

National Pest Management Association's PESP Strategy

Describe your Organization's Five-Year Goals Related to Pesticide Risk Reduction

The National Pest Management Association is a seventy-four year old trade association headquartered in the Washington, DC area that represents approximately 5,000 U.S. companies that provide a wide range of pest management services. These include control of general household pests, mosquitoes, termites, stored product pests, rodents and nuisance wildlife in and around residential, commercial and institutional settings.

NPMA has advocated the use of integrated pest management (IPM) by pest management professionals (PMPs) for more than 20 years through the development of technical and training materials, educational sessions at NPMA sponsored meetings, direct outreach to consumers and promotion of federal and state legislative and regulatory policies. Information about NPMA and its IPM initiatives can be found at our website: www.pestworld.org and whatisIPM.org.

Despite efforts by NPMA, state pest management associations, individual companies and others, few consumers understand or demand IPM services. There are at least several important reasons for American consumers reluctance to embrace IPM. These include:

- Consumers do not understand the term “IPM,”
- Among people and organizations that promote IPM, there is little consensus about what constitutes IPM in residential settings, further contributing to consumers’ confusion,
- Many consumers still equate professional services with the delivery of pesticides—for example, after a service call, PMPs still frequently receive complaints from consumers that they cannot “smell” or “see any pesticides,
- From a long term perspective, IPM intends to remove pests’ sources of food, water and shelter, eliminating the need for routine pesticide applications and can result in lower costs to consumers. Initially, however, costs can be higher because of the need to modify structures, remediate sanitation problems, etc.,
- Consumers have a difficult time performing IPM themselves because they lack specialized information about insect biology and control strategies (i.e., it’s easier to spray), and
- Government agencies have limited PMPs’ ability to market IPM services by limiting the health, safety and environmental claims that companies may make in their marketing and advertising.

What do you envision doing (broadly) to try to resolve your major issues?

Earlier this year, NPMA commissioned Harris Interactive to conduct public opinion research on consumer knowledge of IPM. We found that more than two-thirds of consumers are not familiar with the term “integrated pest management.” Our research

then went on to explore concept testing of definitions of IPM and what resonated well with consumers in terms of understanding. Using a variety of variables and samples to conduct this monadic sample, one concept was clearly the winner by the consumer. That definition is what is being used as the definition for our consumer outreach.

For our initial strategy, NPMA intends to promote a multi-pronged initiative designed to enhance consumers' awareness and understanding of integrated pest management. The ultimate goal is to increase the likelihood that consumers will embrace an IPM approach to pest problems.

Goal 1 and Tactics

Strategic Approach to Enhancing Consumer Awareness of IPM: What You Should Know About IPM

NPMA, in conjunction with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency staff (BPPD and FEAD), has created a brochure entitled What You Should Know about IPM. The focus of this brochure is to provide consumers and organizations with an enhanced understanding of Integrated Pest Management strategies. Through distribution of this brochure our intention is to educate the public in an effort to boost the number of end users that request IPM over traditional pest control.

Goal 2 and Tactics

Strategic Approach to Enhancing Consumer Awareness of IPM: whatisIPM.org

NPMA has developed a website, whatisIPM.org, designed to enhance consumer awareness and understanding of IPM and provide them with the tools to understand the value of an IPM approach to pest control. Complete with an interactive house and sections on IPM in schools and IPM in businesses, this dynamic site will also feature IPM news that may be of value to the consumer.

Goal 3 and Tactics

Strategic Approach to Enhancing Consumer Awareness of IPM: IPM Public Service Announcements

NPMA has developed a public service announcement campaign that will be distributed nationally to hundreds of radio and TV stations across the nation in mid-April. Typically with PSA campaigns, it will most likely begin showing up in mid-May and run throughout the year. Comprehensive reports are compiled showing where the PSA has

run; how many times; how many consumers have viewed it. The goal is to send consumers to the whatisIPM.org website for information on using an IPM approach to pest control.

Goal 4 and Tactics

A Public, Private Partnership to Promote Responsible Pest Management Practices

A draft of the above-referenced brochure is attached. We propose including in the brochure and on the website, the PESP logo and the statement: “This brochure was produced by the National Pest Management Association in conjunction with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP), an EPA public, private partnership to promote responsible pesticide use.” Though it’s too late for this year’s PSA campaign, we further propose adding a reference to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency PESP program in the final screen of the ad in future campaigns.

Measuring Success

NPMA intends to measure the benefits of this initiative and will report back to EPA information gathered over specific time intervals. To properly do this, the brochure will include a web address that will direct consumers to an online survey. This survey will provide us with the ability to collect data on attitude changes relating to IPM services. By analyzing this information we can better understand ways in which to communicate and disseminate messages that will promote IPM.