

## **New Science Standards Provide Exciting Opportunity for Expanded Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Education**

The [Next Generation Science Standards \(NGSS\)](#) can provide an ideal opportunity to bring IPM curricula into K-12 classrooms nationwide. It is a new document being created by the National Research Council (NRC), the National Science Teachers Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and [Achieve](#).

Schools in many states currently use the National Science Education Standards from the NRC and Benchmarks for Science Literacy from the AAAS, but these documents are both nearly 15 years old. The newly updated NGSS are currently undergoing a final review before publication in March 2013. Multiple stakeholder groups have been asked to review the standards and provide comments. In a letter written on behalf of the National School IPM Steering Committee, Dr. Thomas Green, president of the IPM Institute of North America, comments that, "IPM is an ideal science curriculum topic because of deep connections to biology, ecology, behavior, environmental and human health, sustainability, and IPM's broad applicability and ability to be demonstrated in school settings for structural, landscape, human health and other pests."

Following the publication of the IPM curricula, the National School IPM Steering Committee will work to identify key contacts at the national and state levels to create awareness of these existing resources, identify opportunities to collaborate, and implement the NGSS throughout the country.

Well-designed IPM curricula are already available through multiple sources, including [Penn State University Extension](#), the [University of Florida](#), [eXtension.org](#) and the [Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry](#). These standards provide a unique opportunity for these curricula and others to be presented to states for inclusion in their schools' K-12 curricula.

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## **The Flu and You**

While Arizona typically sees most of its flu cases in February or March, flu can be unpredictable and can peak either earlier or later in the season. This year, the flu season started early and the number of flu cases increased rapidly in January.

As someone in charge of school facilities, the most important thing you can do (besides staying healthy yourself) is to routinely clean the most frequently touched objects and surfaces, including doorknobs, keyboards, and phones, to help remove germs.

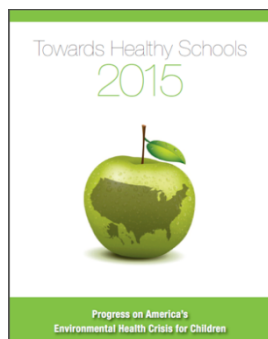
[A University of Arizona study](#) found that more than half of commonly touched surfaces in an office - like doorknobs, copy machine buttons, telephones, desk and tabletops, the office refrigerator, the handle of the coffeepot - can become infected with a virus when a single person in the office is infected and ill. Researchers found that germs may spread more quickly on hands (from touching contaminated surfaces) than by coughing and sneezing. People touch many things during the day, especially in this push-button generation. Disinfecting surfaces and washing hands is the best way to reduce your chance of infection.

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## Healthy Schools Network



Leaders of the national Coalition for Healthier Schools presented a new national report, [Towards Healthy Schools 2015](#), to the Obama Administration and Congress. It states that "all school children should be considered at elevated risk of health and learning difficulties due solely to the unexamined and or unaddressed environmental health risks in their schools and the lack of public health services for children at risk or with suspected exposures". Towards Healthy Schools 2015 cites multiple studies documenting the benefits of healthy indoor learning environments on attendance and achievement, then presents state-level data and policy summaries. A detailed narrative notes progress at US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Education in encouraging states to support and implement improved standards, but also urges swifter actions by federal and state agencies.



See the full report at: <http://www.healthyschools.org/HealthySchools2015.pdf>

A letter to Congress from the Coalition, signed by representatives from 78 organizations, calls for full funding for US EPA Office of Children's Health and the agency's Indoor Air Quality as well as other schools-related voluntary programs. The letter states the need for a "just and equitable" approach to the federal budget, the letter notes "children are 100% of our future. But because children do not vote, it all too often means that the needs of children are easily dismissed or put aside for later deliberation."

See the letter at: <http://bit.ly/VxzbEm>

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## EPA Releases Plan for Integrated Pest Management in Schools



The EPA Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (OCSPP) released a document called "Strategic and Implementation Plans for School Integrated Pest Management". The plan is in response to OCSPP's initiative to achieve greater adoption of IPM in schools as part of its commitment to protect children's health.

The plan specifies IPM as a sustainable approach to managing pests that minimizes economic, health and environmental risks. It explains that full implementation of Integrated Pest Management is cost effective, reduces exposure to pests and pesticides, and reduces pesticide use and complaints. Unfortunately, however, it is estimated that a relatively small percentage of US K-12 schools currently have verifiable IPM programs.

For more information, you can find the full plan at:

<http://www.epa.gov/pestwise/ipminschoools/strategicplan.pdf>

The EPA Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP) newsletter in full can be found at:

<http://epa.gov/pestwise/news/peps/pepswire-2013-02.pdf>

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## Upcoming Webinars – Register Today!

### **Webinars: “The Green Strides Webinar Series: For All Schools Moving Toward the Pillars”**

The [Green Strides Webinar Series](#) provides school communities with the tools to reduce their schools’ negative environmental impacts and costs; improve students’ and teachers’ health and wellness; and teach and enhance effective environmental literacy, including [STEM](#), green careers, and civic engagement. Find more sessions for educators, facilities managers, and advocates weekly.

#### **Mar. 6, 2013, 2-3 p.m. Eastern / 12-1 p.m. Arizona [Integrated Pest Management in Schools: Protecting Children in Schools from Pests and Pesticides \(EPA\)](#)**

Click the title above to register. Pests and pesticides pose risks to the nearly 60 million children and staff who spend considerable periods of time in our nation's schools. EPA recommends that schools use an IPM approach to reduce risky exposure to pests and pesticides in schools. Implementing IPM can reduce the economic and health related issues caused by pests and pesticides. This webinar will describe basics of school IPM, the potential health, environmental and economic benefits, and what it takes to put IPM into practice.

#### **Mar. 13, 2013, 4-5 p.m. Eastern / 1-2 p.m. Arizona [Food and Fitness \(NASA\)](#)**

**No registration necessary. Log on [here](#).** Many factors can impact an astronaut's ability to live and work well in space or on another planetary surface. Study the efforts on improving nutrition and keeping crew-members healthy. Learn about the relationship between nutrition and fitness. The activities examine techniques to make life long healthy meal and activity choices, such as determining the proper serving size, understanding food labels, and assessing proper nutritional and exercise choices.

#### **Mar. 20, 2013, 4-5 p.m. Eastern / 1-2 p.m. Arizona [Radiation Exposure on Earth \(NASA\)](#)**

**No registration necessary. Log on [here](#).** This webinar features the first activity of NASA's Radiation Challenge guide designed for middle school classroom - "Radiation Exposure on Earth." As we climb a high mountain, take a plane flight, or go to the International Space Station (ISS) or beyond, we rapidly lose the protection of the atmosphere and Earth's magnetic field. Discover how NASA is using radiation studies to help design long-duration spaceflight vehicles and how NASA's space

experiences are helping us here on Earth. Explore the use of sunscreen and SPF levels designed to protect us from the effects of solar UV radiation.

For more information about the EPA Schools program, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/schools/>

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## Acknowledgements

This material is based upon work that is supported in part by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA NIFA). Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Additional support is provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the University of Arizona – Arizona Pest Management Center (APMC).



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