

Garbage Management Guidelines

Sanitation is of prime importance in preventing the occurrence of a number of pests such as ants, cockroaches, flies, pigeons, mice, rats, raccoons, and yellow-jackets. Sanitation also plays a major role in controlling these pests. Denying pests access to food decreases the attractiveness of the area and curtails pest proliferation.

Policy and Education

- **Policy should encourage clean campuses.** Set policies that encourage students and staff to keep campuses clean and to take pride in a clean school.
- **Educate school personnel about sanitation.** Educate students and staff about the relationship of food and garbage to pest presence.

Food Wastes from Kitchens, Cafeterias, Food Concessions

- **Drain food wastes.** Remove as much liquid as possible and store in a container with a tight-fitting lid or in a sealed plastic bag until discarding.
- **Set food containers in detergent and water moats.** During ant invasions, containers of food or food waste that must remain open can be placed in larger, shallow pans filled with water and a small amount of detergent. The detergent breaks the surface tension that would otherwise allow the ants to float across to the container.
- **Store food waste properly.** Store food wastes and packaging that is contaminated with food residue in sealed

plastic bags until discarding. Examples of packaging include food wrappers and yogurt and milk cartons. The smell of souring milk is particularly attractive to houseflies and can bring them from a great distance. Remove food wastes to an outside garbage can or dumpster at the end of each day.

- **Fix broken drains promptly.** Drains or electric garbage disposal units that leak, or drains that allow food waste to accumulate under sinks or floors should be fixed promptly. The area must then be thoroughly cleaned to remove any residue from under the floor, inside the walls, or in cracks and crevices. If food residues remain, they will attract and feed cockroaches, rats, and flies.
- **Thoroughly clean counters, floors, and sinks daily.** Never leave food out overnight. Any food that cannot be stored in the refrigerator must be stored in rodent-proof containers.

Other Garbage

- **Clean recyclables before storing.** Rinse all cans, bottles, and plastic containers before recycling or discarding.
- **Use ant- and roach-proof recycling bins,** and as much as possible, locate recycling bins in cool areas and make sure they are emptied at least weekly. Some grocery stores have found that the majority of their cockroach population was being sustained by the residues in recyclables.
- **Remove food wastes promptly.** Any other garbage that may contain food waste should be removed daily from the building. Pay particular attention to offices, locker rooms, and break rooms, i.e. wherever people may consume food.
- **Remove corrugated cardboard.** Cardboard boxes should be broken down and stored in a cool place away from food preparation areas. These boxes make good cockroach habitat and can sometimes transport roaches from a supplier to the school. If they are stored at the school for more than a week at a time, they can become a major harborage for roaches already on the premises.

Indoor Garbage Cans

- **Line garbage cans.** Line receptacles with plastic if there is a chance that they will be used for food waste.
- **Keep garbage cans clean.** Clean receptacles at least once a week if they are used for food waste.
- **Remove garbage promptly.** Never allow garbage containing food waste to remain in a building overnight to feed cockroaches and rodents.

Outdoor Garbage Cans

- **Use garbage cans with lids.** Outdoor garbage cans should be equipped with domed tops with vertical, spring-loaded swinging doors. The swinging door will help prevent and flies from gaining access to food wastes. Doors must be kept clean to avoid attracting yellowjackets and flies.
- **Put garbage into cans.** Educate students about putting garbage into the garbage cans.
- **Line garbage cans.** Line outdoor cans with plastic and clean cans at least once a week to prevent buildup of food residues.
- **Empty cans frequently.** Empty the cans daily or as often as necessary to prevent garbage from impeding the closure of the lid. Never allow garbage to remain in these cans overnight to attract rodents and raccoons.
- **Promptly remove any garbage thrown outside the can.**

Dumpsters and Other Exterior Storage Receptacles

- **Locate dumpster downwind of doors.** Place any dumpsters, garbage cans, and recycling containers downwind from the outside doors of buildings, particularly doors to kitchens or cafeterias, to avoid attracting flies into the building. Flies are attracted first to the waste odors and then fly upwind along odor trails emanating from the doorways leading to cooking areas.
- **Keep lids on dumpster and garbage cans.** Dumpsters and garbage cans should have lids that fit snugly when closed and should always remain closed when not in use. Never leave lids open at night; rodents and raccoons will have easy access to food.

- **Secure lids to cans.** If dogs or raccoons are tipping over garbage cans, use spring-type or stretchy fasteners hooked over the lids.
- **Clean waste receptacles at least weekly.** Dumpsters should have drains so they can easily be hosed out with a high pressure stream of water. If necessary, receptacles can be scoured with a brush and soapy water. A solution of borax in water will effectively eliminate odors that may attract flies.
- **Regularly inspect wet soil around dumpsters.** Flies can develop in soil where water from cleaning dumpsters and garbage cans is emptied. If maggots are found, scoop them up along with the soil and place them in a plastic bag sealed with a knot or a twist-tie before disposal.
- **Inspect garbage cans before nightfall.** At the end of each day, inspect all outdoor storage receptacles and collect any garbage that is lying around outside the dumpsters or garbage cans. Make sure their lids are closed.
- **Don't store garbage outside the dumpster.** Never store extra garbage in paper or plastic outside of dumpsters or garbage cans.
- **Remove garbage weekly.** Garbage should be collected and moved off-site at least weekly.

Remove Pet Feces Daily

- **Use a plastic bag.** Pet waste can be scooped up in a plastic bag and sealed with a knot or twist-tie before disposal.
- **Pet waste breeds flies.** Droppings that remain moist because of humidity, lawn sprinklers, or rain can breed a number of flies.
- **Rats feed on droppings.** Droppings that dry quickly may attract adult flies with their odors but are unlikely to host many maggots; however, dry or wet, they serve as food for rats.

For more information on pest management, call the Marin Dept. of Agriculture at 415-499-6700.