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Division of Environmental Health
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Meeting Minutes – April 30, 2015

Illinois Structural Pest Control Advisory Council (SPCAC)

General Meeting Information

A meeting of the Illinois Structural Pest Control Advisory Council was held on April 30, 2015. The meeting was held at the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), 525 W. Jefferson, in Springfield, Illinois.

Participants and SPCAC Members Present

Subcommittee Members Present:

- Scott Beckerman, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- Warren Goetsch, Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDA)
- Chris Haggerty, American Pest Control
- Ruth Kerzee, Midwest Pesticide Action Center (MPAC)
- Gary Pietrucha, EnviroSafe Pest Management
- Dr. Susan Ratcliffe, North Central IPM Center
- Eric Ruesken, Arab Termite & Pest Control
- Cynthia Stricker, Archer Daniels Midland (ADM)

Subcommittee Members Not Present:

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IDPH Representatives Present:

- Dr. Curt Colwell, Division of Environmental Health
- Joe Mitchell, Division of Environmental Health

Guests Present:

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SPCAC Meeting Summary

- Dr. Curt Colwell, acting as Chairman designee for Ken McCann, called the meeting to order after determining a quorum was present.
- Approval was sought for the Minutes of the Council's meeting of September 17, 2014. Ruth Kerzee motioned to approve, and Gary Pietrucha seconded the motion. The Minutes were unanimously approved by vote.

- The first item of Old Business; the Advisory Council's membership status, was presented by Dr. Curt Colwell who stated that one of the Council's two open positions was in the process of being filled. Jamie Byrd, of the Egyptian Health Department, had been nominated and had agreed to serve as the Council's local health department representative. Byrd's nomination, currently sitting in the Governor's Office for appointment, would be beneficial to the Council, Colwell added, diversifying it by bringing greater representation to southern Illinois. Scott Beckerman was asked if he had insight into filling the remaining vacancy, that being a representative of a wildlife, conservation or environmental organization. Beckerman said he had asked contacts at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to name potential candidates, but the department had declined to do so.
- The next topic of Old Business was the Structural Pest Control Program's passing rates for certification examinations. Dr. Colwell provided members with a table showing passing rates for 2014 and 2015. He noted that the primary concern had been the drop in pass rates for the General Standards Exam since that exam's revision in 2014, but that as of 2015, the pass rate had risen "dramatically" – to 56 percent. Joe Mitchell asked if it wouldn't be informative to know how many of those failing exams were persons retaking the exam after an initial failure or failures. Gary Pietrucha wondered why the pass rate for the Termite subcategory exam remained low. Colwell advised that the exam covered termites as well as other wood-destroying organisms, with the latter possibly being a source of difficulty because the group included wood-destroying beetles of varieties less commonly encountered by pest control technicians. Cindy Stricker commented that examinees should know that such beetles would be covered by the exam. Scott Beckerman wondered if the University of Illinois – Extension had agreed to participate in training classes for IDPH exams. Dr. Susan Ratcliffe offered that she had spoken to Extension's Phil Nixon, and that Nixon had tentatively agreed but details had been pursued in that regard. Beckerman also inquired as to whether the pest control program had added bed bug questions to its Public Health subcategory exam, as suggested at the Council's last meeting. Colwell said that had not been done and that, while it might be a good idea to do so and mold that exam into a kind of "bed bug certification" exam as discussed, revising the exam was of very low priority because the Public Health exam was the least taken of all the program's exams. Indeed no one had taken the exam in over a year. He explained that the exam was original designed to enable thus-certified individuals to apply restricted-use pesticides for public health concerns – but that sort of thing was "just not happening" in practice today. He went on to say that in his assessment the revision of the program's Fumigation subcategory exam was most critical because it was hopelessly outdated and that this might be contributing to the exam's low pass rate. As such, Colwell announced that he had personally begun preparing a new exam, after a failed search for fumigation experts willing to help him with formulating a new exam. He said he had, however, gotten good suggestions from those he queried, with respect to fumigation manuals the test might be based on. Cindy Stricker advised that she had procured a couple of such manuals and had

brought them to the meeting to allow Colwell to utilize them in preparation of the new fumigation exam.

