Healthy Schools Act
Frequently Asked Questions
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What is the Healthy Schools Act (HSA) and who is it for?

The Healthy Schools Act (HSA) is a law that defines pesticide use and reporting requirements for California K – 12 public schools and licensed child care centers—collectively known as schoolsites. The HSA applies to anyone (school staff, volunteers, and pest management businesses) applying any type of pesticide at a schoolsite. The Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) develops training and other outreach materials to assist with HSA compliance and to facilitate the adoption of least-toxic pest management strategies. Schoolsite pesticide use information is required to be reported to DPR.

What is considered an HSA schoolsite?

Under the Healthy Schools Act, schoolsites are defined as public K – 12 schools and licensed child care centers. Private schools and family day care homes are not schoolsites. Schoolsites also include buildings or structures, playgrounds, athletic fields, vehicles, and any other area of the property visited or used by students.

Is it an HSA schoolsite?

1. Yes!
2. Yes! Adjoining city or county parks regularly used by schools and child care centers are considered schoolsites. All requirements of the HSA apply. These school districts and local agencies should sign a formal memorandum of understanding or joint-use agreement so that the pesticide-use information can be shared between both entities.
3. No. Off-campus administration buildings are exempt.
4. No. This center is visited by pupils but is not a public school or licensed child care center.
5. No. Family day care homes are exempt.
6. No. College campuses and post-secondary facilities, even if attended by minors, are exempt.
7. Yes! Licensed child care centers, whether public or private, are considered schoolsites, even those on college campuses.
8. No. Private schools are exempt.
9. Yes! Licensed child care centers, even those not affiliated with the school property they are leasing from, are considered schoolsites.

HSA requirements apply when a pesticide application is made within 10 feet of the perimeter of a child care center.
Who should be the IPM Coordinator?

The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Coordinator is a staff member chosen by the schoolsite to ensure the HSA requirements are met. Examples of IPM Coordinators include maintenance and operations directors and child care directors. Their contact information is included on the IPM Plan and the school Pesticide Use Report (PUR).

What do they do?

The IPM Coordinator works with administrators, parents and guardians, staff, and hired pest management businesses to make sure the schoolsite complies with all of the Healthy Schools Act requirements. The IPM Coordinator is the main contact for HSA questions.

What if the IPM Coordinator changes?

Please update the contact on the IPM Plan and Pesticide Use Reports, and email DPR at school-ipm@cdpr.ca.gov with the contact information.

What is Integrated Pest Management?

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a pest management strategy that focuses on long-term prevention or suppression of pests through a combination of techniques such as monitoring for pest presences, making habitat less conducive to pests, improving sanitation, physically removing pests, and using least-toxic pesticides when necessary as a last resort. Successful school IPM practices require active cooperation and participation from schoolsite staff, students, and visitors.

School IPM resources are available on the DPR website: www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm
**How do schoolsites develop an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan?**

The IPM Coordinator develops an IPM Plan by collaborating with others, such as school staff and pest management professionals, to identify pest management needs and to create integrated pest management strategies in relation to the unique nature of schoolsites and children’s health.

Local pest management resources include County Agricultural Commissioner’s offices and County Vector Control Districts.

**What needs to be on the IPM Plan?**

- The name of the schoolsite’s IPM Coordinator
- All non-exempt pesticides (such as weed killers and insecticides) expected to be applied
- A date when the plan will be reviewed and revised, if necessary

Sample IPM plan forms can be found on the DPR website: [www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm](http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm)

**Where does the IPM Plan need to be posted?**

The IPM Plan must be posted on the schoolsite website. If the schoolsite does not have a website, then the IPM Plan must be provided to all parents, guardians, and staff.
Training

Who needs HSA training?
The IPM Coordinator and anyone expected to use a pesticide at a schoolsite must complete training. This may include schoolsite staff, teachers, and volunteers if they use pesticides like disinfectants or sanitizers, insecticides, or weed-killers. Licensed pest management professionals must also take an HSA training course before applying a pesticide at a schoolsite.

How often does the HSA training need to be completed?
- IPM Coordinators and schoolsite staff, including teachers, must take the training annually.
- Licensed pest management professionals must take the training once during each license renewal period.

