

**“I DON’T CARE IF IT IS HARMLESS,
YOU GET IT OUT OF THE BUILDING!”:
INDOOR INSECT PEST MANAGEMENT**

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Grounds keeping activities, in general, and grounds pest management activities specifically, often create invertebrate pest problems in adjacent buildings. Even seemingly benign activities like cutting grass will cause, otherwise innocuous, clover mites to move to and through window screens. Every time grounds outside inhabited buildings are manipulated or perturbed there exists the potential for outside to inside movement of insects and other similar invertebrates.

The premise of this talk is that at some point in time clients, after observing professionals practicing pest management outside, will seek advice of these same professionals regarding an inside problem. The purpose of this talk is to familiarize grounds keeping professionals with the insects and other similar animals that are common invaders of inhabited buildings in Michigan.

Insects and other similar invertebrates enter inhabited buildings: to seek shelter after their habitat has been disturbed, to find a more hospitable place to pass the winter, to find food and/or water, or their entry may have been a random event.

Integrated pest Management (IPM) is the practice of using all of the tools in the pest management toolbox. We all know this. What we tend to forget is the order of use of these tools and the tendency to observe the presence of an insect in a building and proceed to rummage around in the toolbox for the biggest hammer when all was required was a Phillips screw driver!

Buildings are ideally suited for “good” IPM practices. With only a few exceptions the insect “Problem” can be mitigated without the use of insecticides. Like all sound IPM programs a household or building IPM plan should have a solid strategic (Long term) base augmented with a tactical (short term) plan that is practical.