



National Center for Healthy Housing

Finding an IPM Contractor for Affordable Housing: National Pest Control Recognition Programs

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Controlling pests inside the home requires more than spraying pesticides. Property managers and residents need to address the problems that lead to the pest nesting inside the structure. A pest management professional (PMP) can identify pests, address conditions that cause infestations, use the right approach to eliminate the infestation, and monitor success. Some PMPs go a step farther and work with the homeowner or property manager to implement a systematic integrated pest management (IPM) program to control pests in a sustainable manner.

Finding a qualified PMP is not always easy. A good start is to check references and review credentials. Several programs recognize leading PMPs that have demonstrated a commitment to going beyond the minimum requirements for state licensing as a pest control operator or exterminator.

Two programs are national. They are complementary. The best PMP should be a member of both.

- **QualityPro** is managed by the National Pest Management Association. NPMA is trade association that represents more than 5000 structural pest control operators. It is focused on the overall professionalism of the PMP. IPM is one element of QualityPro, but the program does not require detailed IPM practices or planning. See www.npmaqualitypro.org for details.
- **GreenShield Certification** is managed by the IPM Institute of North America. It is focused on ensuring that the PMP is an effective partner for you in implementing an IPM program tailored to your property. GreenShield contains extensive IPM-based requirements. See www.greenshieldcertified.org for details.

There are also three other recognition programs that warrant serious consideration:

- **EcoWise** is based on **California**. Only PMPs licensed to apply pesticides in California are eligible for recognition. Like GreenShield, EcoWise is focused on ensuring the PMP is an effective partner in implementing an IPM program tailored to your property. See www.ecowisecertified.org for details.
- **IPM Registry** is managed by the **New England Pest Management Association** to educate consumers and to promote the use of IPM. NEPMA is a trade association that represents structural pest control operators in New England. Its focus is exclusively on IPM. It is similar to GreenShield and EcoWise but is not as restrictive. See www.nepma.org for details.
- **Safety Source for Pest Management** is managed by Beyond Pesticides. Beyond Pesticides is an advocacy organization that identifies the risks of conventional pest management practices and promotes non-chemical and least-hazardous management alternatives. Safety Source for Pest management is significantly different from the other programs since it does not verify the information or screen out applicants. PMPs wishing to be listed submit a survey form to Beyond Pesticides. Beyond Pesticides adds their survey information to an on-line database. It does not screen out PMPs or assess their performance. See www.beyondpesticides.org/safetysource/ for details.

Building a healthy home environment for all children

As you contract for pest management services, NCHH encourages you to use these recognition programs in two ways:

1. Screen out firms not recognized by the program; or
2. Give extra credit in the evaluation process to those firms who are recognized by the programs described above.

Comparison of Recognition Programs for PMPs – Table 1

NCHH provides a detailed comparison of the recognitions programs so you understand their features and can make the best decision for your organization in Table 1 below. NCHH encourages you to focus on four features:

- **Focus:** Is the program focused on the problems you want to solve? Are you comfortable with the organization managing the program and its priorities?
- **Verification:** Does the program verify that the PMP lives up to its promises? What documentation does the program have that the PMP understands IPM and effective pest control? Does the program conduct an on-site investigation of the PMP's performance?
- **Response to Problems:** Does the program have a formal system in place to response to complaints by PMP clients? Does the program investigate complaints? If problems are found, can it revoke the certification of the PMP?
- **Standards:** Do you want as PMP that has committed to specific standards for integrated pest management?

Roles for a PMPs in Helping Implement an Effective IPM Program – Table 2

In its *Guidance on Integrated Pest Management*, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) identified ten elements of an effective IPM program.¹ NCHH believes that a property manager implementing this voluntary guidance should have an excellent pest control program that protects the health of residents, keeps pests levels down, and is cost-effective. You should seek out a PMP who understands the guidance and is committed to helping you implement it. It helps you identify what you can expect from a PMP recognized by the different recognition programs. Note that NCHH excluded Safety Source for Pest Management from the comparison because it does not have specific expectations for a PMP to participate in its program.

In Table 2, NCHH compares the recognition programs to HUD's ten elements of an effective IPM program and provides recommendations on the role a PMP in helping implement the elements.

For more information, go to www.healthyhomestraining.org/IPM/vendor.htm.

NCHH developed this analysis pursuant to a contract with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Pesticide Programs and Battelle. NCHH seeks your feedback on this document and information on additional programs that recognize leading PMPs. Please contact NCHH's Tom Neltner at 443-539-4160 or tneltner@nchh.org.

