

Meeting Minutes – April 18, 2012

Illinois Structural Pest Control Advisory Council (SPCAC)

General Meeting Information

A meeting of the Illinois Structural Pest Control Advisory Council was held on April 18, 2012. The meeting was held at the Illinois Department of Public Health, 525 W. Jefferson, in Springfield, Illinois.

Participants and SPCAC Members Present

Subcommittee Members Present:

- Scott Beckerman, United States Department of Agriculture
- Warren Goetsch, Illinois Department of Agriculture
- Chris Haggerty, American Pest Control
- Ron Hodgkins, Bel-O Pest Solutions
- Joe Kath, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- Gary Pietrucha, Envirosafe Pest Management Inc.

Subcommittee Members Not Present:

- Susan DiGrino, McDonough County Health Department
- Harry Frost, Cargill Corn Milling
- Susan Ratcliffe, North Central IPM Center
- Rachel Rosenberg, Safer Pest Control Project

IDPH Representatives Present:

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

SPCAC Meeting Summary

Dr. Curt Colwell, acting as Vice Chairman for Chairman Ken McCann, called the meeting to order and determined a quorum was present.

- Copies of the Agenda and accompanying information were distributed to members.

- Minutes of the previous meeting of November 16, 2011 were motioned for approval by Warren Goetsch and seconded by Gary Pietrucha. The Minutes were then approved by unanimous vote.
- Curt Colwell asked for a motion to approve the Council's By-Laws, but some members stated they had not received the By-Laws. Colwell issued a hard copy of the By-Laws for review, and said he would ask for their approval later in the meeting.
- Curt Colwell referred members to the back side of the Agenda, upon which an excerpt pertaining to the use of bed bug inspection dogs was listed, and which he had recently added to the IDPH's bed bug fact sheet on-line. Members gave tacit approval to the information contained in the excerpt.
- Dr. Colwell next gave an update on the status of the Council's Subcommittee Report on Bed Bugs. He stated that the Report had been sent to all members of the Illinois Legislature, and that the IDPH's Joe Mitchell was spearheading the Department's effort to revise the language of a legislative bill based on the Report, that the Safer Pest Control Program had provided to the Department for review. Mitchell stated that, after the IDPH revised the language to make it more workable to ensure health departments' ability to participate in resolving bed bug problems as the Report and bill would mandate, the revision might be presented to the 2013 Legislature for consideration.
- Next Dr. Colwell summarized a list of proposed rules currently being reviewed by the State Board of Health. The rules would be additions to the Illinois Structural Pest Control Code. Colwell stated that most of the rules dealt with the Structural Pest Control Program's administration of technician certification and business licensing, but that others involved areas such as IPM regulations for public schools and daycare centers, and time notations being required on pest control service records. Ron Hodgkins and Chris Haggerty questioned the proposed time requirement notation, asking whether it meant that service records should report the start time or the time span of the service or pesticide application. Colwell said he would check the rule's language and advise members at a later date.
- Members were then referred to the back of the Agenda sheet where Dr. Colwell had listed the number of technicians completing the various IDPH pest control examinations, along with the number passing those exams, and the passing percentage for each exam for the last 12 months. On the whole, the passing rates were seen as too low, especially by comparison with passing rates for Illinois Dept. of Agriculture examinations which Warren Goetsch advised were generally about 80 percent. The passing rate (11 percent) for the IDPH Insects & Rodents Sub-category Exam was seen as particularly low. Although the Council had worked with Colwell, who had authored the Exam, and had reviewed each question on the Exam, Ron Hodgkins stated that he and the other members had reviewed a sample exam that pointed out the correct answers, and that this as well as having the exam's author

