**IPM Projects for Outlying Areas**

**Introduction**

Integrated Pest Management IPM is an effective and environmentally sensitive approach to pest management that relies on a combination of common-sense practices. IPM programs use current, comprehensive information on the life cycles of pests and their interaction with the environment. This information, in combination with available pest control methods, is used to manage pest damage by the most economical means, and with the least possible hazard to people, property, and the environment.

The GSA Grounds Department implemented an Integrated Pest Management Program in 2007. A County committee was formed that currently meets on a quarterly basis. The committee consists of a variety of members and attendees from various departments within the County of Ventura and the Agricultural Commissioner’s Office. Meetings are designed as a forum for the dissemination of information about Integrated Pest management. Continued education has provided continued process improvement.

At the Government Center we have been using IPM methods for several years now. Careful tracking and monitoring of our pests and the use of IPM methods has resulted in an overall reduction in pesticide use. We have also learned that we can use pest control products that are much safer to the environment.

**Outlying Areas**

In addition to the Government Center, the GSA Grounds Department manages the landscape maintenance of 23 County Facilities. Four facilities are maintained using county grounds keepers, nineteen properties are maintained by a landscape maintenance contractor. We have met with the contractor and initiated IPM programs using knowledge obtained through our in-house operations at the Government Center. Programs, projects and procedures for outlying areas are outlined in the GSA IPM 5 Year plan. They are also listed below.

**Off Site Properties**

1. Work with offsite contractor (Mycols, Inc. at this time) on a regular basis to assure that the same IPM practices that are being used at the Government Center are consistent at all offsite locations.
2. The GSA Landscape Contract Administrator shall examine all offsite locations and develop a planting plan. This planting plan shall prioritize the work on a property by property basis. Prioritization will be based on the properties need for improvement and the relative cost for the upgrades. The administrator shall choose a landscape contractor to do the work. Preferably the contractor that performs the maintenance will be chosen. The Contract Administrator shall work with the landscape contractor to develop the scope of work and the Landscape Contractor shall provide work proposals for budget purposes. The plan will incorporate IPM methods and procedures listed above for the Ventura County Government Center (Numbers1-12). The installation plan is included in this 5 year plan and provides the approximate costs for the installation of improved irrigation systems, weed free plastic, mulch and/or rock materials. Most of the projects are for the installation of mulch to bare soil areas. The installation of mulch has proven to reduce the use of Roundup herbicide which is used the most on an annual basis. The estimated cost to do this work is $51,200.00. (See attached IPM Project cost sheet).
3. Currently the GSA Grounds Department takes care of four properties in addition to the Government Center using County Employees. Improvements to these sites are also included in the planting plan.
4. Install Toro Sentinel II irrigation controllers at selected locations that can be managed from the central controller at the Government Center. This “Smart” wireless control system is used at the Government Center, 646 County Square Drive, 669 County Square Drive and 4651Telephone Road. This system is connected to a weather station located at the Government Center which provides on-site evapotranspiration data for efficient irrigation scheduling. The system also has a rain sensor that shuts down in the case of a rain event. Flow meters are used to track water use. The system has saved a tremendous amount of water since it was installed in 2006. The GSA Grounds department has received bids for the installation of Sentinel II controllers and flow meters at 855 Partridge, Juvenile detention and the Juvenile Courts. The cost to have them installed is $27,000.00.
5. Install new landscaping around the building at 4651 Telephone Road. The landscape around the building has been approved and is scheduled to be installed in August 2010. The new landscape will require retrofitting the existing irrigation system, installing more drought resistant plants and decomposed granite. It is believed that the new irrigation sprinkler system will reduce water use in that area by 30-40 percent. The installation is to be paid for by F&M, Maintenance department as part of their required maintenance and complements LEED Certification.

**Summary**

The Five Year IPM Plan is designed for continual process improvement. The IPM program incorporates pest monitoring, pesticide use tracking and water use tracking (Key Performance Indicators). Continued education is essential and net working with professionals in the industry helps to assure that we are current in the latest IPM methods and technology.

Continual improvement results in landscapes that are improved, landscapes that require less maintenance, landscapes that require less pest control and conserve water. IPM planting will improve the overall look of many properties that are in need of landscape refurbishment. Indoor (Structural) IPM process improvement results in the use less harmful pesticides and the use of less pesticides overall.

Quality Landscape Care (Mycols, Inc.) has initiated several IPM practices during the year. They have started using pesticide products that are less toxic. Horticultural oil has been used along with synthetic botanical pesticides that have a lower toxicity rating. In some areas close to buildings they have been successful trapping gophers instead of using a pesticide. At several properties they have used “Sluggo” for snail control in place of more toxic metaldehyde containing products.

Quality Landscape Care has also been managing their irrigation applications more closely. In doing so we have found that they have been able to maintain good plant health and at the same time reduce applied water. In some case the plants appear to be healthier with these changes because the soil is allowed to dry a little more between irrigations. The benefits of better irrigation are water conservation and healthier plants typically have less pest problems. In addition, watering less frequently reduces weed growth and the need to apply pesticides.

Practicing IPM results in less harmful impacts on the environment and provides sustainability for future generations.