¹ HUD issued the guidance in February 2006 and renewed it in May 2007. Check out the HUD Guidance at www.healthyhomestraining.org/ipm/hud_ipm_5-24-07_pih2007-12.pdf or at www.hud.gov/offices/pih/publications/notices/07/pih2007-12.pdf.

**Table 1
Comparison of Leading Recognition Programs for Pest Management Professionals**

Factors	QualityPro	Green Shield Certified	EcoWise Certified	NEPMA IPM Registry	Safety Source for Pest Mgmt
Organization	National Pest Management Association	IPM Institute of North America	EcoWise Certified Program	New England Pest Management Association	Beyond Pesticides
Nature of Organization	Industry trade association for structural pest control companies.	Independent non-profit	Independent public agency administration	New England-wide industry trade organization	Public interest advocacy organization.
Control	Board consisting of QualityPro industry professionals.	Institute's Board	EcoWise Certified Coordinating Committee	Committee composed of industry and non-industry personnel	Beyond Pesticides
Scope	National	National	State of California	New England	National
Focus	Professional business operations, consumer relations, technical training, & environmental stewardship	Integrated pest management and customer service	Integrated pest management and customer service	Integrated pest management	Integrated pest management and use of least or non-toxic method of control or prevention
Website	www.npmaqualitypro.org	www.greenshieldcertified.org	www.ecowisecertified.org	www.nepma.org	www.beyondpesticides.org/safetysource/
Response to Problems	Companies agree to complaint-triggered audits ensuring adherence to guidelines.	Reevaluation at discretion of IPM Institute.	Reevaluation at the discretion of EcoWise Certified.	Review of complaints by the Registry Coordinator and Committee.	None
Finding Them	Enter zip code to find QualityPro companies in local area at www.npmaqualitypro.org .	See list at www.greenshieldcertified.org/providers/ . Six companies certified as of 9/30/07.	See list at www.ecowisecertified.org . Five companies and 28 practitioners certified as of 9/30/07.	See list at: www.NEPMA.org . Seventy-four companies and 121 practitioners certified as of 9/30/07.	Search by state or service at www.beyondpesticides.org/info/services/pcos/findapco.htm . 225 companies listed as of 9/30/07.
Who is Recognized	Company not individual	Each business operating location or distinct service offered by company	Each business operating location and individual practitioners	Each business location as well as individual practitioners.	Each company that completes form

Verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sign affidavit of compliance. See www.npmaqualitypro.org/Affidavit/. ▪ Random audits of 10% of approved program participants each year. 	<p>On-site verification by the IPM Institute of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimum legal requirements; ▪ IPM practice requirements; ▪ Pesticide safety requirements; and ▪ Business practice requirements. 	<p>Verification with agencies. On-site verification by EcoWise Certified of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level of compliance with pest management standards; ▪ Information submitted in applications; and ▪ Response to customer complaints. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of records submitted. 	None
Who can participate?	<p>Only NPMA members with two years in good standing with NPMA can participate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Operating more than 3 years or operating more than one year with a state-licensed PMP owner or manager with more than 3 years of experience. ▪ License for business and owner/manager not revoked in previous three years. ▪ No open or unresolved regulatory actions. ▪ No bankruptcy filings in past three years. ▪ No unsatisfied liens or outstanding judgments. ▪ Current general liability policy. 	<p><i>Business</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Licensed for Branch 2 (General Pests) by the California Structural Pest Control Board. ▪ Registered and in good standing with county Agricultural Commission. ▪ Employ at least one Certified IPM Practitioner. 	<p><i>Individual</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Licensed at the Field Rep. or Operator level in Branch 2 for at least 2 years or meet experience options. ▪ Pass written exam. 	<p><i>Business</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employ at least one IPM Registry Practitioner. <p><i>Individual</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Licensed to apply pesticides within a New England state. ▪ Pass written exam 	<p>Company completing National Least-Toxic Service Providers Director Survey Form at www.beyondpesticides.org/info/services/pcos/operator_survey.pdf that indicate that it uses one or more practices and/or materials that Beyond Pesticides categorizes as "<u>non-toxic</u>" or "<u>least-toxic.</u>"</p>

