

Sample Organic Pest Management Policy

§1. Statement of Purpose:

In consideration of the hazards involved in the use of chemical pesticides, the _____ deems it prudent to employ pest control strategies which do not jeopardize human health, the environment and non-target organisms. To this end, the _____ should adopt an Organic Pest Management (OPM) program which places first priority on prevention of pest problems and uses a variety of non-toxic alternatives in combination with commonsense practices to control or eliminate pest problems. The goal of the _____ OPM Policy is to eliminate the use of certain chemical pesticides on all _____ properties, either by _____ employees or contractors, and to encourage residents to employ similar pesticide-elimination methods.

§2. The Precautionary Principle:

The potential risks of exposure to toxic chemical pesticides are not yet fully understood; however, there is growing scientific evidence of a link between the use of chemical pesticides and human health problems, including cancer and neurological disease and endocrine disruption. In view of this mounting evidence and the degradation of natural resources and the environment associated with pesticide contamination, scientists, lawyers, policymakers and environmentalists have developed what has become known as the *Precautionary Principle*. It states that when an activity raises threats of harm to the environment or human health, precautionary measures should be taken even if specific cause-and-effect relationships are not yet fully established. The OPM Policy for _____ embraces this principle.

§3. Definitions and Objectives

"Organic Pest Management" is a management strategy that focuses on long-term prevention or suppression of pest problems by systematically eliminating life support systems or conditions required by unwanted pests in indoor and outdoor environments. It also incorporates regular maintenance and cultural practices that promote the health of plants

in the case of outdoor management. OPM dictates that chemical controls (pesticides) be used only in emergency situations (see Section 8). Pesticides are defined by 7 U.S.C. 136 and shall include herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, rodenticides and any other toxic chemicals used to kill pests.

Under this OPM policy, pesticides classified as known, likely or probable human carcinogens, or those pesticides that meet the criteria for Toxicity Category I or Toxicity Category II, as defined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in section 156.10 of Part 156 of Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations should no longer be applied to any Town property. A list of the pesticides in the EPA's Toxicity Categories I and II should be periodically updated and maintained in an office of the Town for reference.

§4. The OPM Advisory Sub-Committee:

An OPM Advisory Committee shall act as a "Pest Management Board" to oversee and assist in the implementation of the OPM policy, and to advise the _____ Board of any problems encountered or amendments required to achieve the full and successful implementation of the _____ policy. The Committee shall be comprised of three members of the _____ Ecological Commission appointed by the Commission's Chairperson, two independent local citizens knowledgeable and experienced in Organic Pest Management, and a designated member of the _____ Board who shall act as an advisor and liaison to the Committee. The members of the Committee shall be appointed for terms of two years. Monthly meetings should be held throughout the transition period until the program is firmly established, and then on a schedule agreed upon by the members of the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee should also periodically review OPM procedures with a Pest Management Coordinator or Town personnel as required, assist in evaluating the efficacy of pest control methods, and recommend experts who may be needed as consultants.

The Sub-Committee should keep accurate records of its meetings, and issue a report to the Ecological Commission and the _____ Board at least every six months regarding the implementation of the _____ OPM Policy.

§5. Staff Training and the Role of Consultants

All personnel involved in the approval, evaluation or implementation of indoor or outdoor pest control or turf maintenance should receive hands-on training in organic methods. Job descriptions

and/or contract specifications should be modified to require the use of OPM procedures and decision-making criteria. To the degree possible, communication and accountability procedures already in place should be retained, tailoring the record-keeping and reporting forms to be consistent with the new OPM policy. The Town should be authorized to make such expenditures as may be required to ensure that all Town personnel are properly trained to carry out this policy.

To ensure the successful implementation and maintenance of the program, a consultant in Organic Turf and Outdoor Pest Management should be retained by the _____. This consultant should be an experienced organic pest control professional who can work with field staff management, who can in turn train all personnel involved with grounds maintenance. The consultant should assist the _____ in developing an implementation schedule for the Organic Pest Management program. The consultant should also be able to assist the _____ with product requirements and an organic product resource list that the _____ can use for soliciting bids.

