



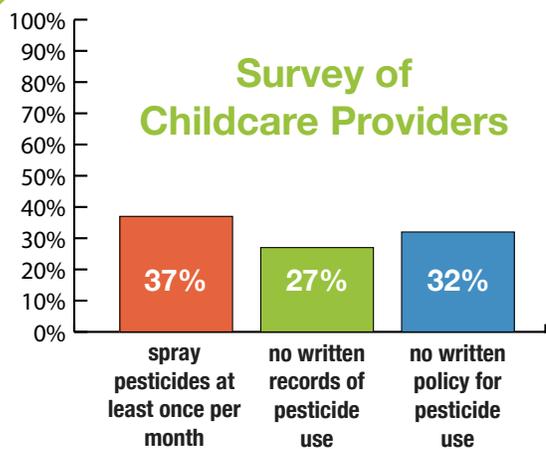
Image Courtesy of Chicago Wilderness, © Carol Freeman



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROJECT FOR ILLINOIS CHILDCARES SEES PROGRESS

In 2013, the Environmental Protection Agency awarded Midwest Pesticide Action Center (MPAC) a grant to help childcares reduce their pesticide use.

Through a small survey we conducted, we found that 37% of the facilities were using broadcast pesticides on a regular basis while 40% had never heard of Integrated Pest Management.



We have begun to engage facilities to move them off the non-compliance list. We have established communication deficits between licensing and enforcement agencies, and we are working to improve their recordkeeping.

Our next steps are to create self-administered training tools to imbed Integrated Pest Management training into the current continuing education structure, to make childcares healthier places to learn and play.

TRAFFIC AT MIDWESTPESTICIDEACTION.ORG

MPAC's website has been up for five months, and we're excited to see the community use this resource! Here is a snapshot of the last several months:



- Our most popular page, "What you can do in your home," received over 60% of the traffic on our website—well over 25,000 hits through March. Take a look to learn the basics of natural lawn care. We will be sharing natural lawn care tips in May on our Facebook page.
- We've added 10 posts to our new blog about our educational events, news, and issues. One of our recent posts discusses the link between GMO crops, glyphosate, and disappearing Monarch butterflies. Read more here: bit.ly/MPACBlog.
- Resources on bed bugs have been the most popular downloads. Do you need a refresher on the basics? Attend our free workshop in Chicago on May 14th. Find information on our events page, bit.ly/MPACEvents.

UPCOMING EVENTS

We have an ambitious calendar of upcoming events. Check our website for the most up-to-date information: bit.ly/MPACEvents.

May 9: Bed Bug Preparedness 101: Developing Your Plan.

This presentation is aimed at condominium associations and multi-unit building managers in Chicago.

May 14: Bed Bug Basics.

A general awareness workshop that will deliver the basics of bed bug behavior and control measures for beginners (Sulzer Chicago Public Library 10:00 am).

May 20: 20th Anniversary Open House!

MPAC Offices, 4611 N Ravenswood Ave Suite 107.

May 22: 49th and 50th Wards Bed Bug Ordinance Talk:

Sullivan High School.

May 29: 46th and 48th Wards Bed Bug Ordinance Talk:

Edgewater Public Library.

LEGISLATION TO WATCH

Illinois Pesticide Act (SB 3565)

Home rule communities in Illinois can make many decisions to protect community health and the environment, but pesticide regulation is not one of them.

State Senator Don Harmon has introduced SB3565, which gives communities in Cook County with populations over 50,000 the ability to regulate their own pesticide usage. This important bill is the first attempt in years to allow Illinois communities the ability to regulate pesticide usage within their borders. We urge Illinois residents to visit The Illinois Environmental Council to tell your state legislator what you think about SB3565. Read the bill here: bit.ly/QlcWjD.

Illinois Genetically Engineered Food Labeling Act (SB 1666)

MPAC is also supporting and closely following the Genetically Engineered Food Labeling Act (GEFLA). Introduced by State Senator David Koehler, the GEFLA would require foods to be labeled as containing genetically engineered crops. Genetic engineered crops (also known as genetically modified organisms or GMOs) currently make up more of the crops grown in Illinois including "RoundUp Ready" corn and soybeans. Many of these crops encourage the use of toxic pesticides that contaminate our land, air and water. Currently, over 60 other countries inform their citizens if their food has been genetically engineered with simple food labels. Consumers need to be informed when purchasing genetically engineered food. Please support this effort and read more information on SB1666 at bit.ly/1mkkSfP.

The Chemical Safety Improvement Act

Introduced in 2013, the Chemical Safety Improvement Act (CSIA) was designed to weaken the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), which was passed in 1973. This new Act is not an improvement and actually further endangers our health, as it removes states' current ability to enforce the law within their borders, and allows the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to preempt state efforts to regulate toxic chemicals. In the Great Lakes Region where protection of our valuable water resources is paramount, this is particularly troubling. It also places the burden of proof of safety on the EPA, but only for chemicals it deems to be "high priority," which in many cases may be difficult to determine without some additional testing. Learn more about CSIA at bit.ly/1ph9OVI.

YOU CAN SUPPORT OUR 'GREEN & CLEAN CHILDCARE' INITIATIVE

Through our "Green & Clean Childcare" initiative, we have worked to educate and train childcare providers to maintain facilities that protect children from pesticide exposure. We have already raised 92% of the funds for this project.

Please help us with the last bit of funding so we can improve the conditions of even more facilities. Find out more information here: bit.ly/Childcares14

RECENT BED BUG SUCCESS

With the 2013 Chicago Bed Bug Ordinance now in effect, MPAC has seen a renewed interest in bed bug education.

We recently worked with a local public school which had a revolving door bed bug problem, and discovered that some students were living in an apartment building infested with bed bugs just one block north of the school.

School officials contacted MPAC to try to control the flow of bed bugs into the school. Although we made a presentation (translated into Spanish and Urdu) to 30 mothers, it was clear that more help was needed. With the help of a Chicago alderman and the school principal, the landlord of the apartment building was contacted, issues for bed bug control were identified, and strategies for control were devised. While this situation is currently under control, there are many similar stories playing out across the Chicago area.

Additionally, we hosted our first workshop specifically for condominium associations, impacting over 9,000 units of housing. Those who attended left the workshop with a completed bed bug control plan that included sample monitoring, education, and inspection procedures. More opportunities are scheduled for the coming months and can be found on the events page of our website, bit.ly/MPACEvents, and in this Update.

OPEN HOUSE TO CELEBRATE 20 YEARS

We're opening our doors to the community on May 20th. Meet the staff and board of MPAC as we celebrate 20 years of protecting people and the environment. Light refreshments will be served, and our food truck friends at Sweet Ride will also be here to offer up their delicious goodies. Stop by anytime between 4:00 and 6:30 pm! Invite your friends: bit.ly/MPACOpen20.

Be the first to know about upcoming 20th anniversary events by signing up for our newsletter! bit.ly/MPACEmail.

