



# County of Santa Cruz

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## COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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January 14, 2002

AGENDA: January 29, 2002

Board of Supervisors  
County of Santa Cruz  
701 Ocean Street  
Santa Cruz, California 95060

### Mid-year Report on Integrated Pest Management Program

Dear Members of the Board:

The purpose of this mid-year status report is to inform your Board of progress made in the implementation of the Santa Cruz County IPM Policy Program. Topics addressed in the report include:

- 1) Training of County staff.
- 2) Review and implementation of pesticide alternatives.
- 3) Directions for the future

### **Training of County Staff:**

On December 6, 2001, an IPM training session for the County's Safety Officers was conducted by the IPM Coordinator. This training included the following topics:

- An overview of the Santa Cruz County IPM Policy. A copy of the IPM Policy was distributed to each Safety Officer. The overview included a discussion of IPM principles and practices, methods of monitoring for pests, required recordkeeping, and a discussion of pesticide application posting requirements.
- A discussion of some of the most common pests found on County property (ants, wasps, rodents, etc) and acceptable management options for their control.
- Each Safety Officer was also provided with handouts covering the most common pests and information on additional IPM resources.

## **Review and Implementation of Pesticide Alternatives:**

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A number of pesticides used by the County prior to the implementation of the IPM Policy have been replaced with “non-toxic” or “reduced risk” alternatives. Alternatives to other pesticides are currently under review or being tested in trials. Some of these pesticide alternatives include:

**e Mint oil for wasp control**

A food grade mint oil based product, under the brand name Victor’s Poison-Free Wasp and Hornet Killer, was evaluated in a number of field tests and has replaced three pesticides previously used to control wasps. This product was given an exemption from EPA pesticide registration requirements through FIFRA (Federal Insecticide and Rodenticide Act) section 25B based on low toxicity of the active ingredient and the required full disclosure of inert ingredients.

**e Borax and boric acid for ant control**

Borax based “reduced risk” products have replaced twelve products previously used by various Departments throughout the County for ant control.

**e Heat treatment for termite control**

A field test on the use of heat treatment to control termites is scheduled at the Santa Cruz County/University of California Cooperative Extension facility during the January 19 to 21, 2002 weekend. Termites were discovered at the facility, and heat treatment is the only non-pesticidal, full structure termite control measure currently registered for use in California. Both the cost of the actual treatment and the associated logistical costs will be evaluated as a part of this test.

**e Rodent control**

A one-year study comparing the efficacy and costs of pesticidal and non-pesticidal pocket gopher control measures has been initiated on the Pajaro River Levee system. One category I pesticide, “Fumitoxin”, has been granted a one-year IPM Policy exemption by the IPM-DAG pending the results of this study. The study is being conducted by a University of California Vertebrate Pest Control Specialist from UC Davis, Dr. Desley Whisson, in association with staff from Santa Cruz County UCCE.

**e Antimicrobials**

A review of registered disinfectant products has been conducted, resulting in the selection of one product for general use as a disinfectant by all County Departments. Specialized dispensing systems have been investigated and will be installed on a trial basis in selected County facilities. These dispensing systems are expected to reduce staff exposure to concentrated disinfectant products and ensure accurate dilution of the product(s) thus reducing waste and minimizing public exposure and release into the environment of these materials.

### **Directions for the Future**

A number of issues have been identified for additional study or action over the coming year. These issues include:

e **Vegetation management.**

Currently glyphosate (under the brand name Round-up and related products) is used for vegetation management throughout the County of Santa Cruz, most notably for control of vegetation on County roads and on the Pajaro and Salsipuedes Levee systems.

Alternatives to the use of this Category III material are being investigated and a "Weed Management Sub-Committee" within the IPM-DAG has been formed to study this issue.

e **Development of background information packets.**

Background information packets with respect to the most common pests and control options along with practical treatment information are anticipated to be distributed to affected County Departments along with additional IPM resources over the next four months.

e **Administrative activities.**

The county has made significant progress in developing the Integrated Pest Management program, and it is now important to ensure that it is incorporated into the internal County administrative structure. Key areas to be discussed over the coming months include the development of appropriate forms, signs and recordkeeping systems.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Integrated Pest Management Departmental Advisory Group for their thoughtful and knowledgeable assistance. The County has moved very quickly in a short period of time thanks to their efforts.

This office will return prior to Budget Hearings with an annual report for your Board's information which will include data on the annual use of pesticides.

IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD accept and file this report and direct the County Administrative Officer to return prior to budget hearings with an annual report.

Very truly yours,



Susan A. Mauriello  
County Administrative Officer

cc: IPM Departmental Advisory Group