

St. Clair Housing Commission Integrated Pest Management Policy

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is an effective and environmentally sensitive approach to pest management that relies on a combination of current practices, comprehensive information on the life cycles of pests and their interaction with the environment.

IPM focuses on pest prevention by identifying and eliminating conditions conducive to pest activity to preempt future pest infestations. IPM treats the causes of pest infestations instead of the symptoms by relying on regular building inspections and pest monitoring. Treatment focuses on reducing and eventually eliminating sources of food, water, and harborage available to pests and limiting access into and throughout buildings. Common pests can cause serious health problems. Pests such as bed bugs, cockroaches, and rodents as well as the chemicals used to control them can affect allergies and asthma along with more serious health risks.

Keeping pests out is the first step in preventing pest infestations in a building. The next step is to eliminate areas where pests can hide. Harborage areas include unsealed baseboards, cracks and crevices in walls and ceilings, wall voids and more. Eliminating pest harborage prevents infestations from going unnoticed until it is too late.

Pests travel inside of walls, along electrical and plumbing lines, in ceiling and floor voids, and on the items, tenants bring into their apartments. Pests may find sources of food and water in places that may need repairs, have clutter, and that has food that is not properly stored.

Sanitation is essential to pest control and prevention. Good sanitation habits prevent pest access to sources of food, water, and harborage. Proper sanitation limits the resources pests need to live and reproduce. Reducing clutter, cleaning under kitchen counters, and behind stoves, and regularly removing trash will reduce the attractiveness to pests and the conditions that allow them to survive.

Communication between property managers, pest management specialists, tenants and staff working in areas impacted by pests is a critical component of an integrated pest management. Empowering staff and tenants to watch for and report any pest sightings or pest damage improves the effectiveness of monitoring programs and allows for a more rapid, better-informed response for pest control.