<p>Elements Specifically Addressing Integrated Pest Management (IPM)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide IPM services to customers that include five basic, broadly stated components. ▪ Train technicians in accordance with the proper application of these techniques. ▪ Provide consumers with an IPM information sheet that communicates its commitment to environmental stewardship. 	<p>Demonstrate to an IPM Institute-approved independent auditor that applicant has or will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All of 18 elements related to IPM strategies and use of least-toxic pesticides; and ▪ A score of at least 68 on 17 additional elements based on a score of 1 to 5 for each element. 	<p>Business and practitioner must comply with specific EcoWise Program IPM Performance and Pesticide Application Standards which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing a written site-specific IPM plan; ▪ Applying pesticide only when needed – not preventatively – to minimize risk; and ▪ Using only pesticides on the approved list unless the customer agrees to a deviation. 	<p>Businesses submit records demonstrating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use of inspection, monitoring; ▪ Use of appropriate controls; and ▪ Recommendations for cultural controls and client education. 	<p>Companies must complete survey regarding its integrated pest management services. Survey results posted on web.</p>
<p>Standard for Legal Compliance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Company not engaged in a continuous pattern of willful and intentional violations of or showed disregard for state and federal laws and regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ License for business and owner/manager not revoked in previous three years. ▪ No open or unresolved regulatory actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Licenses for businesses and practitioners are current. ▪ Business and practitioners are in good standing with the county Agricultural Commissions. ▪ No unresolved regulatory actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compliance with “highest legal and ethical standards.” ▪ Avoid conflicts of interest. 	<p>None</p>
<p>Requirements not related to IPM</p>	<p>Certify that specific elements are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business Operations (10 elements) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hiring Standards ○ Company Vehicle Standards ○ Professional Appearance Standards ○ Safety Standards ▪ Consumer Relations (3 elements) ▪ Environmental Stewardship (2 elements) ▪ Training and Testing Standards (1 element) 	<p>Demonstrate to IPM Auditor that applicant is complying with or will comply with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legal requirements (7 elements) ▪ Pesticide safety requirements (8 elements) ▪ Business practice requirements (7 elements). 	<p>Demonstrate to EcoWise Certified that the business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintains separate records of EcoWise Certified customers for 3 years; and ▪ Is in good standing with the county Agricultural Commissions where they do business. 	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>

Renewal	Payment of annual dues and signing of renewal affidavit to ensure company continues to meet QualityPro standards.	On-site evaluation by an independent IPM professional every three years.	<i>Business:</i> On site evaluation by EcoWise Certified every 3 years. <i>Individual:</i> Complete 15 continuing IPM education hours every 3 years.	<i>Business:</i> Submit records to demonstrate IPM performance every three-years. <i>Practitioner:</i> Obtains three additional IPM contact hours of training above state pesticide license requirements.	None
Appeals process	Written notice and 30 days opportunity to correct problem prior to termination.	Written response to reevaluation report.	When EcoWise Certified issues notice of non-compliance, the business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Corrects non-compliance; ▪ Submits information to rebut; or ▪ Withdraws from certification. 	The NEPMA Ethics Committee will resolve conflicts of interest and ethical issues.	None
Resources Provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ QualityPro Resource Manual. ▪ Sales and Service Technician Training Support Manual. ▪ QualityPro Toolbox: Contains sample resource materials including employment application, background check release forms, IPM fact sheet, customer communication guidelines. 	Green Shield Certified Program Guide and Evaluation Form.	EcoWise Certified Handbook which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Steps to become certified; ▪ Example IPM protocols; ▪ IPM Service and other forms; ▪ EcoWise Program Standards; ▪ Approved product list; and ▪ Knowledge requirements and example test, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IPM training manual ▪ Integrated pest management: a manual for IPM practitioners. ▪ Integrated pest management guidelines for structural pests; ▪ Model guidelines for training and implementation. ▪ Educational brochures for clients 	List of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Non-toxic pest control tools; ▪ Least toxic pesticides; and ▪ Toxic pesticides.

Table 2
Roles for a Pest Management Professional in Helping Implement an Effective IPM Program

