

PEST-FREE & HEALTHY SCHOOLS

An Overview



Massachusetts Coalition
For Occupational Safety And Health

Goals

- 1) To create **awareness** of the potential pest problems in our schools
- 2) To introduce you to **solutions** that involve everyone
- 3) To create healthier schools and **improve the quality of life** for students, families and staff

Healthy, high performing schools = healthy, high performing students

Have you ever seen pests in your school building? Do you know if they affect students' health? Your health?

What is a Pest?

A pest is an organism that can spread disease to people and/or plants, destroy property, is a nuisance, and/or is found in a place it's not wanted.



Pests Cause Problems

They can:

- 1) Trigger/cause **asthma and allergies**
- 2) Bite and sting
- 3) Contaminate food
- 4) Transmit disease
- 5) Hitchhike in belongings
- 6) Damage property
- 7) Cause people to **misuse pesticides**



What is an example of a **policy** you **must follow**?

How can we **change** or **make new** **policies** in our schools?

Where should we start?

Conduct a building or classroom walkthrough

- Use the toolkit's "Walkthrough checklist" or download the **EPA Air Quality Tools for Schools App**
- Use these tools to assess a full school and/or an area of your choice (i.e. classroom, auditorium)
- Identify and prioritize problem areas
- Consider resources and people available – then take the **next steps**

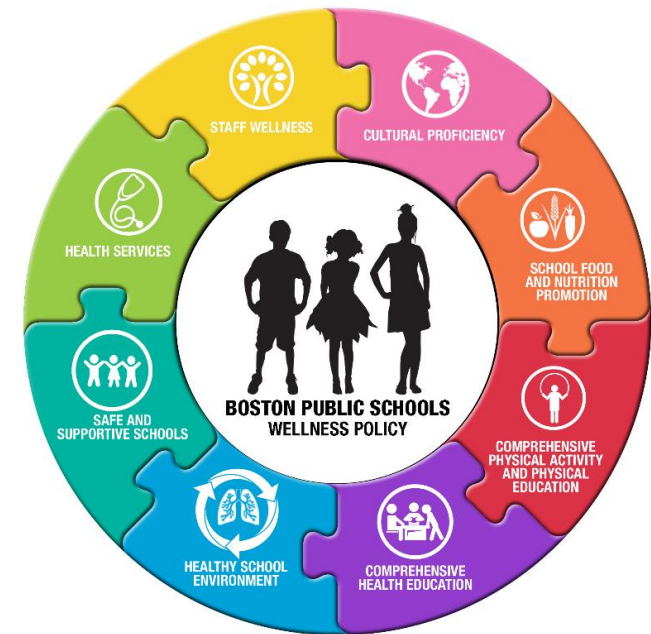


Five Ways to Take Action

- 1) Participate in your school's Wellness Council or Environmental Committee
- 2) Promote green cleaning practices by providing green cleaning products to teachers and staff
- 3) Submit work orders for needed repairs
- 4) Monitor pest control strategies
- 5) Maintain clean trash & recycling systems

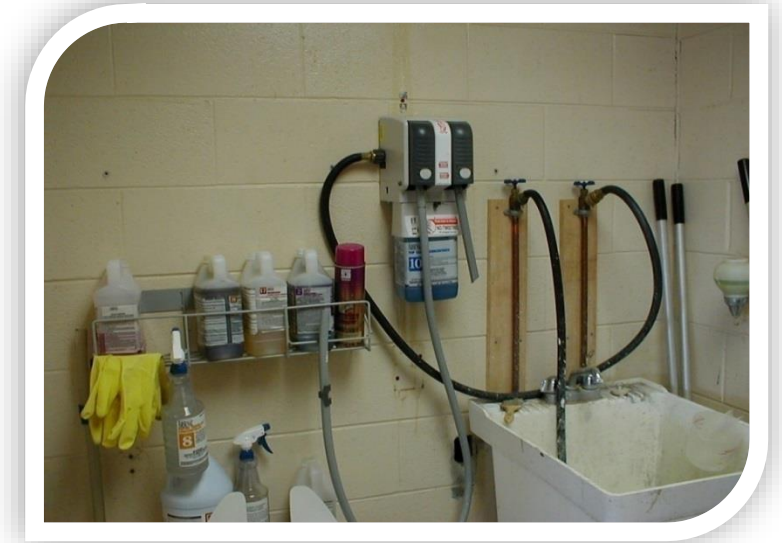
Participate on the School Wellness Council

- Your **voice** and your **expertise** about the building is valuable
- MA encourages schools to **include “Healthy School Environment”** as a policy component
- Build a **diverse team** (*include custodian, recycling coordinator, nurse, etc.*)
- Create an **Action Plan** with your Wellness Council
 - Use **the classroom checklist/walkthrough results** to address health and safety issues



Clean For Health

- Keep the dirt out
- Use **less-toxic, third-party certified**, cleaning products and hand soaps
- Update and **maintain** equipment
- **Sanitize/ disinfect only high-risk areas** and areas regulated for early education
- Breathe easier – **clean doesn't have an odor**



Identify & Monitor Work Orders

- **Share results** of environmental walkthroughs with custodial staff
- **Take pictures** to document repairs needed and progress
- **Submit work** orders for the “top” problems in the school
- Work with custodians (or person in charge of work orders) to **track and/or resubmit prior work orders** if unfulfilled



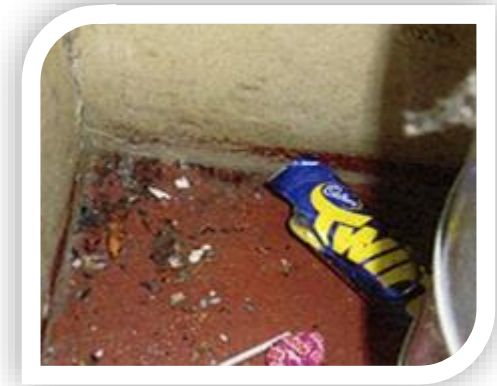
Monitor Pest Control Strategies

Food + Water + Shelter = Pests

- Integrated Pest Management (IPM): a **systematic strategy for managing pests** that considers prevention, avoidance, monitoring, and suppression.
- IPM regulations only allow **pesticide use as a last resort**

Each school must have:

- An IPM plan specific to your building's pest problems
- Staff person identified as IPM Coordinator
- IPM log available at all times



Maintain Clean Trash & Recycling

- **Helps reduce clutter, dust, and pests**
- **Work with school's Recycling Coordinator to ensure:**
 - Signage is appropriately placed
 - Students and staff are educated properly about what can be recycled
 - Areas are kept clean and free of equipment, e-waste, unwanted desks, chairs, etc.
 - The school's recycling process is clear