A consultant or licensed professional pest control contractor experienced in Indoor Organic Pest Management should be hired by the _____ to inspect all buildings, provide written recommendations to implement best management practices for OPM, provide an organic product resource list that the _____ can use for soliciting bids, and develop a schedule for non-toxic maintenance for each individual facility. The consultant should train building managers so they can in turn train their staff in the use of these products to ensure their effectiveness.

The _____ should amend its contract provisions for all outside contractors to ensure that they abide by the terms of this OPM Policy.

§6. Implementation of OPM Policy

All departments which currently use pest control procedures should participate in the OPM Program. A Pest Management Coordinator or other designee should identify types and quantities of pesticides currently in use, create a phase-out schedule for prohibited pesticides and coordinate with the OPM Advisory Sub-Committee and consultants to effect the transition to an OPM Program at all _____ properties. The Coordinator should schedule meetings and report back to the _____ Board and the Advisory Committee on the progress of the program.

The following are general principles for implementing an Organic Pest Management program:

- (1) The key element in an outdoor organic program is the establishment and maintenance of healthy soil. Essential practices should include periodic soil testing and the addition of necessary nutrients, organic soil building materials and soil microbes.
- (2) Select and/or replace plantings (including grasses, shrubs and trees) using criteria of hardiness, drought resistance and easy maintenance.
- (3) Modify outdoor management practices, including but not limited to watering, mulching, pruning, scouting and observation.
- (4) Modify indoor management practices, including but not limited to sanitation, waste management and food storage.
- (5) Use physical controls such as hand weeding, traps and barriers.
- (6) Use biological controls (introducing or enhancing pests' natural enemies).
- (7) Determine the most effective treatment time, based on pest biology and other variables, such as weather and local conditions.
- (8) Eliminate pest habitats and their support to discourage pest propagation

Detailed outdoor OPM cultural practices are attached hereto (Addendum II). Strategies should be modified as new research suggests better organic pest management methods. Organic Product Resource lists and OPM reference materials should be maintained and updated periodically.

§7 Exceptions

All pest management activities taking place on _____ properties shall be subject to this OPM Policy except as follows:

1. Pesticides otherwise lawfully used for the purpose of maintaining a safe drinking water supply at drinking water treatment plants, waste water treatment plants, reservoirs, and related collection, distribution and treatment facilities;
2. Pesticides in contained baits or traps for the purposes of rodent control; and

3. Pesticides classified by the United States Environmental Protection Agency as exempt materials under 40 CFR 152.25. A list of these materials will be maintained and updated periodically.

§8 Emergency Waivers

If an emergency situation warrants the use of pesticides which would otherwise not be permitted under this Policy, the _____ shall have the authority to grant a temporary waiver for a period of 30 days. Notice of the waiver should be given to the OPM Advisory Committee, and unless the Committee is able to resolve the problem, the _____ Board may extend the waiver for an additional period not to exceed six months. Nothing in this waiver provision prohibits the _____ from adopting additional waiver resolutions for as long as the condition exists, again not to exceed six months for any individual resolution. The _____ should determine if such a waiver is warranted based on the following criteria:

1. The pest situation poses an immediate threat to human health and/or environmental quality, including fauna or flora; and
2. Viable alternatives consistent with this Policy do not exist.

The chemical controls employed under any such waiver shall be applied to affected areas only in a site-specific manner to minimize contamination of broader unaffected areas. Any _____ department using a pesticide under a _____ waiver shall comply with the following notification procedures:

1. Signs shall be posted (with prior notification when possible) of pesticide application and remain in place for at least four days after the application.
2. Signs shall be of a standardized design that are easily recognizable to the public and workers.
3. Signs shall contain the date and time of application, the name of the pesticide and the target pest, the date of re-entry, and the department responsible for the application.