

# Western Pest Services' PESP Strategy

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

We would like to reduce the total pesticide usage by educating staff and consumers on pest management techniques that require little to no pesticide application. Further we hope to be able to show over five years that the technician education and evaluation will result in more IPM centered solutions to pest management. As a main by-product of this technician education and evaluation we hope that the IPM tactics will be employed by our customers.

In addition to the above, we also hope to identify new technologies that can replace or supplement the current products available for pest management. Such products may be more specie specific, less-hazardous to non-target animals, more efficacious, easier to apply or retrieve, and less invasive than current alternatives. If after five years we have constantly reviewed the current options and made selections that benefit the consumer, technician, and the company, then we have met our goal of pesticide risk reduction without sacrificing the safety and welfare of our technicians and customers.

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

Increased education for both field staff and customer will be the cornerstone of our reduction program.

The proper identification of new more efficacious products coupled with the proper standard of treatment that includes exclusion, sanitation, and cultural controls will best serve both our company and the consumer by reducing pesticide usage. We will also address the viability of reduced-risk and low-impact products to replace other potentially more hazardous products (i.e. EPA Class IV products). Where possible new delivery/control tools will be evaluated and implemented to reduce/replace pesticide usage.

The key will to be the constant update of pest mitigation technology, novel control techniques, and biology of pests in addition to the proper evaluation of technicians to ensure they can perform IPM services for our customers.

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### Goal 1 and Tactics

One page Treatment Standards for all major pests and customer groups that give both non-chemical and chemical solutions. We plan to incorporate the education and experience of our best field staff to make a guide for relatively new technicians and sales staff. We will measure the success of these treatment standards in our field entomologist evaluation described below.

The EPA can best further our goal of new technician education by refining their label reading information into a commonly used business platform program (i.e. windows or Mac based program) as a learner-centered, content-driven module whereby the technician receives constant positive and negative feedback based on label questions. If this type of module could be utilized by pest management firms it could provide a great base on which we can start the training of a new technician on product label comprehension and safety.

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## **Goal 2 and Tactics**

Implement seasonal schools for technicians and incorporate IPM tactics for pest management as a component for every school. We will identify from field personnel and local experts the most encountered or troublesome pests. Given those pests and their biology, we will devise a treatment strategy and monitor the industry for new technology or biology updates.

With the pests identified, we will present to a group of field personnel (managers, supervisors, office staff, technicians, and sales staff) the best treatment strategies with highlights on non-chemical solutions such as exclusion, sanitation, and cultural controls. We will role play these scenarios where the pests need to be removed and ask for solutions based on the most current research, tools available, and customer conditions.

The success of this program will be in the attendance and feedback from the field offices.

The EPA could help by providing a Public Service Announcement about pests and specific IPM tactics (caulking windows, installing door sweeps, replacing screens, etc.) to the public. Such a PSA would hopefully increase the relative value of the technician to the customer and may sway the general public to better heed our current IPM recommendations.

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## **Goal 3 and Tactics**

Review and test products by field entomologists to best select products that can be judiciously applied. Given a group of test products the field entomologists will either apply or track the application of new and novel products or tools for their efficacy. Where possible, if the products are deemed a better fit for our customers, the field entomologist will suggest their usage be allowed in all offices. The criteria for selection include (but are not limited to):

1. Safety for our technician and our customer
2. Field Efficacy
3. Ease of Application
4. Reduction of the total variation of pesticidal products held on any given service vehicle

5. Ability for multiple pest usage
6. Cost

If a product meets all the above criteria it will be reviewed by all the field entomologists and the technical services manager and may be introduced onto our Recommended Pesticide List (RPL). Success will be the constant review and/or changing of our RPL to best fit the above criteria.

The EPA can best facilitate this process by evaluating products on the broadest range of pests/situations possible. The need to carry two differently labeled products where one might suffice would reduce the amount and variation of products currently carried and thus the potential for accidental pesticidal spill problems.

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#### **Goal 4 and Tactics**

To evaluate new technicians after the initial phase of training and introduction into the company by the field entomologist on the technicians ability to recognize and implement IPM tactics. We will devise a form which allows the field entomologist to ride with a new technician and evaluate their training on several items including IPM tactics. The form will rank the ability of the technician from exceeds standards to needs improvement. Any remedial training will be given by the local supervisor or manager.

Evaluations will be done and forwarded to the local manager, regional manager, and technical services manager. A successful completion of the evaluation will be a traceable form with the technicians relevant background information properly filled out and signed by the field entomologist. This type of measure of success will close the loop on the field training and field performance of the technician.

Currently, there is not an easily identifiable way for the EPA to assist in this goal.