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## INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY

### **Purpose:**

The purpose in establishing this policy is to help provide a safe and healthy learning, working, and playing environment for students, staff, visitors, and users of Mercer Island School District properties. We propose to achieve this through the adoption of this Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy. The IPM policy is intended to keep unwanted vegetation and pest at acceptable levels in effective, environmentally safe, and economical ways. Our primary concern is the health and safety of the people who use Mercer Island Schools and to minimize the risks to the environment.

### **Policy:**

This Integrated Pest Management policy is an elaborate decision-making system using the best combination of cultural, biological, physical, and chemical methods that are used in an environmentally sound way to maintain pest populations below damaging levels. It is designed to maximize long-term pest management and minimize harmful, unexpected, or unintended consequences of managing nuisance organisms. Cultural, biological, and physical control methods shall receive priority consideration for managing pest problems. Chemical control strategies shall be used only where a mix of other strategies is inadequate and pest damage is above tolerable levels. The objectives of this policy include, but are not limited to the following:

- minimize hazards to human health and non-target organisms
- minimize hazards to the general environment
- be most likely to bring about a long-term reduction in pest populations
- be cost effective in the management of pest populations
- minimization of pesticide use
- compliance with local, state, and federal regulations

School district properties shall be constantly monitored for pest populations so that the appropriate treatment may be applied in a timely manner and the effectiveness of such treatment assessed.

### **Integrated Pest Management**

### **Procedure:**

#### **1. Definitions**

For the purpose of this policy, a “pest” includes any insect, rodent, nematode, snail, weed, fungus, or other form of plant or animal life that adversely interferes with the aesthetic, health, safety, environmental, or economic goals of the school district. A pest does not include viruses or microorganisms on or in a living person or animal, but shall include plant diseases.

The term “pesticide” includes any chemical agent registered as a pesticide by the Washington State Department of Agriculture, which can be herbicides, insecticides, rodenticides, fungicides, or other chemical that repels, changes the growth rate of, kills, or otherwise reduces levels of a targeted pest.

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Integrated Pest Management means a decision-making process for the selection and use of pest suppression tactics. IPM practices suppress nuisance organisms while minimizing negative impacts on society, human health, non-target species, and the environment. Preferred IPM techniques include the following measures:

- **Biological Management** means the conservation of natural enemies of pest to maintain pest populations at tolerable levels. Biological management measures are selected to minimize negative impacts on beneficial communities and to enhance the suppressive interaction of biological control agents with pests.
- **Physical/Cultural Management** means the use of prevention, avoidance, and mechanical tactics that alter habitats and landscapes to provide unfavorable conditions for pest organisms.

## 2. Pesticide Use and Selection

Pesticides will only be used if necessary to protect the health and safety of students and staff, or as a last resort, in controlling problematic vegetation or pests. No high-hazard pesticides will be used. If the pesticide meets any of the following criteria, it will constitute a high-hazard pesticide:

- a. The pesticide is classified as highly acutely toxic (Hazard Category I or II) by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (signal word for Hazard Category I or II products is DANGER or WARNING);
- b. The pesticide is a restricted use pesticide (use of the product is restricted to certified pesticide applicators);
- c. The pesticide contains ingredients that the United States Environmental Protection Agency has determined to be possible, probable, known, or likely carcinogens;
- d. The pesticide contains reproductive toxicants (CA Prop 65 list);
- e. The pesticide contains ingredients listed by Illinois EPA as known, probable, or suspected endocrine disrupters;
- f. The pesticide contains nervous system toxicants (neurotoxics by mode of action-defined as pesticides in the organophosphate, carbamate, pyrethrin, and pyrethroid classes of chemicals);
- g. The pesticide contains ingredients that have a soil half-life of more than 100 days;
- h. The pesticide contains ingredients that have high or very high mobility in soil, according to Groundwater Ubiquity Score (GUS) index;
- i. The pesticide is labeled as toxic to fish, birds, bees (except products used specifically to control bees in situations where they pose a hazard to humans), wildlife, or domestic animals.

In cases where preventive and non-chemical pest control strategies prove inadequate, least-toxic pesticides may be used as a last resort. These pesticides may be used if they do not constitute a high-hazard pesticide under the criteria outlined above and meet the following criteria:

- j. The pesticide's active ingredient has a soil half-life of 50 days or less (unless the active ingredient is a mineral);
- k. The pesticide's active ingredient has very low mobility in soil;
- l. The pesticide is not labeled as toxic to fish, birds, bees (except products used specifically to control bees in situations where they pose a hazard to humans), wildlife, or domestic animals.

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No pesticide will be used if the district does not have information on all the pesticide's active ingredients.

### **3. Fertilizer Use and Selection**

Fertilizers and soil amendments to be used by the district will not include those containing herbicides or moss killers. Soil samples will be taken annually from turf areas that receive the majority of the fertilizer applications (athletic fields) and analyzed at a lab to determine nutrient deficiencies. Fertilizers will have the N-P-K ratio recommended by the soil lab, and be slow-release nitrogen to minimize excess run off and contamination of surface water. The district grounds maintenance department will make every effort to apply fertilizers when students, staff, coaches, or others will not be present for at least 24 hours following fertilizer applications.

### **4. Notification and Timing**

Written notification will be provided annually or upon enrollment to parents, guardians of students, and employees describing the school districts IPM policy, including the posting and notification requirements. As part of this notification system, the school district will keep a list of any interested parents or guardians of students and employees and notify those people at least forty-eight (48) hours before a pesticide application to a school facility.

The prenotification requirements do not apply if the school facility application is made when the school is not occupied by students for at least two consecutive days after the application.

The prenotification requirements do not apply to any emergency school facility application for the control of any pest that poses an immediate human health or safety threat, such as an application to control stinging insects. When an emergency application is made, notification consistent with the school's notification system will occur as soon as possible after the application.

Notification signs will be placed at the main entrance of each school, athletic field, or other area, as well as, at the location of the pesticide application. Signs will be placed at all entrances to an affected area or building and in other strategic locations to prevent human contact with treated areas.

Notification signs will be 8 1/2 by 11 inches and will be printed in colors contrasting to the background. The heading will read "Notice: Pesticide Application" and will be easily readable from a safe distance. The following information will also be included on the signs:

- the product name of pesticide applied
- the date and time of application
- the location to which the pesticide was applied
- the pest to be controlled
- the name and phone number of a contact person

Notification signs will remain in place for at least twenty-four hours from the time the application is completed.

The district grounds maintenance department will make every effort to apply any pesticides to school properties during the summer break when school is out.

A school facility application does not include the application of antimicrobial pesticides or the placement of insects or rodent baits that are not accessible to children.

**5. Record Keeping**

The school district grounds maintenance department will maintain records of all pesticides used along with the amounts and location of treatments. The material safety data sheets, pesticide product labels, and manufacturer information about pesticide ingredients will also be on file.

**6. Identification and Notification of Sensitive Individuals**

The school district will keep a current list of any person registered with the Department of Agriculture as “pesticide-sensitive individuals” and will give proper notification to these people within the designated notification area (RCW 17.21.420). The school district will also keep a list of any people who wish to be notified prior to any pesticide application unless the school is not occupied two consecutive days after the application.

**REFERENCE:**

**LEGAL:**

**OTHER:**

RCW 17.21.020: Posting and Notification of Pesticide Application at School  
Washington Toxic Coalition’s “Model Pest Management Policy”; Model  
Integrated Pest Management Policy for Whatcom County Public Lands,  
Bainbridge Island School District Policy #6522 “Integrated Vegetation and Pest  
Management”

ADOPTED: 05/09/02