

# The Safer School Pest Control Pledge

Our school (or school district),

\_\_\_\_\_, agrees to adopt (or continue in effect) the following pest control policies and practices:

1. Stop routine spraying for pests. Cancel any monthly or calendar-based spray programs. Consider pesticides (which include herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, and others) only when a pest species is present and presents a health or safety hazard. Never use pesticides "preventively" or for strictly aesthetic reasons.
2. Use preventive and alternative pest management techniques first, and pesticides only as a last resort, when all other feasible non-chemical methods fail. Use only spot treatments and "least-toxic" pesticides if chemicals are used. Preventive and alternative methods include sanitation, caulking, screening, trapping, hand or mechanical weeding, mulching, use of beneficial insects, and more. "Least-toxic" pesticides are those that pose minimal acute or chronic toxicity or environmental health concerns.
3. Tell teachers, parents, students and the community what pesticides are used and when. Keep publicly accessible records of all pesticide use, and provide advance written notification to teachers, parents and students about planned pesticide applications. Post all pesticide applications for at least 96 hours following treatment.
4. Work toward the establishment of more naturalized school landscapes that do not require spraying, weeding, frequent mowing, or other labor-intensive maintenance. Whenever possible, use trees and plants that are native to the area, and that are pest and disease resistant. Naturalized landscapes can be an attractive alternative to highly groomed, chemical-dependent landscapes, and can provide wildlife habitat and areas for nature education and creative teaching and learning.
5. Educate the school community about their role in pest prevention and control. Find ways to periodically remind all school or district employees, students and parents about their important role in keeping school buildings clean, and preventing the introduction of "pests" such as fleas, head lice, and more.
6. Work toward the adoption of a district-wide pesticide use reduction policy and practices for buildings and grounds. A written policy based on the above principles and coordinated by the district will help ensure that pesticide use policies and practices are clearly documented and understood by all, and that pest prevention is incorporated into custodial and landscape design and maintenance practices.

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Date

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School (or School District) Representative, Title