



City of Santa Barbara
Parks and Recreation Department

Memorandum

DATE: March 17, 2009

TO: City Council
Park and Recreation Commission
Airport Commission

FROM: City IPM Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: IPM Advisory Committee Review of IPM Program in 2008 and 2008 Annual Report

In its fifth year of implementation, the City of Santa Barbara's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program continues to grow and evolve. The Committee feels strongly that the program has been successful in its first five years, stands as one of the greatest environmental achievements in the City's history and believes that it will continue to succeed in the coming years with appropriate resources and program management. The progress is exemplified by the steady reduction in use of high toxicity, "red" materials and the increased use of lower toxicity "green" materials.

The Committee agrees with the analysis presented in the 2008 annual report and supports the direction and programs described therein.

Many challenges are presented by the implementation of an IPM program. Some of the continuing challenges we see in the City include:

- Mosquito control necessitates a substantial amount of yellow material use (close to 70% of all units applied in 2008). Continued efforts by staff to replace some of these materials with green materials have been successful. This is an area where public health is of great concern; therefore effectiveness is the highest priority.
- Some areas, such as the golf course greens and the airport airfield, continue to require the use of highly toxic "red" materials, for the control of fungal disease and rodents, respectively. Long term efforts at the golf course, including modifying grass types and fertilizer regimens, may reduce the use further. However, the elimination of these red materials in the future is most likely not possible without the development of new methods/materials.
- While there are successes with rodent control, particularly trapping of rats along State Street, the application of yellow materials was performed in 2008 at Shoreline Park to "knock down" the squirrel population there. This is the first application of yellow rodent control at Shoreline Park in 5 years (it used to be done annually). Whether the subsequent Parks program of trapping will provide

effective, long term control is not known at this time. If repeated use of yellow materials in Shoreline Park is required, the park may need to be re-designated as a yellow area.

- While the number of infractions increased from just a few in 2007 to 14 in 2008, all of the infractions were relatively minor. Importantly, the departments appear to have implemented appropriate policies and procedures to ensure that infractions are reduced in the future. The Public Works Department, as it appears to utilize more contractors than other departments and has a number of “sub” departments hiring contractors, has the greatest challenges in ensuring that the IPM strategy is followed. Many of their infractions (9 of the 14 Citywide) were related to indoor pests (ants, roaches, mice, etc). The Committee is committed to working to streamline the materials list and ensuring that effective “green” materials are available for the pest problems encountered.
- With the continued budgetary challenges and the associated need for labor related to least toxic methods, we continue to believe that developing a well coordinated, volunteer program will help the long term effectiveness of the IPM program. Expanding the Rose Garden volunteer system, for example, and ensuring volunteers can sign up easily (via email online) should be part of a program that, with some investment by the City, might actually result in reduced labor hours with the benefit of increased outreach to the community.

The Advisory Committee will 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.