(Colwell) present to explain what was meant by each question, may have prejudiced the review process to a degree, allowing the exam to be more difficult than it might have otherwise been. Hodgkins and Scott Beckerman also suggested that the Department partner with other state(s) to use or to prepare a manual as a study guide for each exam, that could be provided to examinees as a single source of study material for the exam, from which all of the exam's questions could be written. Colwell advised that all questions for the Insects & Rodent Exam had been written from Purdue's Scientific Guide to Pest Control, and that the Department recommends examinees study this book in preparing for the Exam. He advised that if a different manual was used as a single source from which the Exam would be written, then the Exam would have to be entirely rewritten as opposed to reviewing it again and removing questions that were problematic for examinees. Michael Boyle, a prospective nominee to the Council, the only guest present at the meeting, commented that he had recently taken the Termite Sub-category Exam, and suggested that perhaps one reason for the declining passing rates was simply that the exams had been recently rewritten, foiling those companies who had accumulated knowledge of previous exam questions over the years – to a point where they were able to prepare their technicians sufficiently to pass. Hodgkins said he favored writing a new test that would be based solely on a dedicated manual/study guide for that exam. Chris Haggerty said that, as for the Termite Exam, there should be more questions on baiting for termites, versus the Exam's apparent focus on liquid termite treatment. Scott Beckerman, whom Colwell had asked to help rewrite the aging Bird Sub-category Exam, asked if he should see the old exam before writing new questions. Colwell said he'd prefer that the old exam not be used, so as not to influence Beckerman's revision of the Exam. It was agreed that Beckerman would present new questions for the Exam within 3 months.

- Dr. Colwell added that he hoped that the Council's new food industry representative (replacing Harry Frost) would have fumigation experience and might agree to help with a revision of the Department's Fumigation Sub-category Exam which, according to some, was extremely difficult to pass and in dire need of revision. However, no appropriate candidate for the food industry spot on the Council had been found. Ron Hodgkins suggested that, among others, Archer-Daniels-Midland be contacted to learn if such a person might be employed there and would be willing to serve on the Council.
- The next topic was training recently required for statutory board members. Dr. Colwell related that all members of the Council, after appointment or reappointment by the Governor, were required to undergo Open Meetings Act training, as well as Ethics training, as prescribed by the State, if they had not already done so. Colwell said that he would wait for the members' appointment/reappointment, and then forward links to the required training modules.
- Dr. Colwell continued, with the notion of allowing electronic attendance at Council meetings. He stated that, if this were allowed, it would have to be approved by the

Council and written into the Council's By-Laws. He asked for member comments. All subsequent comments were opposed to allowing electronic attendance (i.e., by phone). Ron Hodgkins motioned that the Council not approve electronic attendance. Gary Pietrucha seconded the motion.

- Discussion moved to the possibility of certification reciprocity, i.e., granting Illinois certification to technicians holding similar certification in other states, and vice versa. Dr. Colwell said he was investigating this possibility, and that despite this being a fairly common practice in other states, Illinois had always denied reciprocity requests in the past. He added that one of the proposed rule additions to the Code dealt with reciprocity, namely that Illinois residents would not be granted reciprocity, preventing them from "shopping around" for easier exams and certification in other states, in order to avoid taking Illinois' exams. He went on to note that a current regulation stated that technicians granted reciprocity would lose their Illinois certification if they lost that certification in their state of residence. Ron Hodgkins and Scott Beckerman suggested that one way to ensure that such technicians had maintained their home-state certification would be to require them to submit a copy of their home-state certification card with their applications to renew their Illinois certification.
- Finally, Colwell gave an update on the Department's Integrated Pest Management Program, advising that former coordinator, Derrick Pehlman, had taken another position, leaving the IDPH IPM Program unstaffed and, incidentally, unfunded. However, a pending EPA grant would enable the IPM Program to continue to help ensure that all of the State's public schools and daycare centers were in compliance with its IPM regulations. Colwell said he and Joe Mitchell had recently sent out approximately 1500 letters to schools and daycares that had not responded to earlier attempts to bring them into compliance (by filing the required form, etc.), and that after 2 weeks about 10 percent of those facilities had responded by filing their forms. He added that by tracking those who had and hadn't complied, he would be able to know where best to hold the Department's IPM seminars, at which attendance is mandatory for facilities electing not to adopt IPM as their method of pest management, and that dates and locations of those seminars would be posted on the Department's IPM Webpage. Colwell thanked in advance those persons, including Council members Chris Haggerty, Gary Pietrucha and Dr. Susan Ratcliffe, plus the Dept. of Agriculture's Scott Frank, who had agreed to help with the presentation of those seminars.
- It was determined that no date for the next meeting of the Advisory Council would be set, pending the appointment and reappointment of its members – whose appointments would all expire on April 28, 2012.
- Ron Hodgkins motioned to adjourn the meeting, Chris Haggerty seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.