- Dr. Colwell then began a discussion of New Business, beginning with on-the-job training (OJT) records. He provided copies of a newly designed spreadsheet which he and representatives of the Illinois Pest Control Association (IPCA) had refined for use by pest control companies as a template on which to record the training of new employees per regulations set forth in the Structural Pest Control Act and Code. Chris Haggerty, one of those who helped prepare the template, commented that the IPCA planned to distribute an article on the topic of on-the-job training and that the new template would be included therein. Colwell realized that the pest control program's inspectors might also distribute the OJT template during their inspections of pest control businesses.
- The next topic brought for discussion was the disposition of House Bill 3427. Colwell provide a copy of the proposed one-page bill to the Council members. He stated that the Bill had essentially "died." Ruth Kerzee reported that her organization, the Midwest Pesticide Action Center, had had nothing to do with the Bill, but was aware of its existence. Warren Goetsch noted that the Bill was poorly worded and without regard for existing regulations. The Bill's intent appeared to be to ban the application of lawn care pesticides, except in emergency situations as determined by the IDPH (disregarding the fact that pesticide application for lawn care is the purview of the Illinois Department of Agriculture, not the IDPH), and to require all pest control technicians using pesticides inside schools to be somehow "licensed."
- The impact of certain bird repellent products was brought up. Gary Pietrucha led the discussion against the use of "sticky" bird repellents, i.e., those designed to deter birds from landing and roosting on surfaces such as building ledges and overhangs. Pietrucha presented that these products had the potential to entangle and kill birds indiscriminately. He said that not only had use of these gel repellents resulted in the deaths of songbirds, the products were unreliable and often created a sticky and unsightly mess. Chris Haggerty, a fellow pest management professional, agreed that the gel repellents were a last choice for bird control, but that potential customers sometimes demanded it as a cheaper alternative – despite being told of the repellents' limitations – putting the pest control operator in a position of using a repellent or losing a customer. Ruth Kerzee offered that use of the repellents and their resultant failures might be enough to effectively eliminate their use once customers became informed this through market experience. Curt Colwell commented that the only way he believed such products might be "banned" would be if their real and likely potential to destroy non-target birds could be demonstrated through research. Warren Goetsch said repellent use by the poorly informed could not be regulated, adding that his department could refuse to register a pesticide, but rarely if ever did so.
- The final topic for discussion was the status of proposed Integrated Pest Management (IPM) seminars for 2015. In past years, various agencies and organizations had

cooperatively presented one or more of the seminars, designed to inform school and daycare workers about IPM, how to apply it to their facilities' pest problems, and how to comply with the State's IPM regulations. Chris Haggerty said that three seminars were in planning for 2015, and might be delivered July 27-29 in northern, central and southern Illinois locations. He said that the central location would likely be Springfield. Gary Pietrucha added that he had arranged for the northern seminar to be in Brookfield. Curt Colwell related that he had spoken to Jamie Byrd (previously mentioned as a nominee for Council membership) who had found a school in Harrisburg that might be willing to host the southern Illinois seminar. Colwell advised the dates needed to be set as soon as possible so they could be advertised. Dr. Ratcliffe pledged that her colleague at the University of Illinois, Dr. Leslie Deem, was willing to participate in the IPM Seminars and might also be able to provide some refreshments as they had in the past, though funding for their IPM initiatives had declined precipitously. Ruth Kerzee asked if a discussion of pesticide-free lawn care might be part of the seminars, reminding that the IDPH was obligated by regulation to recommend this to schools and daycares. Curt Colwell advised that lawn care was the purview of the Department of Agriculture, and that the IDPH was nevertheless fulfilling its obligation to recommend pesticide-free lawn care by presently sending 3000 letters bearing that recommendation to school and daycare facilities. Kerzee also wondered if participation in the IPM Seminars by individuals employed by pest control companies might be a conflict of interest. Chris Haggerty explained that the IPM seminar presentations of pest management professionals focused on making attendees aware of the extensive knowledge and other requirements needed to control pests at schools and daycares, rather than focusing on selling business. Kerzee asked if the IPCA, since it was now coordinating efforts to conduct the seminars, would be charging attendees a registration fee. Haggerty replied that such a fee had been discussed but the Association had decided that no fees would be sought.

- With no further comments regarding New Business, Dr. Colwell and the Council congratulated Council member Warren Goetsch on his recent appointment as Department of Agriculture Chief of Staff. The meeting was adjourned after a motion from Gary Pietrucha and a second by Mr. Goetsch.