

Learn More Organizations

- ♣ Poison Free Lawns, www.poisonfreelawns.com
- ♣ Northeast Organic Farming Association, 978-355-2853, www.massorganic.org
- ♣ Toxics Use Reduction Institute, 978-934-3275, www.turi.org
- ♣ Wellesley Natural Resource Commission, 781-431-1019X294, www.ci.wellesley.ma.us/nrc/pesticide
- ♣ Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility, 617-497-7440, www.igc.org/psr
- ♣ Toxic Action Center, 617-292-4821, www.toxicaction.org
- ♣ Living Lawn Project, www.livinglawn.org

Books

Common Sense Pest Control

by W. Olkowski, S.Daar, and H. Olkowski, 1991

Tiny Game Hunting

by Hilary Klein and Adrian Wenner, 2001

Handbook of Successful Ecological Lawn Care

by Paul Sachs, 1996

Healthy Lawns Healthy Schools Healthy Children



Integrated Pest Management:

Finding Safer Ways to Control
Indoor and Outdoor Pests



League of Women Voters
Acton Area

Massachusetts Child and Family Protection Act (MCFPA)

In 2000 the Massachusetts State Legislature passed an act protecting children and their families from harmful pesticides. All schools in the state must now restrict pesticide use.

Goals of the Act

- ♣ Prevent unnecessary exposure of children to chemical pesticides
- ♣ Promote safer alternatives to pesticides
- ♣ Ensure notification concerning pesticide use
- ♣ Promote the use of integrated pest management (IPM) to reduce dependence on chemical pesticides

All schools, including preschools and daycare centers, must file both indoor and outdoor management plans that outline strategies to prevent pest problems from occurring. All pesticides can only be applied by a licensed applicator.

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts promoted the passage of the MCFPA. The LWV - Acton Area encourages both public and private property owners to move toward pesticide free land management.



The law now protects children from
pesticides in school.
It's up to us to protect them at home.

What is Integrated Pest Management ?

Integrated Pest Management, or IPM, is an effective and environmentally sensitive approach to pest management that relies on a combination of common sense practices. IPM programs use information on the life cycles of pests and their interaction with the environment to keep pest damage at tolerable levels. The methods used present the least possible hazard to people, property, and the environment.



IPM in Action

I. Monitor the Environment

Where are the carpenter ants going?

II. Is the Damage Tolerable?

Will this plant survive with some leaf damage?

III. Treatment Options:

- ♣ **Adjust Habitat:** Drain low spots in yard to remove mosquito habitat
- ♣ **Change Your Behavior:** Clean up kitchen spills quickly to discourage ants
- ♣ **Physical Controls:** Apply sticky band to tree trunk to keep insects off
- ♣ **Biological Controls:** Release lace wings to kill aphids
- ♣ **Least Toxic Chemical Controls:** Use insecticidal soap to reduce a large infestation

Pesticides are poisons.

Children are particularly vulnerable to the toxic effects of pesticides.

Pesticides may include:

grub control, weed killer, fungus treatment, insect spray, crab grass preventer, insecticides, herbicides, etc.

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<http://groups.msn.com/LeagueofWomenVotersActonArea>

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Wellesley Natural Resource Commission.**

THINK BEFORE YOU ACT

Indoors

Cockroaches

Place food in sealed containers, fix water leaks, caulk cracks. Use boric acid or diatomaceous earth as a dust, and give it time to work.

Pantry Moth Larvae and Beetles

Store susceptible foodstuffs in airtight, dry containers. Freeze infested food to kill live pests and discard. Redesign pantry to make it easy to clean up food spills promptly.

“Kitchen” Ants

Store food in airtight containers. Caulk cracks where ants can enter the home. Use soapy water to kill invading ants. Select least toxic interventions like insecticidal soap and boric acid for bait traps and sprays.



