



City of Santa Barbara
Parks and Recreation Department

Memorandum

DATE: February 16, 2007

TO: City Council
Park and Recreation Commission
Airport Commission

FROM: City IPM Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: Annual IPM Review

Public Advisory Committee's Review of IPM Program in 2006

Now in its third year, the City of Santa Barbara's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program continues to evolve. The Public Advisory Committee has worked closely with city staff in reviewing overall practices, pest control materials, exemption requests, and proposed changes to the program. We believe the program has been a success, and thank staff for their work not only in implementing the program, but in promoting the program as a whole.

Highlights:

The City should be extremely proud of some major accomplishments under the program in 2006. These include:

- **Adoption of the Pesticide Hazard and Exposure Reduction (PHAER) model-** In Feb. 2006, the City Council adopted the PHAER zone model for all city parks. This model uses potential hazards, exposure risk, and available resources as factors in determining where and how the program should grow.
- **Addition of Committee Member-** Kristen LaBonte has joined the Committee as a public representative, and has been a great asset thus far. The Committee now has 5 participating members, and continues to meet on a regular basis.
- **Increased use of "Green" materials-** In 2006, city staff increased the use of green materials by 126% citywide.
- **Increase in total hours applied to alternative methods-** In 2006, city staff increased by 66% the number of person hours used for the implementation of least toxic alternatives. This highlights the dedication of staff to implement least toxic green alternatives whenever possible.
- **Site visits-** The Advisory Committee conducted a number of site visits, including Alice Keck Park, Hidden Valley Park, Francesci Park, Douglas Family Preserve, Arroyo Burro, and the airport.
- **Green Team-** Additional funding secured for the Green Team in 2006 has allowed for the purchase of equipment and materials to assist in IPM implementation.

The City's adoption of the PHAER model is significant, and will guide the development of the program throughout 2007. Though PHAER will necessitate various changes to the program, this Committee has worked closely with staff to ensure a smooth transition.

The City's use of green materials should be commended. Staff increased their use of green materials by 126%, and the use of these materials was implemented by every department. However, along with the increase in green materials, the use of higher toxicity yellow and red materials also increased, mainly to control mosquitoes and rodents.

The increase in higher toxicity materials can be attributed to a long rainy season, which led to an overabundance of mosquitoes in the Bird Refuge and at the airport, increasing the threat of West Nile Virus. In addition, increased rodent activity at the airport required the use of higher level materials. While increases in yellow and red materials were substantial, they cannot be viewed in a vacuum. In every case, green alternative products were implemented first, and higher toxicity materials were used only as a last resort.

Areas in Need of Improvement:

As the program continues to evolve, it is important to acknowledge areas where additional efforts are needed to ensure the program's continued success. These include:

- **Increased research into emerging alternatives-** Research into alternatives, and pilot projects for alternative materials, should be a continuing effort. In addition, more research on alternatives is needed to address the declining health of the Morton Bay Fig Tree. This committee has strongly encouraged staff to consult with outside experts, and we eagerly await the outcome of those consultations.
- **Increased efforts placed on volunteer coordination and implementation-** Staff has begun to utilize volunteers, and could do this to a greater degree in the future. Increased volunteer efforts, coupled with increased resources to the City's Green Team, will greatly benefit ongoing IPM efforts.

While there was an increase in overall pesticide use in 2006 for alternative (green) as well as higher toxicity (yellow/red) materials, the City should be proud of its continuing efforts to limit the use of pesticides. Staff has shown dedication and commitment to the ongoing success of the program, and we are grateful for this effort.

As mentioned in our 2005 IPM Annual Review, yearly pesticide use trends may increase or decrease based on a variety of factors. The Advisory Committee will continue to monitor these factors in order to limit and reduce the use of pesticides on city property in the future. The Advisory Committee will further continue to work with staff, elected officials, and members of the public to ensure a quality program that protects the City's assets while not compromising human and environmental health.