What is IPM?

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a strategy that focuses on long-term pest control using environmentally friendly techniques. The theory behind IPM is that utilizing the natural relationships between plants, insects, and other organisms is more effective than relying on traditional chemical pesticides.

IPM is successful because it helps to keep your garden in balance, similar to what occurs in nature. An important part of an IPM strategy is making sure your plants are healthy, because healthy plants resist pests and diseases.

IPM encourages the use of helpful insects and other less toxic pest control methods to eliminate pests naturally. Contrary to popular belief, a few pests are okay! Knowing how to control your garden area when there are too many pests is key to successful IPM.

How can I use the IPM approach?

IPM begins before the first plant is planted. It is important to know your garden so that the plants you choose are right for your location. Research your garden soil conditions, watering and drainage needs, and the amount of sun and shade it gets. Spend time at your local nursery so you can make wise choices when shopping for plants or selecting pest control methods. With a little practice, you will be using IPM without even realizing it...

Your plants and the environment will thank you!
How to use a Pest Control and Elimination

What’s so bad about Pesticides?

Pesticides are the leading cause of water pollution in San Diego County. It is important to realize that pesticides can have detrimental impacts on your health and the environment. Please avoid pesticides if possible!

- The chemicals in pesticides remain active long after they have done their job in your garden.
- When pests are applied, they infiltrate our soil, air, and water reserves. Pesticides used near water sources can harm aquatic life and destroy natural ecosystems.
- Toxic substances in pesticide sprays cause health problems ranging from skin irritation to cancer.
- Pesticides not only kill pests; they may kill beneficial organisms too.
- Pets exposed to excessive pesticides can build up resistance over time, just as humans build up resistance to antibiotics.

We have several methods of pest control currently available as alternatives to pesticides. They are easy to use, more effective, and usually cost less than sprays or repellents. Learn to recognize and use the methods available to you.

Insect Control

Physical Control

- Encourage dense ground cover or use mulch for weed reduction.
- Use a "cycling pattern" to encourage deep watering with less runoff (see lawn care section of www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/).
- Don’t plant in areas where pest problems are likely to develop.
- Know the sunlight/shade requirements of your plants before planting and select appropriate locations.
- Avoid dense ground cover or use mulch for weed reduction.
- Don’t plant in areas where pest problems are likely to develop.
- See page care section of www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/.
- Water during cooler times of the day, such as morning.

Our Friendly Companions

- Mint discourages the presence of ants.
- Nasturtium repels squash bugs and whiteflies.
- Marigolds repel whiteflies.

Recipes for Success

- Garlic/Pepper Spray
  - 3 c. hot (not boiling) water
  - 1 Tbsp. powdered cayenne pepper
  - Skin and eye irritation.

- Baking soda spray
  - Mix 1 c. baking soda with 1 c. warm water
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Did You Know?

- Diazinon has been proven to cause severe environmental impacts. Please discontinue use and properly dispose of unused portions at a household hazardous waste collection facility.

- Toads feed on slugs, cutworms, and many beetles. Create a toad house by propping a flat rock at an angle over some loose soil.

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- Beneficial Organisms
  - Many organisms actually help control pest populations. Learn to identify the beneficial organisms living in your garden. Encourage them to stay around by choosing plants that provide them with pollen, nectar, and shelter.
  - The bacteria, Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt), is useful for eliminating caterpillars from your garden.
  - Check your local nursery for availability.
  - A ladybug can consume over 5,000 aphids in its lifetime! Attract them by providing plants like goldenrod and morning glory vines.
  - Trichogramma wasps are beneficial because they lay their parasitic eggs within the eggs of certain pests.
  - Toads feed on slugs, cutworms, and many beetles. Create a toad house by propping a flat rock at an angle over some loose soil.

- Physical Removal
  - Some of the easiest ways to control insects are to use physical controls. Visually inspect plants and remove larger insects by hand.
  - Spray infested plants with a strong stream of water to remove small insects.
  - Use barriers such as fencing, screens and copper tubing (for snails and slugs) to deter pests.
  - Don’t let weeds go to seed—their seeds create more weeds later.