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**P R E S S R E L E A S E**  
**MIDDLETOWN SCHOOL SHOWS SUCCESS IN PEST MANAGEMENT WHILE  
REDUCING PESTICIDES**

As part of an incredibly successful pesticide reduction project, Middletown's Woodrow Wilson Middle School reduced pesticide use by 98% over the past year. Woodrow Wilson, working with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), achieved the reduction through participation in a year long Integrated Pest Management (IPM) demonstration program. IPM is a combination of strategies used to reduce pest populations while also reducing the need for pesticide applications.

"The results of this pilot project are outstanding. Woodrow Wilson, with some assistance from the DEP and the use of IPM, was able to significantly reduce their use of pesticides in the school environment while keeping pests under control," said DEP Commissioner Arthur J. Rocque, Jr. "There has been a great deal of recent attention focused on the use of pesticides in schools and this IPM pilot with Woodrow Wilson Middle School demonstrates that pests can be safely controlled in schools with limited use of pesticides."

Initiated in March 1998, the program demonstrated that the goals of pest management and pesticide use reduction are achievable when the pest control contractor and the School work together in building maintenance and pest monitoring. The DEP assisted by developing a site specific IPM plan with the pest control operator, and providing bi-monthly monitoring and technical assistance. The pest control contractor, Richland Pest and Bee Control, worked closely with the School and the DEP to provide monitoring and actual pest control practices when needed.

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"The inspections and advice showed us a way of looking at the buildings that we hadn't used before" said Ken Jackson, Director of Facilities for the Middletown Schools. "The fixes they recommended were things we needed to do anyway, but we hadn't thought of them as being important for such things as keeping mice out of the buildings. We will work on expanding the program to other schools within the system."

The goal of IPM is to deliver effective pest control while reducing the volume and toxicity of pesticides used. All methods of pest control are utilized in an IPM program including monitoring of pests, sanitation structural repair and maintenance, physical controls (such as traps), and careful use of pesticides. Pesticide applications may be necessary if pest populations have exceeded an established tolerance or threshold. When pesticides are used, their selection is based on a number of factors including toxicity and the frequency and method of application.

Funded in part by a grant from Northeast Utilities, this program was designed to demonstrate that IPM could be used in schools with the twin goals of reducing pesticide use while still achieving excellent pest control.

"Woodrow Wilson and the Middletown school system should be commended for their work on this project. They have clearly demonstrated that pesticide use can be reduced in the school environment while effectively controlling pests," said DEP Commissioner Rocque. "The awareness created at Woodrow Wilson will be shared with other schools as we take their experience and develop it into a statewide program. In addition, we hope their effort will increase awareness on the proper use of pesticides and the value of IPM statewide."

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