How can I take the HSA training?
There are a few ways to take the required HSA training:

1. DPR Online Training Courses:
   - Integrated Germ Management (IGM)* is designed for schoolsite staff who use disinfectants or sanitizers as part of their daily activities.
   - Basic Pest Management for the Classroom and Office Environment* is an introduction to IPM for anyone applying pesticides, including disinfectants or sanitizers, at schoolsites.
   - Best Pest Management Practices around Children (ADVANCED) is designed for licensed pest management professionals and others with experience in IPM. This course is certified for 1 hour of continuing education credit toward professional pest management licenses. (Not available in group training kit.)
   *Offered in Spanish

   Courses are free and available year-round through the DPR website: www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm

2. DVD Group Training Kit
   - Available for schoolsite staff only
   - Request a free kit by email: school-ipm@cdpr.ca.gov

3. Approved 3rd-Party Training Courses
   - Course list provided on the DPR website: www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm

4. Workshops
   - In-person workshops are available by region. To find out about upcoming workshops, send a request to: school-ipm@cdpr.ca.gov

How long is the training?
One hour or less. Courses that offer continuing education credit for licenses are at least one hour long.
Warning Signs

When do warning signs need to be posted?

Pesticide application warning signs need to be posted 24 hours before an application and remain posted until 72 hours after an application. Warning signs are still required when students are not present and during school breaks. Exempt pesticides do not require warning signs to be posted.

If there is a pest management emergency, warning signs need to be posted as soon as possible and remain posted until 72 hours after the application.

What is considered an emergency?

A pest management emergency is when the IPM Coordinator deems that the immediate use of a pesticide is necessary to protect the health and safety of pupils, staff, or other persons, or the schoolsite.

What do the warning signs need to say?

Warning signs must prominently display “Warning/Pesticide Treated Area” and include:

- The product and manufacturer’s name
- The U.S. EPA product registration number
- Scheduled date and areas of application
- The reason for the application (the target pest)

Where should I post the warning sign?

The warning sign must be visible to anyone entering a treated area.
What needs to be on the annual written notification?

- A list of all pesticides (such as weed-killers and insecticides) and their active ingredients expected to be applied during the year by schoolsite staff and licensed pest management professionals
  * Listing exempt pesticides is optional
- A link to the DPR website: [www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm](http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm)
- The opportunity for recipients to register to receive advanced notifications about individual pesticide applications

Sample notification forms can be found on the DPR website: [www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm](http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm)

When should I send out the annual notification?

The notification must be provided annually at the beginning of the school year to parents, guardians, and staff. Many schoolsites choose to include it in their parent handbook.

What if you want to use a pesticide that is not listed on the annual notification?

The IPM Coordinator must provide written notification of the pesticide not listed on the annual notification to all parents, guardians, and staff at least 72 hours before the application.

When is notification not required?

If there is a pest management emergency, advanced notification is not required. However, you must notify parents, guardians, and staff as soon as possible.

Exempt pesticide products such as self-contained bait stations, indoor gel or paste crack-and-crevice treatments, antimicrobial pesticides including disinfectants and sanitizers, and FIFRA 25(b) minimum-risk pesticides do not need to be included in notifications.
What is a notification registry?

As a part of the annual written notification, a schoolsite must provide parents, guardians, and staff the opportunity to register to receive advanced notifications for individual pesticide applications. The people on the registry must receive notifications at least 72 hours before each pesticide application. The intent of the Healthy Schools Act is to provide schoolsite pesticide use information to parents, guardians, and staff so that they can make better informed decisions when pesticides are applied.

What needs to be on the individual notification?

- The product name
- The active ingredient(s)
- The intended date for the application

Sample notification forms can be found on the DPR website: [www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm](http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm)

How should the individual notification be sent out?

The schoolsite can decide what form of communication is best for those on the registry. Examples include phone call, email, or hardcopy.
Do I need to keep records of all pesticide applications?

Each schoolsite must keep records of every non-exempt pesticide application made on the site, including those made by licensed pest management professionals.

Licensed pest management professionals are also required to keep records of their pesticide applications at schoolsites.

How can I keep a record of the pesticide applications?

Warning signs have most of the required information. By adding the amount of product used to the warning sign, it can be saved as a complete record.

Sample warning signs can be found on the DPR website: [www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm](http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm)

Records must always include:

- The pesticide product name
- The manufacturer’s name
- U.S. EPA registration number
- Dates and areas of application
- Undiluted amount of pesticide product used

How long do I keep the records?

Schoolsites must keep records of all non-exempt pesticide applications made at the schoolsite (by staff and pest management businesses) for four years.

Does the public have access to the schoolsite’s pesticide use records?

Yes. Records must be available to the public upon request as paper or electronic copies.
Who submits school pesticide use reports (PUR)?

Both schoolsites and pest management businesses submit school pesticide use reports.

The schoolsite must report only pesticides applied by schoolsite staff. This includes weed-killing pesticides. Self-contained bait stations, indoor gel or paste crack-and-crevice treatments, antimicrobials, and FIFRA 25(b) minimum-risk pesticides are exempt from reporting by schoolsite staff.

If a pest management business applies registered pesticides at a schoolsite, they will submit their own pesticide use reports to DPR. However, the schoolsite is still responsible for posting warning signs and keeping records of all non-exempt pesticide applications made on site—applications made by schoolsite staff and pest management businesses.

