Brockton Public Schools
School Committee Policy

PESTICIDES IN SCHOOLS

1. Responsibility

Those persons who perform, contract, and/or administratively oversee pest management services for schools and school-aged child care programs play significant roles in the implementation of these new changes. Also, the new changes include others with responsibility such as utility companies and state agencies.

2. Definitions

School Property
   a. Property on which there are school buildings.
   b. Property on which there are school managed athletic fields
   c. Property that is primarily used for school-managed activities regardless of who maintains the property

3. Standard Written Notification Form

   a. Approximate dates when the application shall commence and conclude
   b. Specific location of the application
   c. Product name, type and EPA Registration number of the pesticide
   d. Massachusetts Pesticide Bureau Fact Sheet
   e. Description of the purpose of the application and
   f. Massachusetts Pesticide Bureau approved statement describing ways to minimize exposure and precautions to be taken

Note: It is recommended that the Pest Management Professional obtain the Standard Written Notification Form (see above), complete it, and provide this ready-to-copy form to the school, but the school is responsible for providing the information to employees, pupils, parents, etc.

4. Exception

The written notice is not in effect if the application is done during a period when classes or other activities are not scheduled, or the school is not going to be open for at least five consecutive days after the date of application. Again, the pest management professional must make every effort to ascertain the status of the property for the five-day period. Pest Management professionals would be prudent to request in writing a statement from the school. [Larval mosquito control and anti-microbial pesticides are exempt from this notification.]
5. Indoors

Pesticides cannot be applied indoors while children are on the property, except, for anti-microbial pesticides such as bleach; rodenticides placed in tamper resistant baits; insecticide baits; ready-to-use dusts, gels or powder formulations; termiticides in the presence of an active termite infection and only when non-chemical alternatives have been determined to be ineffective; and certain pesticides exempted under section 25B such as mint oil and baking soda.

It is strongly recommended that the pesticide management professional provide the school with a standard written notification for indoor applications of pesticides except in the cases of anti-microbial pesticides such as bleach; rodenticides placed in tamper resistant baits; insecticidal baits; ready-to-use dusts, gels, or powder formulations; and certain pesticides exempted under section 25B such as mint oil and baking soda.

It is strongly recommended that pest management professionals should complete and provide information for the standard written notification form to schools. Thereafter, the schools must notify parent, staff and students at least two (2) working days before the indoor application is to commence application.

Schools must maintain written or electronic records of all pesticides used for 5 years.

The only pesticides that can be used indoors will be anti-microbial pesticides such as bleach; rodenticides placed in tamper resistant baits; insecticide baits; ready-to-use dusts, gels or powder formulations; termiticides in the presence of an active termite infection and only when non-chemical alternatives have been determined to be ineffective; and certain pesticides exempted under section 25B such as mint oil and baking soda.

Note: Emergency exemptions (see emergency provisions section below)

6. Outdoors

The pest management professional cannot use pesticides on outdoor property while children are located in, on, or adjacent to the area of pesticide application. The pest management professional cannot use any pesticides on school property within 150 feet of where children are located, either inside or outside or are reasonably expected to enter within an eight-hour period of time following the application.

The school must provide a standard written notification to parents, staff and students at least two (2) days before pesticide use, post standard written notification on conspicuous common areas at least two (2) days prior to pesticide use and leave posted for at least 72 hours following the application, and insure that the perimeter of location of pesticide use is posted.

The pest management professional must complete and provide information for the standard written notification to schools for making and insuring the notification and posting requirements are satisfied. Note: Pesticides cannot be used later than 72 hours after the approximate date. The pest management professional must assure themselves that the school sent out the written notice, that treated areas were posted with clear and
conspicuous warning signs along the perimeter, and at a minimum, check to be sure there are no children within 150 feet at the time of application.

Schools must maintain for 5 years written or electronic records of all pesticide use.

The pest management professional must post along the entire perimeter of the area to be treated at schools. The posting must be clear and conspicuous. Until specific posting standards are developed, the warning signs for turf application currently required are acceptable. Pesticides cannot be used for purely aesthetic reasons on the property of schools unless the city of town provides written permission for their use.


The Board of Health or the Department of Food and Agriculture—Pesticide Bureau must approve a situation that a school deems an emergency. Each situation must be considered individually; no blanket approval will be given. The two criteria of whether the pest situation poses an immediate threat to human health or whether no viable alternatives to the use of chemical pesticides exist will be used. Further, in such an emergency situation, the school official shall also ensure that standard written notification is provided to employees, pupils or supervised children and their parents or guardians immediately prior to, or, if necessary, immediately following the emergency spraying, release, deposit or application.

Note: The pest management professional should obtain a copy of the notice as soon as possible following the application and retain a copy as a part of the official pesticide application records. The school administration must ensure that there is a conspicuous posting near the area to be treated, and around the perimeter. In such an emergency situation, the school official shall also ensure that standard written notification is provided to employees, pupils or supervised children and their parents or guardians immediately prior to or, if necessary, immediately following the emergency spraying, release, deposit or application.

Pest management professionals should obtain a copy of the notice as soon as possible following the application and retain a copy of the notice as soon as possible following the application and retain a copy as a part of the official pesticide application records. If the applicator cannot determine that both the written notice was sent, and the required posting was made, they must not make the application. While the pest management professional does not issue the written notice, they do furnish information to the school. If the school has no signs to be posted, the pest management professional should be prepared with signs and post them prior to the application.

8. Use of Pesticides along Rights-Of-Way (ROW)

A right of way is any roadway or thoroughfare on which public passage is made and any corridor of land over which facilities such as railroads, pipelines, powerlines, conduits, channels, or communication lines are located. The Rights of Way Management regulations (333 CMR 11) were designed to minimize any potential harmful effects of herbicides used for vegetation control along rights of ways in Massachusetts. The
regulations promote the use of an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to vegetation control and aims to protect private wells and environmentally sensitive areas.

Notice must be given, by registered mail, regarding ROW applications to community officials (mayor, city manager and chair of board of selectmen, conversation commission) 21 days before application and must be published in a general circulation newspaper at least 48 hours prior to application. The application cannot start sooner than 10 days before, must conclude no later than 10 days after the approximate date.

The notice to the city or town shall consist of the method and location of the pesticide use, the approximate dates beginning and ending of the pesticide use, the type of pesticide to be used, copy of the label and labeling of the pesticide, EPA Reg # and a department approved fact sheet, name, address, license number of the applicator. Agencies and authorities of the Commonwealth must develop policies that eliminate or reduce the use of pesticides for vegetation management along roadways.

The goal of these regulations is to protect the public health and the environment by regulating the use of herbicides in or around sensitive areas along rights of ways. These sensitive areas include private and public water supplies, wetlands and areas where people live, work and gather.

Any company or agency proposing to use an herbicide must use applicators who are certified or licensed by the Department. Industries proposing to clear or maintain ROWs with herbicides submit a five-year Vegetation Management Plan (VMP). These plans are subject to review by the Department, an Advisory panel, the public and municipalities. An operational plan is also submitted yearly to the DFA and to municipalities in which proposed herbicide spraying is expected to take place. Final acceptance of these plans is considered only when all concerns and recommendations are addressed.

9. State Agencies and Authorities

State agencies must furnish the employees using pesticides, or who may be present during pesticide use personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing as required by state and federal law and the directions on labels, MSDS and supportive data. Label directions will be the criteria for what personal protective equipment must be furnished. The applicators, their employees or the utility companies must furnish the PPE information to any state authority/agency that may have employees accompanying a crew applying the ROW pesticides.