Carpenter Ants

Prevent excessive moisture accumulation in wood in the home. Repair existing damage. Eliminate potential nesting areas by repairing damaged trees and removing wood debris. Locate nest by trailing workers. Destroy nests with boric acid baits or dust.

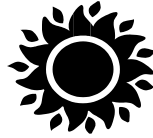
Clothes Moths

Store clean woolens in air tight containers

Silver Fish

Find the reason for the moist condition and try to correct it. Use dehumidifiers. Heat or freeze infested articles.

Outdoors



Poison Ivy

Repeated mowing will kill ivy. Small plants can be pulled by gloved hand. Larger plants can be brushed with a lemon juice and vinegar-based weed killer. Dispose of ivy in trash. Wash hands and exposed skin immediately.

Garden Weeds

Hand pulling is best. If weeds have gone to seed, do not put into compost bin. Before weeds have sprouted, sprinkle corn gluten meal as a pre-emergent control.



Garden Pests

Hand pick large insects and toss in a jar of soapy water. Kill with insecticidal soaps or solution of dish detergent. Get a correct identification of an insect to learn of the best treatment: use a book or contact the Mass Horticulture hotline (617) 933-4929, Hort_Line@masshort.org

Mosquitoes

Get rid of any standing water in your yard—in tires, buckets, even toys. Where water can't be drained (eg. pool covers, ponds), add cakes of mosquito larvae killers containing Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*), with don't harm beneficial insects.

Ticks

Keep wood piles away from the house, keep meadows mowed. Young deer ticks live on mice, so remove potential mice habitats. Always perform a “tick check” after being in the woods or tall grasses.

GROWING AN ORGANIC LAWN

The easiest, most cost effective way to a beautiful, healthy lawn is to work with nature, not against it. A healthy lawn needs nutrients and microbe-rich soil to develop deep rooted, dense turf that competes successfully with weeds. Dense turf is beautiful and low maintenance. It naturally resists drought, insects and diseases.

Pesticides are not necessary for a beautiful lawn. In fact, they can do more harm than good. They kill the microbial life necessary for healthy soil and can kill the pest's natural enemies. This invites disease and insect infestation, which leads to more pesticide use and traps you in an unhealthy, costly chemical cycle.

Basic organic lawn care tips

- ♣ Spread 1/4" compost, or sprinkle organic fertilizer, each fall.
- ♣ Seed with a mix of hardy grasses.
- ♣ Mow high! Keep mower blades sharp.
- ♣ Leave grass clippings on lawn as fertilizer.
- ♣ Water only when soil is dry 6" down. 1" water per watering.
- ♣ Overseed in the spring and fall.
- ♣ Get a soil test to determine what needs to be added to the soil. (UMass Soil Testing Lab, 413-545-2311, www.umass.edu/plsoils/soiltest)
- ♣ Strive for a soil pH around 6.8.
- ♣ Know that an organic lawn can take 3 years to fully establish.



Suggested Yearly Schedule

March & April

Raise mower blade to 3 inches.— weeds and crabgrass die back when shaded by tall grass. Test soil: Add soil amendments based on soil test. Re-seed bare patches, or apply corn gluten to prevent weed germination.

May & June

Monitor for insect pests. If you have grub damage, spot treat with milky spore (once every ten years) and/or with beneficial nematodes (once yearly for 2 or 3 years).

August

You may allow lawn to go dormant during drought. It will green up after rain.

September & October

Best time to seed (generously). Fertilize if needed (sparingly) or top dress with 1/4 inch compost. Aerate if soil is compacted. Lime if pH lower than 6.8 in Fall soil test.

Going Organic with a Lawn Service

- ♣ Specify mowing high with sharp blades.
- ♣ Request corn gluten and organic fertilizer instead of “Weed and Feed” products.
- ♣ Refuse routine application of pesticides.
- ♣ Organic lawn care has been defined by the Northeast Organic Farming Association. Order a copy of the standards from www.massorganic.org.