HUD IPM Program Elements²	Pest Mgmt Prof.'s Recommended Role	QualityPro Requirements	GreenShield Certified Requirements
1. Communicate Policies Communicate property manager's (PMs) Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policies and procedures to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All building occupants; ▪ Administrative staff; ▪ Contractors; and ▪ Maintenance personnel. 	Property manager must prepare the IPM Policies and Procedures. Use HUD's <i>Guidance on IPM</i> including the 10 elements (left column) as a starting point. Pest Management Professional (PMP) can provide technical assistance and guidance.	PMP must provide IPM services and an IPM information sheet. This information may be helpful for property managers's policies and procedures.	PMP must maintain a written IPM program. This program can be used as basis for property manager's policies and procedures.
2. Identify Problems Identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pests ▪ Environmental conditions that limit the spread of pests. 	Property manager should expect that PMP will provide these services.	PMP must identify pests. There are no specific requirements for identifying the environmental conditions to limit spread of pests.	PMP must identify pests and conditions as the first step to address new problem.
3. Monitor and Track Establish an ongoing monitoring and record keeping system for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular sampling and assessment of pests; Surveillance techniques; ▪ Remedial actions taken; and ▪ Assessment of program effectiveness. 	Property manager should expect PMP to take the lead on these services. Property staff may monitor glue traps placed in agreed-to locations. PMP can monitor resident and remedial actions. Property manager should keep responsibility for assessing program effectiveness.	PMP must evaluate effectiveness of the control and/or management measures	PMP must use monitors are used where appropriate and results reported to the customer and/or occupants verbally and in writing.
4. Set Thresholds for Action Determine, with involvement of residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pest population levels – by species – that will be tolerated ▪ Thresholds at which pest populations warrant action. 	Property manager should set threshold at zero unless there is an agreement to the contrary. The health threats posed by cockroaches, mice, and rats have no threshold. Other pests will spread once established.	PMP must establish threshold levels for pest activity. No requirement that residents need to be involved.	<i>Not a required or recommended element.</i>
5. Improve Non-Pesticide Methods Improve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mechanical pest management methods; ▪ Sanitation; ▪ Waste management; and ▪ Natural control agents, that have been carefully selected as appropriate in light of allergies or cultural preferences of staff or residents. 	Property manager should expect the PMP to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify methods to improve non-pesticide methods; ▪ Assess the effectiveness of these methods; and ▪ Make recommendations to improve the methods based on the assessment. 	<i>Not a required or recommended element.</i>	PMP must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use inspection, monitoring, sanitation, and exclusion as the primary pest management strategies; and ▪ Make recommendations to correct pest-conducive conditions verbally and in writing.

² HUD, Guidance on Integrated Pest Management, 2/3/06, renewed 5/24/07. Check out the HUD Guidance at www.healthyhomestraining.org/ipm/hud_ipm_5-24-07_pih2007-12.pdf or at www.hud.gov/offices/pih/publications/notices/07/pih2007-12.pdf.

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6. Prevent Pest Entry and Movement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor and maintain structures and grounds including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sealing cracks ○ Eliminating moisture intrusion and accumulation ▪ Add physical barriers to pest entry and movement. 	PHA should expect the PMP to monitor structures and report problems.	<i>Not a required or recommended element.</i>	PMP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is required to use exclusion as a primary strategy; and ▪ Earns points toward minimum number required for certification by providing minor structural repairs and non-routine sanitation measures.
7. Educate Residents and Update Leases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop an outreach/educational program. ▪ Ensure that leases reflect residents' responsibilities for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Proper housekeeping; and ○ Reporting presence of pests, leaks, and mold. 	Property manager should require PMP to provide educational materials on IPM and on specific pests.	PMP must provide consumers with an IPM information sheet that communicates its commitment to environmental stewardship.	PMP must communicate verbally and in writing to owner and occupant the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conditions conducive to pest problems; ▪ Recommendations to correct conditions; ▪ Results of monitors; and ▪ Existing pest problems.
8. Enforce Lease Enforce lease provisions regarding resident responsibilities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housekeeping; ▪ Sanitation; and ▪ Trash removal and storage. 	Property manager should expect the PMP to identify residents who are not complying with the lease provisions regarding housekeeping, sanitation, trash removal, and trash storage.	<i>Not a required or recommended element.</i>	<i>Not a required or recommended element.</i>
9. Use Pesticides Only When Necessary Use pesticides only when necessary, with preference for products that, while producing the desired level of effectiveness, pose the least harm to human health and the environment, and, as appropriate, notifying property manager before application.	Property manager should require PMP to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not space spray (fog) or surface spray pesticides without prior written approval; ▪ Identify conditions where pesticides will be used; ▪ What pesticides will be used; and ▪ Provide copy of pesticide label to property manager. 	<i>Not a required or recommended element.</i>	PMP must follow specific and extensive requirements including use of least-toxic pesticides.
10. Post Signs Provide and post 'Pesticide Use Notification' signs or other warnings.	Property manager should require PMP to coordinate resident notifications with building management.	<i>Not a required or recommended element.</i>	PMP must abide by posting and notification requirements for pesticide applications.