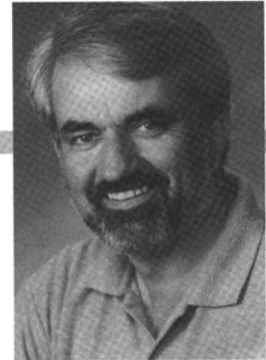




# Municipal Integrated Pest Management Accreditation

JOHN HOWARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ONTARIO PARKS ASSOCIATION



According to Health Canada, "Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a decision-making process that uses all necessary techniques to suppress pests effectively, economically, and in an environmentally sound manner to sustain healthy landscapes." Integrated Pest Management was originally developed for agriculture, but has been successfully applied to almost every field where pest management is an issue.

**A**n integrated approach will employ prevention techniques wherever possible to minimize the impact of pest problems, by altering, whenever possible, conditions that promote pest populations. Plant Health Care (PHC) is an integrated approach that incorporates all the best horticultural practices to ensure that the best plants are chosen and through proper planting and maintenance techniques, pests and their related effects are minimized.

### Benefits

Interestingly, Ontario municipalities have reduced pesticide use by significant amounts over the last 10 to 15 years. Much of this reduction was accomplished through the implementation of IPM or PHC programs. The multiple, long-term solutions provided through IPM/PHC promotes the use of the latest techniques and materials. Pesticide reduction is also achieved and environmentally, the application of any compound, natural or synthetic, when it is not necessary can

upset the balance of nature. Pests have developed resistance to certain chemical compounds. IPM/PHC options reduce the chances of pesticide resistance and enable pest managers to control pests that have developed resistance through alternative products and measures. The decision making process that is an essential component of these programs is guided through the establishment of pest population thresholds. Using alternative strategies for pest control reduces pesticide applications.

### Background

The horticulture industry, represented by numerous associations, agencies and organizations, recognized the need to formalize IPM/PHC principles and practices and are instituting the IPM Accreditation Program which will recognize IPM practitioners through a qualification program and adherence to a code of practice. The elements of the IPM Accreditation include adherence to the Code of Practice, which essentially is a list of guidelines established to describe what is expected of accredited companies or organizations and

creates a common ground approach.

Initially, this approach was seen as only a benefit to the commercial lawn care industry; however applications are recognized in other areas including structural pest control and on public lands. A municipal working group, facilitated by the Ontario Parks Association, has been meeting since last May to develop IPM accreditation for parks, forestry and other applications. Subtle differences in the approach to IPM between various sectors of the industry provide the working group with challenges as it investigates the opportunities IPM Accreditation will provide to the public sector. IPM Accreditation is seen as the most viable alternative for municipalities considering the creation of pesticide by-laws.

### Participants

The Municipal IPM/PHC Working Group has endorsed a "parks and open space" specific "Code of Practice" to standardize the municipal approach to IPM and PHC. The working group, centered in the Golden Horseshoe area, has



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invited representatives from various cities, towns and organizations to participate. To date the following agencies are represented:

City of Burlington, City of Cambridge, City of Hamilton, City of Windsor, Town of Oakville, Town of Halton Hills, City of Mississauga, City of Toronto, City of Brampton, The Ontario Parks Commission, Parks and Recreation Ontario, International Society of Arboriculture, Guelph Turfgrass Institute, OMAF, Landscape Ontario and the Ontario Parks Association.

### Working Group Objectives

The main objective of the Working Group is to promote a standard approach to IPM/PHC through the accreditation process. Representatives of the various agencies have been exploring and developing municipal IPM/PHC principles and practices and sharing their experiences and approaches in this area. Information on municipal IPM/PHC Accreditation has been distributed to provincial politicians,

seeking support for a provincial IPM/PHC Accreditation process. A province-wide approach to pest control issues is preferred, as opposed to a patchwork of inconsistent, and some say unenforceable, municipal by-laws.

### Initiatives to Date

The Working Group has reviewed the industry's version of the Code of Practice and modified it to make it more applicable to parks, grounds and public space operations. Information on the existence and activities of the group has been communicated to various ministries within the provincial government, along with information on the benefits of IPM/PHC and the Accreditation Program. The group has also attempted to liaise with other organizations dealing with pest control related issues.

The Municipal Working Group is investigating the development and production of an IPM/PHC information brochure as a vehicle to disseminate information on the latest pest management

techniques and practices. A "Municipal IPM/PHC Tool Kit" is also being considered to provide answers to commonly asked questions. Members are researching available case studies on IPM/PHC applications from municipalities across the province to determine past successes and challenges.

### Future Direction

The Working Group is gradually expanding and eventually would like to include participation from across the province. The continued promotion of IPM/PHC through education, communication and accreditation is important in assisting municipalities with IPM/PHC programs.

The Working Group will continue to supply input into the IPM/PHC Accreditation process via various organizations represented on the IPM Council. A very important activity will be the continued sharing of information on the latest science-based methods, products and alternatives for pest management. ♦

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