



Healthy Schools Act of 2000 Extended to Child Care

The Healthy Schools Act of 2000 is a California state law that:

- established the right of parents and school staff to know when pesticides are used in California public schools
- mandated using least toxic pest management methods in schools as state policy
- required school districts to designate an integrated pest management (IPM) coordinator
- required the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) to collect pesticide use information from schools and support schools in their use of IPM

The Healthy Schools Act is Extended to Child Care

In the 2007 California Law AB 2865, the Healthy Schools Act was extended to child care centers. This extension of the Healthy Schools Act ensures that parents and staff in child care centers are notified of pesticide use and it promotes safer pest prevention practices in child care centers. The Healthy Schools Act helps parents and ECE staff be better informed about what pesticides are being used in their ECE centers and helps ECE providers prevent pest infestations and use safer ways to control pests when they do become a problem. The Healthy Schools Act only applies to child care centers, not family child care homes.

The law was prompted by concern about the health risks that pesticides pose to young children. Research suggests that pesticides are commonly found in child care environments. These pesticides may have toxic effects on the developing brain and nervous system of a young child. They are also associated with an increased risk of developing asthma and cancer. Acute pesticide poisoning can cause breathing difficulties, vomiting, diarrhea, headaches and dizziness.

What is a Pesticide?

A pesticide is any substance that controls, destroys, repels, or attracts a pest. Some common pesticides include:

- Insecticides (kill insects like ants and mosquitoes),
- Insect repellants (a substance applied to skin or clothing which discourages insects from landing or climbing on that surface)
- Miticides (kill mites, for example, dust mites that can cause asthma and eczema)
- Herbicides (kill unwanted plants/weeds)
- Fumigants (gaseous pesticides that fill a space and poison the pests within; for example, fleas)
- Rodenticides (chemicals intended to kill rodents)
- Avicides (substances used to kill birds)
- Antimicrobials (substances such as sanitizers and disinfectants that kill bacteria and viruses)
- Algicides (kill and prevent the growth of algae)

What is Integrated Pest Management?

The Healthy Schools Act defines integrated pest management (IPM) as “a pest management strategy that focuses on long-term prevention or suppression of pest problems through a combination of techniques such as monitoring for pest presence and establishing treatment threshold levels, using nonchemical practices to make the habitat less conducive to pest development, improving sanitation, and employing mechanical and physical controls. Pesticides that pose the least possible hazard and are effective in a manner that minimizes risks to people, property and the environment, are used only after careful monitoring indicates they are needed according to pre-established guidelines and treatment thresholds.”

What Does the Law Require?

- **Notification.** Every year, each ECE center must provide written information for parents and staff that
 - Describes what pesticides it expects to be applied by center staff or an outside contractor in the upcoming year
 - Provides the Internet address to DPR’s School IPM Program Website, www.schoolipm.info, to their staff and parents.

- **Registry.** Each ECE center must provide a way for parents and staff to sign up to be notified ahead of time each time a pesticide is used in the center.
- **Warning Signs.** Every ECE center must put up warning signs around each area where pesticides will be applied. These signs should be in place 24 hours before and stay in place 72 hours after pesticides are used. These signs should be large enough that they prevent any adult from accidentally entering areas where pesticides have been used.
- **Record Keeping.** Every ECE center must keep records of what pesticides have been used at the facility site for the past four years and the records must be available to anyone who asks to see them.
- **Pesticide Prohibition.** Some pesticides are never allowed to be used in ECE settings. For a list of these pesticides, see the link under resources, *AB 405 List of Pesticide Products Prohibited from Use in Schools*.
- **Property Owners.** If the owner of a property where a child care center is located uses pesticides, they must provide written notice to the child care facility at least 120 hours before they apply a pesticide.
- **Information.** The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) must provide information to child care centers on the least harmful methods for getting rid of pests in ECE centers
- **Licensed pest control businesses** must report yearly to DPR on pesticide applications they make to private child care facilities.

The Healthy Schools Act regulates the use of pesticides on school sites. The site includes the buildings or structures, playgrounds, vehicles, or any other area of the property visited or used by children.

Some pesticides are exempt from the requirements of the Healthy Schools Act. For example, products used to kill germs (antimicrobials) such as sanitizers and disinfectants, are exempt. For more information on exempt pesticides, see the DPR publication *Pesticides Exempt from the School Posting, Notification, and Record Keeping Requirements of the Healthy Schools Act of 2000 (HSA)* available online at http://apps.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm/school_ipm_law/26_exempt_text5.pdf

Who is Responsible for Helping to Implement the Healthy Schools Act?

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) is responsible for helping schools and child care centers to implement IPM practices. DPR has developed an IPM in Schools web site. Visit DPR's Web site,

www.schoolipm.info, where you can find the following information:

- sample letters to parents about expected pesticide use, and the registry
- a template for the warning signs that must be put up when pesticides are used on school grounds
- information on least-toxic pest management alternatives.

DPR has funded the development of an IPM Toolkit with curriculum and materials specific to child care centers. Keep checking the IPM in Schools website for additional and updated information that specifically addresses IPM in child care. You also can subscribe to receive automatic updates from the DPR school IPM website via e-mail – go to www.schoolipm.info and click on “Join E-List” under the “Featured Links” that you will find on the right-hand menu.

Resources and References

Keeping Children Safe from Pests and Pesticides available from CCHP online at: http://ucsfchildcarehealth.org/pdfs/healthandsafety/PestsPesticidesEN021306_adr.pdf

Department of Pesticide Regulation School IPM website: www.schoolipm.info

AB 405 List of Pesticide Products Prohibited from Use in Schools: http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm/school_ipm_law/prohibited_prods.pdf

University of California Statewide IPM Program: www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/

Head Start Performance Standard 1304.53 (a)(10)(viii)

Title 22 California Child Care Licensing, regulations 101238 and 101239.

Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs. Second Edition, 2002, standard 5070

by Vickie Leonard, RN, FNP, PhD

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