Reports are due to DPR by January 30th of the following year. For example, reports for applications made during 2020 are due by January 30, 2021.

Which form should I use?

Schoolsite Staff: Use form DPR-HSA-118, *Pesticide Use Report for School and Child Care Employees*

Pest Management Businesses: Use form DPR-ENF-117, *School Site and Child Day Care Facility Pesticide Use Reporting By a Business*

Both forms are available on the DPR website: [www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm](http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm)
What are pesticides?

A pesticide is any substance intended to prevent, destroy, repel, or mitigate any pest. Examples of pests include insects, rodents, weeds, mold, and germs. Insecticides, rodenticides, herbicides, and antimicrobials, like disinfectants and sanitizers, are all pesticides. Plant nutrients and fertilizers that contain weed-control chemicals are also considered pesticides.

Topical antiseptics such as hand sanitizers are not included in the Healthy Schools Act because they are regulated by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA).

Exempt Pesticides

What pesticides are exempt from HSA requirements?

HSA training is required for anyone using any type of pesticide product at schoolsites. However, certain pesticide products applied by schoolsite staff are exempt from all other HSA requirements (i.e. notifying, posting warning signs, recordkeeping, and reporting).

In addition to receiving training, licensed pest management businesses must report all registered pesticides used at schoolsites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Healthy Schools Act Exempt Pesticides</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anyone using these products at schools must receive HSA training. All other HSA requirements do not apply.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-contained bait stations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Gel and paste crack-and-crevice treatments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Self-contained bait stations" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Gel and paste crack-and-crevice treatments" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIFRA 25(b) minimum-risk pesticides pose little to no threat to human health and the environment. A U.S. EPA registration number will not appear on these products labels.

Do I need to record and report organic pesticides?

It depends. If the organic pesticide label has a U.S. EPA registration number and is not a self-contained bait station, gel or paste crack-and-crevice treatment, antimicrobial, or FIFRA 25(b) pesticide then all HSA requirements apply.
Prohibited Pesticides

What pesticides are prohibited from use at schools and child care centers?

Some pesticide products are prohibited from use at schoolsites due to registration reasons. The current prohibited products list can be found on the DPR website: [www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm](http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm). This list is updated quarterly.

Any pesticide product with label indicating "not for use at schools" is also prohibited.

Can school districts restrict pesticides?

Yes. A pesticide can be legal to use at a schoolsite according to California law and the product label, but local jurisdictions or school district may choose to restrict its use. Check local ordinances for more information.

Who do I contact with pesticide questions?

The local County Agricultural Commissioner’s office: [https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/exec/county/countymap/](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/exec/county/countymap/)

How do I know if the product is a FIFRA 25(b) minimum-risk pesticide?

Most products in this category will have a statement on the label regarding their FIFRA 25(b) status.

Conditions for these products are found on the U.S. EPA website: [https://www.epa.gov/](https://www.epa.gov/)

For further assistance, contact the local County Agricultural Commissioner’s office.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registered Pesticide Products in the Form of:</th>
<th>HSA Training Required</th>
<th>Post in IPM Plan</th>
<th>Applicator Notify Child Care Center</th>
<th>Notify Parents, Guardians, Staff</th>
<th>Post Warning Signs</th>
<th>Keep Records</th>
<th>Report to DPR By Jan. 30th Following Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dusts, sprays, aerosols (spray cans), foggers, bombs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>120 Hours before</td>
<td>• Yes, list of pesticides to be applied that year • Yes, for those on the registry</td>
<td>Yes 24 hrs before until 72 hrs after</td>
<td>Yes, keep for 4 yrs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Self-contained bait stations • Indoor crack-and-crevice applications of gel or paste bait • FIFRA 25(b) pesticides (registration exempt)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>No, Exempt</td>
<td>No, Exempt</td>
<td>No, Exempt</td>
<td>No, Exempt</td>
<td>No, Exempt*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antimicrobials including disinfecting sprays and wipes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>No, Exempt</td>
<td>No, Exempt</td>
<td>No, Exempt</td>
<td>No, Exempt</td>
<td>No, Exempt*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications under emergency conditions</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>As soon as possible</td>
<td>Yes, as soon as possible</td>
<td>Immediately until 72 hrs after</td>
<td>Yes, keep for 4 yrs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pesticides intended for use (not included in Annual Written Notification)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>120 Hours before</td>
<td>Yes, 72 hrs before application</td>
<td>Yes 24 hrs before until 72 hrs after</td>
<td>Yes, keep for 4 yrs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Exempt for schoolsite staff only. Pest management businesses report to DPR all registered pesticides used at schoolsites.