

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

A Factsheet from Austin Energy's Green Building Program

Keep your home and building safe from bugs and poisonous pest control chemicals by understanding and practicing Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

Bugs love Central Texas

With its mild temperatures and high humidity, Central Texas is a haven for pests. If you moved here from a part of the world that's not as hospitable to them, you may be shocked by the variety and quantity of our bugs! Even if you grew up around lots of bugs, you may be used to the old-school approach of spraying everything in sight with powerful insecticides. Today, we're more aware of the dangers of toxins in our environment, and we've found that many of the critters around us are more helpful than harmful. Therefore, we want to take a safer and more sensible approach to pest management.

What is Integrated Pest Management?

IPM is a combination of pest control tactics compatible with human health and environmental protection. It follows these principles:

- ❑ Proper identification of suspected pests.
- ❑ Understanding the pest's biology and habits.
- ❑ Ascertaining whether damage is occurring.
- ❑ Selecting the most specific, effective, and least-toxic treatment.

Pests go where they find food, water and undisturbed shelter

Practice good home maintenance and use least-toxic treatments.

- ❑ Inside the home:
 - Clean regularly and reduce clutter.
 - Put away all food immediately (in sealed jars if necessary).
 - Eliminate water where it doesn't belong. Fix all leaks.
 - Reduce humidity. (See Indoor Humidity information.)
 - Seal all gaps and cracks.
 - Use boric acid, pyrethrum, diatomaceous earth, silica gel desiccating powders, or baits with growth regulators, if you have an infestation. Follow instructions. Be careful--don't inhale powders and be alert to possible allergic reaction.
- ❑ The home structure:
 - Be sure water drains away from the foundation.
 - Don't raise the soil level around the foundation when you prepare planting beds and keep soil at least 12 inches from any wood products.
 - Keep trees and bushes pruned away from the foundation, roof, and walls.
 - Remove all construction debris.
 - Don't store firewood near the house, and don't keep it longer than one season.
 - Keep exterior in good repair. Replace rotten wood (after fixing the cause).
 - Caulk and seal any cracks, seams, and holes in the foundation, house exterior, and duct work.
 - Be sure all operable windows have well-fitting screens in good repair.

HEALTH

- Inspect for signs of termites:
 - mud tubes or tunnels on outside of foundation.
 - soft spots in wood, especially beams (poke with an ice pick or awl).
 - swarms of termites in warm, humid weather (not to be confused with flying ants).
- The landscape:
 - Keep plants healthy--they'll be less vulnerable to insect attack.
 - Choose a wide variety of native plants. This deters pests and attracts helpful bugs.

Use a pest management company that practices IPM

Term-Trol Exterminating Company

Kitty Kestenbaum, Owner/Operator

Austin, Texas 78753

(512) 836-3309

www.beyondpesticides.org/infoservices/pcos/serviceproviders/term-trol78753.htm
termtrol@texas.net

Aztec Organic Pest Service

Austin, Texas 78704

(512) 443-0123

www.aztecpest.com/
info@aztecpest.com

Chem-Free Organic Pest Control

Austin, Texas 78753

(512) 837-9500

www.chemfreepestandlawn.com
contactus@chemfreepestandlawn.com

Environment Sensitive Pest Control

Kenn Brown, Owner/Operator

San Marcos, Texas 78666

(512) 805-7777

www.environmentssensitive.com
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Termi Mesh USA, Inc.

Joel Roehling

Austin, Texas 78753

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This list does not constitute an endorsement or recommendation by the City of Austin, Austin Energy or the Green Building Program. Please check references thoroughly before employing the services of any contractor.