



COOL (Coalition Of Organic Landscape Professionals) Organic Vegetation and Pest Management Policy (Organic IPM)

We believe that healthy, vigorous plants are resistant to insect and disease problems and enhance the quality of the environment. Direct control of existing insect and disease problems is critical to the success of organic integrated vegetation and pest management, but this work should not be the only focus of the pest management program; it is essential that a substantial amount of effort in urban organic IPM be devoted to landscape and facility design and construction as well as cultural maintenance practices. Also, vegetation is emphasized to clarify that the term "pest" pertains to weeds as well as to insects and diseases. In fact, in most ornamental horticulture settings, weed control is a key pest control requirement of the pest management program.

Purpose

All COOL members are subject to the requirements of this policy. Members acknowledge by signing their membership documents that they abide by this policy or are transitioning to it in no more than three years full transition must take place in order to be listed on the COOL website.

Principles/Philosophy

The following section identifies important concepts and approaches that must be employed by all COOL members when managing vegetation and pests:

- an ecologically and environmentally responsible and cautious approach to implementing organic IPM;
- minimizing all pesticide use and if pesticide use cannot be avoided, only organic pesticides are applied,

- protecting environmental quality and human health and safety regardless of the pest problem;
- using a long-term approach to evaluating pest management practices;
- coordinating implementation of the policy by all members within the organization who influence or have an impact on vegetation and pest management operations;
- consistent application of responsible pesticide use regulations and procedures;
- providing staff training to facilitate policy implementation;
- the desirability of promoting landscape designs that incorporate ecologically and environmentally sound and efficient approaches to vegetation and pest management;
- developing opportunities for educating the public about safe, ecologically sound organic methods of vegetation and pest management.

Definition of Organic IPM

"IPM is a sustainable approach to managing pests by combining biological, cultural, physical and chemical tools in a way that minimizes economic, health, and environmental risks." National IPM Network

COOL emphasizes that its members must agree to use only organic pesticides and only as a last resort under specific conditions if all other methods of vegetation and pest control methods were considered and were found insufficient as solutions.

(This information facilitates effective communication between the members of COOL affected by or interested in the policy.)

Regulatory Context

All COOL members must ensure that their staff and personnel directly or indirectly involved in vegetation and pest management are aware of and operate in compliance with legal requirements pertinent to these activities as well as in compliance with this policy.

IPM Programs

COOL requires preparation of organic IPM programs by each/any members of its organization that is responsible for or involved with:

- implementing vegetation and pest management practices, and
- the development, approval, and implementation of designs that influence vegetation and pest management requirements and practices.

These required programs incorporate two primary approaches to vegetation and pest management:

1. Treatment of existing or potential vegetation and pest problems by direct management of the physical environment.
2. Prevention/reduction of vegetation and pest problems by the development of design improvements, education and training in mitigation strategies.

Requirements must be outlined for each of the two types of organic IPM programs to ensure their specific development and implementation.

Together, these programs must provide a comprehensive approach to pest management that is composed of short and long-range pest management strategies involving an integration of prevention, mitigation, education, and direct control techniques.

Each program's monitoring, record-keeping, and data management component provides information for effective program evaluation. Upon review of the records, improvement of the program maybe necessary. COOL reserves the right to request records and data from its members for review and as proof of their compliance with the organization's policy.