

Statement of Work

Urban populations include a large number of individuals at-risk of chronic pest infestations as well as over and misuse of pesticides. At-risk populations include low-income children, pregnant women and the elderly as well as asthmatics of all ages. Besides potentially acute and chronic effects, both pests and pesticides can trigger asthma, which in urban areas is at epidemic proportions. Asthma, caused and/or exacerbated by pests and pesticides, is rampant in children living in substandard housing. In the United States, rates of childhood asthma soared 50% between 1980 and 2000, with particularly high rates in poor, urban communities.

Cities across the Northeast are beginning to address these problems via coordinated mechanisms to reach these diverse populations with messages of safer, more effective pest control practices (IPM), proper pesticide choices, uses, storage and disposal. However, many people are unaware that these programs exist in urban areas. Community organizations, cooperative extension and other state IPM programs may be unaware of urban IPM projects in other cities in the Northeast and of the collaborative opportunities that may exist. We propose developing a comprehensive communications strategy to reach a diverse audience including urban residents, community organizations, state IPM programs, cooperative extension and others in Northeastern cities in which the Northeastern IPM Center is funding urban IPM projects.

The goal of this project is to publicize and promote NE IPM Center funded projects that reduce risks of pesticide exposures and asthma triggers to at risk populations such as children, asthmatics, pregnant women and the elderly as well as the general population in urban areas in the Northeast, specifically Philadelphia, New York and Boston. There are 3 key objectives necessary to achieve and sustain our goal:

1. Develop a comprehensive communications strategy to promote NE IPM Center funded projects in Philadelphia, New York and Boston. Identify target audiences for each urban IPM project and appropriate media outlets.
2. Identify and interview specialists to develop news releases, with a goal of at least two news release per month for the duration of the project.
 - a. Identify purpose of the urban IPM project.
 - b. Interview specialists and conduct additional research.
 - c. New release review by specialists and PA IPM staff.
3. Acknowledge the Northeastern IPM Center and USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service in a “boilerplate”; a descriptive paragraph about the Northeastern IPM Center and its mission that will be included in each news release.
4. Utilize a multi-pronged approach in distributing news releases:
 - a. NE IPM Center newsletter and Web site
 - b. State and city IPM Web sites
 - c. E-mail listservs
 - d. State and regional newsletters and other publications
 - e. Regional media outlets including newspapers
 - f. Online news release distribution services
5. Develop a downloadable brochure that will feature a NE IPM Center funded project from each city.

6. Update NE IPM Center contact database with Pennsylvania information to increase distribution of information generated from this project and all NE IPM Center funded projects.

PA IPM has had a successful communications strategy in place for over ten years. As a result of this, our Web site averages over 400,000 page views/month and our two quarterly newsletters are distributed to over 5,000 people. In addition, our news releases have appeared in both regional and national publications. We expect even more widespread success with this project, as we reach out to new audiences and media outlets across the Northeast. As a result of this project, information about IPM in urban environments will become more utilized and accessible by urban populations to reduce the risks of pesticide exposure and asthma triggers.