

## Agency Integrated Pest Management Updates

San Francisco Department of the Environment

October 23, 2017

The purpose of Agency IPM Updates is to improve communication with policy bodies and the community at large regarding pest management issues on City properties. Information was provided by departments of the City & County of San Francisco as part of the Citywide IPM Program.

### **Public Utilities Commission**

Major drivers of herbicide use for the PUC were mitigation and restoration projects. In particular, a native grasslands restoration project on the peninsula required herbicide use in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2017, and a current mitigation project in the Crystal Springs watershed involves daubing tree stumps to prevent resprouting. PUC has been testing several alternatives to glyphosate in its projects, with particular focus on glufosinate-based products (such as Clearcast). So far, these trials have been mixed: While it functions well as a burndown herbicide – better than other burndown alternatives – it does not translocate as well as glyphosate or other herbicides. This means that it is not as effective for deep rooted weeds, although it works well for shallow-rooted ones like *Erharta*.

PUC's Natural Resources Division is also collaborating with SFE to develop the new Pest Prevention by Design for Landscapes resource, which is a collection of practices and design elements aimed at preventing pest infestations in landscapes.

### **Public Works**

Public Works is making a concerted effort to develop and revise its Standard Operating Procedures, and eventually to update IPM plans for its various operations. Preventing weed infestations at the design stage, and consequently reducing maintenance requirements, are priorities. Public Works is participating in the new Pest Prevention By Design for Landscapes project, with the intention of incorporating some of the pest preventive features into its landscape architecture operations.

Supported by SFE, Public Works has also organized its first-ever Bay Friendly Landscaping training for its staff, which begins in late October, 2017.

### **Recreation & Parks Department**

The Recreation and Parks Department Integrated Pest Management program is currently in the process of redevelopment. The most significant change is that the staff have been increased from one IPM specialist to a total of five. In general, this has increased oversight, area coverage, response time, monitoring, training of staff and piloting alternative pest control methods and materials.

It is expected that pesticide use over the next few years may fluctuate. With new staff, the Department will be able to: Continue piloting various herbicides as possible alternatives to tier 1 herbicide use, increase focus on aquatic vegetation management, increase focus on mosquito abatement, initiate a city-wide *Arctotheca* removal project, and increase coverage for rodent control. Other factors that influence pesticide use are: preparation for a major professional golf tournament in 2020 at Harding Park Golf Course; improvement of facility standards, for example the addition of the semi-professional soccer team (Deltas at Boxer and Kezar Stadiums); and of course, several years of drought followed by heavy rains.

Recreation & Parks is currently completing another in a series of annual Bay Friendly Landscaping trainings for its staff. At this point, most Recreation & Parks grounds staff have become Bay-Friendly Qualified.

### **San Francisco International Airport**

The one weed of greatest concern to SFIA is Bristly Ox Tongue , which is very aggressive and difficult to manage using strictly cultural methods of mowing ,weed whipping, flaming, hoeing, pulling , and mulching. 'Finale' (a glufosinate product) was suggested as an alternative to glyphosate and the results have been very encouraging. Crews were able to get very good control with one application.

SFIA does use large propane torches during the winter months, and this has been a helpful method to manage weed populations. The problem with this method and ox tongue is that because the ox tongue is so deep rooted, burning down does not kill it. Plus, it is most actively growing in the warmer months when we are not permitted to use these torches. (fire hazard).

As with previous years, SFIA has been doing a lot of sheet mulching to prevent weeds in the first place.

Due to the ongoing demolition here, SFIA has had a very busy year with rodent activity. Staff have been working with Revenue Development and onsite contractors to emphasize the need for good sanitation, but it's been a challenge with all the disruption due to demolition.