

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: JENNIFER BURKE, DIRECTOR
SANTA ROSA WATER
SUBJECT: RESOLUTION TO APPROVE CITY-WIDE INTEGRATED PEST
MANAGEMENT POLICY

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by Santa Rosa Water and the Recreation and Parks Department that the Council of the City of Santa Rosa, by resolution, adopt the City-Wide Integrated Pest Management Policy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy provides clear guidance on the management of pests on city-owned landscapes. A successful IPM program manages landscapes in a safe way for the community, staff, and the environment. In this policy, there is direction on how to control pests and how to identify and implement methods to reduce the need for pesticide application in landscape management.

BACKGROUND

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a science-based approach to reduce the quantity of harmful pesticides used in landscape management. The key reasons cited for developing IPM policies are to reduce impacts on humans and the environment. While pesticides have been developed to help manage pests in the environment and dramatically increase crop yields around the world, their over-use has been linked to many environmental catastrophes including the near extinction of the bald-eagle due to wide use of DDT and other issues. IPM programs are designed to help strike a balance between effective pest control and chemical use.

This policy will ensure the greatest protection to city staff and the community when managing pests. There have been concerns about the use of certain chemicals including the active ingredient in Roundup (glyphosate) as well as a broadly used group of insecticides called neonicotinoids. The focus on Roundup and other chemical formulations utilizing glyphosate has grown due to its wide use in agriculture and

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY

PAGE 2 OF 3

landscaping. The most disturbing health claim has come from the International Agency for Research on Cancer, which has identified glyphosate as a probable carcinogen harmful to humans. This categorization has led to successful lawsuits against the chemical manufacturer of glyphosate. Neonicotinoids are broad-spectrum insecticides that impact all insects, not just the target species, and have been shown to negatively impact bee populations located near to where these chemicals have been sprayed. Because neonicotinoids have also been shown to have respiratory effects in humans, these chemicals are being phased-out state by state and will be banned from over-the-counter sales in California by 2025.

The purpose of an IPM policy is to design landscapes that are naturally resistant to pests and utilize non-chemical controls where possible. This includes installing pest-resistant species, controlling weeds with mulch and dense plantings, mechanical removal with powered equipment or grazing animals, and only using chemical controls when all other methods have been determined to not be effective in eliminating the pests to the desired levels. IPM policies typically specify using the least toxic pesticide first before applying more toxic pesticides.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

On August 21, 2018, Council approved the tenth renewal of the Golden Gate Landscape contract for one and directed contract and city staff to discontinue the use of glyphosates.

On September 24, 2019, the Council held a study session on citywide contracted landscape services and landscape maintenance options for city sites. Council provided feedback discouraging the use of products with glyphosates and neonicotinoids.

On October 1, 2019, Council approved a contract with Signature Coast Holdings, LLC dba Coast Landscape Management with a scope of work limited to mowing operations. The landscape portion of the scope of work was not funded or approved.

On January 9, 2024, the City Council held a study session on Integrated Pest Management (IPM). Council provided direction on developing the IPM policy.

ANALYSIS

This IPM policy directs how the City of Santa Rosa (City) manages pests and applies to all City staff and contractors performing pest control work for the City in landscaped areas. It provides a consistent approach to management of pests throughout the City and will help to prevent over-use of pesticides on City-owned and City-managed properties by banning the use of neonicotinoid containing pesticides and prohibiting application of glyphosate in sensitive landscape areas.

This policy provides action thresholds, which are the observable conditions that must be present before a pest control method can be used, and management actions for

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY

PAGE 3 OF 3

common pest species. This policy provides for exceptions to the prohibition of glyphosate for public safety needs and for less sensitive landscape areas such as street medians. This policy also provides direction on staff training, pesticide applicator training, requirements on notification to the public regarding pesticide application, and requirements for record keeping and reporting on pesticide use by the City.

FISCAL IMPACT

Landscape management costs will increase due to restrictions on the use of glyphosate in the most sensitive landscape areas. It is anticipated that contracts for managing weeds in these areas will become more expensive, but the allowance of glyphosate use in less sensitive areas like parking lots and for public safety purposes will limit the increased cost-implications while providing the greatest protections to the public and the environment. City Departments will need to include the increased costs associated with this policy in their annual budgets and those increases have not been included in prior financial projections provided to the City Council.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) and 15378 in that there is no possibility that the implementation of this action may have significant effects on the environment, and no further environmental review is required.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On October 4, and December 6, 2023, staff presented options for developing an IPM policy to the Climate Action Subcommittee, which recommended bringing consideration of an IPM policy to the City Council.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Draft City-Wide Integrated Pest Management Policy
- Attachment 2 - Appendix A City Integrated Pest Management Policy
- Resolution / Exhibit A - City-Wide Integrated Pest Management Policy

PRESENTERS

Sean McNeil, Deputy Director of Environmental Services
Paul Lowenthal, Fire Marshal
Jen Santos, Deputy Director of Parks