



IPM Strategies for Pest Prevention In Child Care Centers

Good sanitation **is** pest management, because it limits the resources pests need to survive and reproduce. Child care centers are generally very clean environments, because the staff works hard to protect the health and well being of the children. However, because insect and rodent pests require relatively little food to survive, the standards for sanitation must be very high.

Sanitation practices for pest management include:

- ✓ Thorough cleaning of food preparation areas,
- ✓ Good trash management
- ✓ Storing food in tight-sealing containers
- ✓ Eliminating clutter and removing cardboard wherever possible
- ✓ Equipment cleaning and maintenance (including floor drains and vents)
- ✓ Put in extra effort to clean hard-to-reach areas
- ✓ Repairing water leaks and eliminating standing water
- ✓ Sealing gaps or holes that lead into wall voids or other pest harborage areas
- ✓ Good landscape management practices to reduce pest attraction

Pest Vulnerable Areas

Remember that pests are most likely to become established in those areas where all the pest's needs are met: food, water or moisture, warmth, and a hiding place (harborage).

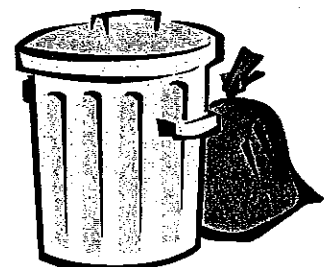
In child care centers, pest vulnerable areas include:

- ✓ Kitchens and other food preparation areas
- ✓ Storerooms
- ✓ Dumpster and trash receptacles
- ✓ Teacher's lounges
- ✓ Custodial closets
- ✓ Classrooms with food, water, and other favorable conditions

Kitchens and other Food Preparation Areas

Here are some tips for pest management sanitation in kitchens and other food preparation areas:

- ✓ Put in extra effort to clean hard-to-reach areas
- ✓ If possible, put heavy equipment on rollers to improve cleaning and inspection
- ✓ Continuously monitor all food areas for pest activity
- ✓ Clean floor drains and ventilation screens on a regular schedule
- ✓ Seal gaps around pipes and fixtures to eliminate harborage
- ✓ Replace any cracked floor or wall tile
- ✓ Reduce moisture levels and eliminate standing water
- ✓ Employ good trash management practices



- ✓ Store all food products in pest-proof containers
- ✓ Eliminate clutter and reduce cardboard

Kitchen Storerooms

Good shelving versus bad shelving:

- ✓ Use wire shelves that allow spilled food or debris to fall through for easy cleaning.
- ✓ Shelves should leave 6-12" between the floor and the bottom shelf to facilitate cleaning and inspection.
- ✓ Shelves should be 6" away from the wall to facilitate inspection and discourage rodents and other pests.
- ✓ Avoid wooden shelving units because wood is porous, absorbs food, odors and grease, and is generally attractive to cockroaches because it resembles their native habitat.
- ✓ Avoid any shelving with "kickplates" that create areas that are inaccessible for cleaning and inspection.
- ✓ Avoid shelving with hollow spaces for pests to hide in.



Teacher's Lounge

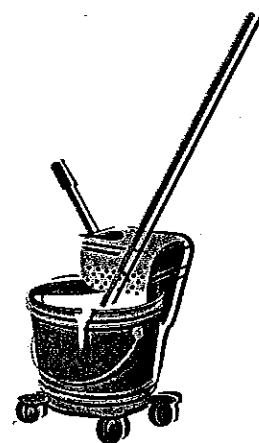
Teacher's lounges and staff break rooms normally contain food, water, warmth, and plenty of hiding places for pests. These areas need to be kept clean and should be monitored to prevent pest infestations. Store all food products in sealed containers.

Janitor's Closets and Mop Rooms

These rooms are often overlooked as pest vulnerable areas, but they are often a source of cockroach or rodent infestations. They bring together all those things that pests need: food, moisture, water, warmth, and living space.

To reduce pest harborage in custodial closets:

- ✓ Keep the area clean and clutter-free
- ✓ Keep mop sinks and buckets empty and dry when not in use
- ✓ Hang all mops and allow to dry between use
- ✓ Do not eat or store food in these rooms
- ✓ Repair plumbing leaks
- ✓ Utilize appropriate shelving and storage practices
- ✓ Clean floor drains on a regular basis
- ✓ Seal gaps around pipes and fixtures to eliminate harborage
- ✓ Replace any cracked floor or wall tile
- ✓ Remove all cardboard
- ✓ Do not store boxes or cardboard on the floor
- ✓ Continuously monitor these areas for pest activity



Here is a list of potential hiding places and some of the pests that may be concealed there:

Wall voids	Cockroaches and mice
Sink voids	Cockroaches
Equipment voids	Cockroaches and mice
Cabinet and shelf voids	cockroaches, mice
Clutter	cockroaches, mice and spiders
Decaying organic matter	All pests plus flies

Pest Management Practices

IPM includes activities as diverse as writing pest management plans, performing building inspections, reporting pest sightings, caulking and sealing exterior openings, cleaning cluttered areas, selection and use of pesticides and record keeping. In most childcare facilities, these practices will be carried out by a number of different persons, including administrators, custodians, contracted pest control services, teachers and others who work in coordination with each other to implement the pest management plan.



For more information on IPM and pest reduction go to:
<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/controlling/resources.htm>
EPA Region 2 Pesticides Program
Phone: 732-321-4461

