.

Dr. Jason Meyers, recent graduate of Texas A&M University, has been studying the crazy Raspberry ant, known scientifically as “*Paratrechina species near pubens*”. He also provided the data to the manufacturer that showed this wider barrier would provide enhanced kill around structures. According to Meyers, the populations of this ant build up so high, and their numbers are so overwhelming, that conventional band applications of insecticides around homes do little good.

Davis agreed, noting that the allowable treatment barrier on a standard Termidor label was not wide enough to contain the crazy Raspberry ant, which would create a so-called “suicide bridge” over the insecticide zones. When enough dead ants accumulated in the treated zone, he said, other ants from the colony would simply walk over the top of their dead nestmates and avoid contact with the insecticide residues. Subsequent research by Myers showed enhanced control when wider zones were treated with Termidor.

Crazy ants have begun to be a problem for school districts in the Houston area as well. [Janet]

The special emergency label is good only for Termidor® use against crazy ants, and only within the counties of Brazoria, Galveston, Harris, Jefferson, Liberty, Montgomery and Wharton. The rules for use of Termidor® for treating fire ants and other ants in other parts of the state have not changed.

Pesticide labels are legal documents governing how pesticides may be applied. The new section 18 label for crazy ants was developed by the manufacturer working with Texas A&M University, the Texas Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Insecticide without a Signal Word

A new insecticide label was approved last month—with an unusual twist. Unlike nearly all labels approved over the past 36 years, chlorantraniliprole (trade names Calteryx™ and Acelepryn™, from DuPont™ Professional Products) comes without one of the nearly-always-present signal words: Danger, Warning or Caution.

Signal words are so universally required in the U.S., to see a product without one makes the average pesticide applicator wonder if something is wrong. But the missing precautionary statement is no oversight. It is part of a new EPA guideline, approved last year, that allows manufacturers to leave the signal word off the packaging for Category IV products, EPA’s lowest risk category for pesticides.

Category IV products have always been difficult to identify because they lack their own unique signal word. Both Category IV and Category III products, until now, were required to bear the Caution signal word. Category III products will still be required to carry the Caution signal word; but as of August 2007 the signal word and first aid statement is optional for any pesticide that qualifies, under all toxicity criteria, as a Category IV product.

Not all pesticide safety educators and regulators are thrilled with the new EPA guidelines. The signal word was the most obvious sign of a properly executed pesticide label. In many cases it can be used to quickly spot legal from illegal, under-the-radar products. However, chlorantraniliprole is not the first legal insecticide to be excused from including a signal word on its packaging.

Signal words are optional for the so-called 25(b) products, pesticides that contain only active ingredients deemed to be safe enough to be exempt from normal registration requirements since 1996 (See [Vol. I, Issue 2 of School Pest News](#) for more on 25(b) “exempt” products). These include several green-category insecticides used commonly in schools. Although some of the manufacturers of green-category products continue to include a signal word on their labeling, this is not strictly required by EPA.

According to Jim Tompkins, herbicide registration specialist at EPA headquarters, because of the newness of the guidelines, few manufacturers have been “brave enough” to avail themselves of the signal word exemption for Category IV products. At least one other pesticide, Safari 2G, has been granted a signal-word-free label. Expect to see more such labels in the future.

[Acelepryn™](#) is labeled for use on turf and ornamentals against several pests. It can be considered one of the least toxic materials registered yet for control of white grubs, chinch bugs and caterpillars.



2008 Regional IPM Coordinator Training Dates

Location	Training Date	Registration Deadline
North East ISD 1033 Broadway Ave, San Antonio, TX 78215	July 30 & 31, 2008	7/25/08
Texarkana ISD 1600 Waterall Dr., Texarkana, TX 75501	Sept. 24 & 25, 2008	9/19/08
Keller ISD Administration Building, 350 Keller Parkway, Keller, TX 76248	Oct. 22 & 23, 2008	10/17/08

Class time is 8:30 am to 5:00 pm with an hour for lunch.

Cost: \$210 for both days, \$135 for one day only

Day One – Required New Coordinator Training

If you're a new IPM Coordinator and have not yet taken the six-hour mandatory IPM Coordinator training, this class is for you. This class fulfills Texas state requirements for IPM Coordinators under section 595.11 of the Structural Pest Control Act.

Whether this is your **first time**, or you just need a refresher course, this day will help make your school district's pest management program something to be proud of. The course will cover legal requirements for schools, an introduction to IPM, how to prepare for an inspection and a hands-on exercise conducting a pest inspection of a school campus.

Day Two – Advanced Coordinator Training

Advanced training is for **both experienced and new school IPM coordinators**. For 2008, we will be offering a half day on turfgrass management with Associate Professor and Turfgrass Extension Specialist, Dr. James McAfee. Other topics of interest will include mosquito and other outdoor insect invaders. Finally class participants will learn more about developing bid specifications for working with pest control companies. This training will offer CEU credits for those who are licensed under the Texas Department of Agriculture and Structural Pest control Service.

All class participants will receive TXSPCB Laws and Regulations manual, the School IPM manual developed by Texas Cooperative Extension, and additional handouts based on subject matter. In addition, participants will conduct a facility inspection utilizing the tools and new skills learned in the class.

For more information or to register call 979-845-3849

Register on line at

<http://agrilifevents.tamuedu/events/>

IPM Pride™ Award

After a brief hiatus, the school IPM Pride Award Program is back and even better. The IPM Pride Award honors school districts making a successful transition from traditional pest control programs to integrated pest management.

The goal of school facilities management is to provide a safe, attractive, and efficiently run place for children to learn and grow. Pest management is a critical component of facilities management. By monitoring and reporting sanitary conditions, preventing pest invasion, and correcting pest problems as they appear, pest management professionals make valuable contributions to safer schools.

Pests pose serious economic and health problems for schools. Stinging insects, cockroaches, and rodents can transmit disease, contribute to poor air quality in buildings, and result in potentially serious health threats to kids and adults. Weeds increase the cost of maintaining an attractive campus. Plant disease contributes to playground tree hazards and lead to costly plant replacement.

A goal of the IPM Pride Award is to encourage a sense of pride by schools in their IPM programs. The award program is available to all public schools in Texas. In addition to a special plaque and media recognition, cash awards of \$1,000 and \$500 will be given to schools with outstanding IPM programs. The goal is to award two schools this summer and re-open the application process in early 2009. Winners will be recognized at the first annual IPM Coordinator Symposium slated for summer of 2009.

To submit your district for nomination go to <http://schoolipm.tamu.edu/dev/applyforawards.asp> to complete the application. Remember you must also submit a copy of your IPM policy statement, a sample of your recordkeeping documents, supporting documents for your best IPM story, and a copy of your parent notification separately either via email to schoolipm@tamu.edu or by U.S. Mail. 2008 School IPM Pride Awards, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, 17360 Coit Road, Dallas, Texas 75252-6599

Let the SWTRC help you through your pest emergency. Our faculty may be able to put you in touch with experts that can help you solve a tough problem, or can serve as a resource to whom you can refer media for accurate and helpful information.

Educational programs of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating