



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **City of Santa Barbara**

Parks and Recreation

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

1/18/2008

## **California Department of Pesticide Regulation Honors City's Integrated Pest Management Program at IPM Innovator Awards Ceremony**

***City officials attend the January 17 Ceremony in Sacramento***

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation has chosen the City of Santa Barbara as one of eight recipients for the 2007 Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Innovator Award which acknowledges new approaches to help reduce or avoid the risks associated with some traditional chemical pesticides. The awards ceremony was held at the California Environmental Protection Agency headquarters in Sacramento on Thursday, January 17. Those attending included Mayor Marty Blum; Council members Schneider, Williams and Francisco; City Administrator Jim Armstrong; Nancy Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director; Santos Escobar, Parks Manager; and Eric Cardenas, Chair of the citizens IPM Advisory Committee.

"The City of Santa Barbara is very honored to be recognized for our efforts to reduce use of toxic pesticides in our parks and City facilities," commented Mayor Blum. "We are committed to providing a healthy environment for the community and protecting our precious resources for future generations."

Over a number of years, the Parks Division of the City Parks and Recreation Department successfully reduced overall pesticide use by 84% on approximately 1,400 acres of parklands. In January 2004, a formal Integrated Pest Management (IPM Strategy) was adopted by the Santa Barbara City Council, making a commitment to aggressively reduce the use of potentially harmful materials throughout the City, particularly in City parks. The strategy covers the diverse activities of the city - from the airport, to the golf course, to street maintenance, to creek protection, to the beaches, and to the nationally accredited AC Postel Memorial Rose Garden. Each setting has unique management and pest issues,

and all are addressed under the IPM strategy. Since 2004, City facilities have reduced use of pesticides by 92%.

In April 2005, the City adopted a Pesticide Hazard and Exposure Reduction (PHAER) Zone Model. The Zone System assigns a Green, Yellow, or Special Circumstance/Red Zone designation to each park, or portion of a park, based on the potential for exposure to humans and sensitive habitat. Today, more than 98% of City parkland is managed with "Green" (least harmful) materials.

City departments including Parks and Recreation work with a five-member citizen IPM Advisory Committee to implement IPM techniques including visitor education, trapping for rodents at high use parks, cultural modifications to manage clover and associated bee sting hazards around pools, mow strips and planting bed renovations to eliminate the need for herbicides, mulching, hot water/steam and green-flaming in high use parks, and trials of reduced-risk herbicides. The City is currently investigating the use of bat nesting boxes to reduce the need for mosquito abatement treatments.

The City of Santa Barbara exemplifies a large-scale, innovative IPM approach with measurable improvement, collaboration and community involvement as cornerstones. Staff actively shares information with other jurisdictions around the state. The City has served as an official sponsor of the Santa Barbara Organic Festival, provided outreach to citizens about pesticide use reduction, and has participated in events such as the California Parks and Recreation Society Annual Meeting in Sacramento, March 2007; the Urban Pesticide Committee in Oakland, July 2006; the 5Th National IPM Symposium in St. Louis, Missouri, April 2006; and the Association of Applied IPM Ecologists Annual Meeting: IPM In Practice Tour in February 2006.

A special recognition of the award is planned for Tuesday, January 29, at the 2:00pm City Council meeting.

For more information, please contact the Parks Division at 564-5433.

