



# ECOWISE

February 2011 | Volume 9, Issue 2

[www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/phecc/newsletter/newsletter.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/phecc/newsletter/newsletter.cfm)



## Integrated Pest Management: A Less Toxic Strategy

Residents and maintenance departments in public housing agencies (PHAs) must be vigilant in their efforts to keep housing free of pests such as cockroaches, ants, and rats. Unfortunately, sometimes this diligence can have unintended side effects. Chemical pesticides are toxic and can have health risks for residents and PHA staff including aggravation of allergies and asthma. Overuse and misuse of chemical pesticides can also lead to pests building up resistance to certain pesticides. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is one way to avoid some of these problems.

IPM is a healthier, less toxic method of fighting pests. Non-toxic methods such as identifying, reporting, and monitoring pests as well as a reduced reliance on pesticides are key components of IPM. IPM is not required by HUD, but the Department promotes its use through guidance provided in PIH notices.

IPM uses comprehensive knowledge about the life-cycle of the pest and an understanding of how it interacts with the environment to fight pests. The most important element of IPM is prevention—creating an environment which is undesirable to pests. This means eliminating their sources of food, water, and shelter. Resident education and commitment are the keys to success in this area. Residents should report all leaks and take steps to remove food sources. Residents have the power not just to discourage pests, but, once they are gone, to keep them away. (See the Resident's Corner for specific suggestions.)

In general, the recommended first steps in IPM are use of traps and bait. If the infestation is severe, once the nontoxic and less toxic methods have been used, pesticides may be needed. Even then, residents and PHA staff should read labels carefully to find the least poisonous pesticides.

When using pesticides, traps, or bait stations, PHAs should help residents avoid health risks and learn what steps to take if pets or small children touch or taste poisons. IPM will not produce overnight success where there is serious infestation. But, with the full cooperation of the residents and the PHA, IPM can create an atmosphere that is healthy and safe.

To learn more: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/phecc/pestmang.cfm>

Bed bug fact sheet presented in English and Spanish located at: <http://bit.ly/gzi4uA>

To view the voluntary guidance: <http://bit.ly/eKiwRb>

To get trained in IPM: <http://www.healthyhometraining.org/ipm/training.htm>

Interested in IPM and Multifamily Housing? Visit this blog: <http://stoppests.typepad.com/>



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- » **SAVE THE DATE!**  
**Going Green: Intelligent Investments for Public Housing Conference**  
Presented by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development  
April 12-13  
Boston, MA  
(Watch this space for details)
- » **Better Buildings: Better Business Conference**  
March 2-4, 2011  
Wisconsin Dells, WI  
<http://bit.ly/idpKXS>
- » **Northeast Sustainable Energy Association's Building Energy 2011**  
March 8-10, 2011  
Boston, MA  
<http://bit.ly/fnVuba>
- » **Renewable Energy 101 for Housing and Community Development**  
March 24-25, 2011  
Tampa, FL  
<http://bit.ly/gryTKr>

## HUD and Public Housing at GreenBuild Conference

Last November, energy efficient and sustainable public housing initiatives were on display as part of the GreenBuild International Conference and Expo. The annual conference of the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) was held over 3 days in Chicago. USGBC's pre-conference Affordable Housing Summit held sessions on public housing and rural affordable housing.

During the conference, PHAs participated in a panel discussion session entitled "Public Housing Authorities as Sustainable Building Innovators." The panel explored how PHAs are saving on energy costs and improving residents' quality of life by including energy conservation and environmentally friendly practices in their rehabilitation and redevelopment activities.

Panel presenters included representatives from two PHAs—the District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA), the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA)—and the Council of Large Public Housing Authorities (CLPHA), a membership association of large PHAs. CLPHA's presentation included a statistical snapshot of public housing residents, buildings, and energy costs, which served to show the importance of conservation and sustainability in helping PHAs fulfill their missions in a cost-effective manner.

Speaking at the close of the plenary session, HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan highlighted the Department's commitment to environmental improvements. "All told, nearly a third of HUD's \$13.6 billion in Recovery Act funds can be used for 'greening' America's public and assisted housing stock—making homes healthier and more energy efficient at the same time they create good paying jobs," Donovan stated.

Secretary Donovan described the impact of some of these innovations on the lives of residents: "As I saw at Gibson Plaza Apartments in the Shaw neighborhood of Washington, DC, these investments are helping families—cutting their utility bills by more than 20 percent and at the same time helping them live in healthier homes, removing asthma triggers, lead paint and other health hazards."

Improvements that PHAs are making to conserve energy and water are also improving residents' quality of life. Additionally, these activities contribute to a healthier planet.

To view the CLPHA, DCHA, and CHA PowerPoint presentations, visit: <http://www.clpha.org/greeningpublichousing>

To read Secretary Donovan's entire speech, visit: <http://bit.ly/f5J6VP> or watch it: <http://bit.ly/gldxea>

## National Bed Bug Summit

The Federal Government held the Second National Bed Bug Summit February 1-2, 2011. The meeting focused on prevention, current research, public education, and governmental response. The summit was open to the public and featured officials from several government agencies.

For those who could not attend, summit materials are available on the Web. Visit the Environmental Protection Agency Web site for more information: <http://bit.ly/h5jMnC>



## Resident's Corner | Pest Control

When you see pests, you should always let your PHA or landlord know. Pests may include bed bugs, cockroaches, mice, and rats. If possible, let them know exactly where you saw the pests. The sooner the PHA or landlord knows, the sooner they can take steps to eliminate the pests. But you do not have to just wait on them or wait to see pests. You can take easy steps that are more powerful than pesticide sprays to get rid of pests and keep them away.

Pests will not live where they cannot find the food, water, or shelter. Here are some tips for making your home an unfriendly environment for pests.

- Store fresh food or food in cardboard boxes in containers that pests cannot get into. Containers should have tight lids and be made of plastic, glass, or metal.
- To control crumbs and make clean up easier, only eat in the kitchen or dining area of your home.
- Wipe down all counters and tables where you eat, and stovetops after meals.
- Pests don't need much to live on. Sweep the kitchen and any other eating areas after meals.
- Look for and clean up food spills or buildup of food material on or under countertops, stoves and refrigerators.
- Keep any pet food covered and don't keep it outside at night.
- Purchase a kitchen trash container with a lid or take out your trash each evening.

Here are a few areas of concern to discuss with your landlord or PHA:

- Leaks around the sinks or toilet because these provide a water source for pests.
- Openings under doors leading outside or to a public hallway. If you can insert your finger under the door, a mouse can get in. You may want to request that a door sweep be installed.
- Water-damaged wood like in a window frame because it is a food source for some ants.

You can search on the Internet or at the library for information about specific pests. Do not use pesticide sprays yourself, they can have harmful health effects.

To learn more: <http://www.watchall.com/how-to-control-pests.html>

## Contact Us:

### Public and Indian Housing Information Resource Center (PIH IRC)

2614 Chapel Lake Drive  
Gambrills, MD 21054

**Toll free number:** 1-800-955-2232

**Fax number:** 1-443-302-2084

**E-mail:** [pihirc@firstpic.org](mailto:pihirc@firstpic.org) (Put "EcoWise" in subject line)

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