



City of Santa Barbara
Parks and Recreation Department

Memorandum

DATE: March 14, 2014

TO: City Council
Parks and Recreation Commission
Airport Commission

FROM: City IPM Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: IPM Advisory Committee Review of IPM Program in 2013 and 2013 Annual Report

The City of Santa Barbara's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program is in its' 11th year. The Committee agrees with the analysis presented in the 2013 annual report and supports the direction and programs described therein.

Pesticide use has decreased substantially from its pre-strategy period before 2004, with the use of the most toxic materials decreasing by over 90% and green practices developed in a number of areas. Some use of toxic pesticides continues, however, due to a number of challenges, including control of fungus on golf greens, control of rodents on airport runways, mosquito control during critical periods, and control of invasive weeds. These areas currently provide only limited green alternatives that the City continues to explore.

Many of the City's challenges utilize green materials on a regular basis, such as mosquito control using Bti, rodent control using trapping, the use of compost tea on golf greens or the control of weeds using mechanical methods. However, often the challenges are sufficient, and the public health or resource issues substantial enough, that more toxic materials are used. Examples are the use of more aggressive/toxic materials when mosquito levels get too high, or the use of more toxic materials on the golf greens to prevent irreparable damage to greens. These challenges will always be present. We will continue to pursue green materials, but also protect the public's health and resources as part of this committee's mission and goals.

With the associated need for increased 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. The Parks Division has expanded the number of volunteer work days by reaching out to community groups such as Santa Barbara Beautiful. We believe a more robust program, with online signups and a part-time and/or intern-type coordinator within the Parks Division, would help to assist in maintaining our parks at a high level of aesthetics. An example is Alice Keck Park Memorial Gardens, which is in need of extensive bed refurbishment and maintenance.

A coordinated effort to expand the existing volunteer pool for this park would help to reduce the need for pesticide use during renovations.

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.