Illinois Department of Public Health
Division of Environmental Health
525 West Jefferson Street
Springfield, IL 62761
Telephone: 217-782-5830 Fax: 217-785-0253

Meeting Minutes – September 17, 2013

Illinois Structural Pest Control Advisory Council (SPCAC)

General Meeting Information

A meeting of the Illinois Structural Pest Control Advisory Council was held on September 17, 2013. 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
- Michael Boyle, Grundy County Health Department
- Warren Goetsch, Illinois Department of Agriculture
- Chris Haggerty, American Pest Control
- Gary Pietrucha, Envirosafe Pest Management Inc.
- Dr. Susan Ratcliffe, North Central IPM Center
- Eric Ruesken, Arab Termite & Pest Control

Subcommittee Members Not Present:

- Joe Kath, Illinois Department of Natural Resources

IDPH Representatives Present:

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

Guests Present:

- Cindy Stricker, ADM Corn Processing

SPCAC Meeting Summary

- Dr. Curt Colwell, acting as Chairman designee for Ken McCann, called the meeting to order after determining a quorum was present. He welcomed guest and prospective member, Cindy Stricker, to the meeting.

- Approval was sought for the Minutes of the Council's meeting of February 27, 2013. Chris Haggerty referenced a sentence in the Minutes and proposed it be amended. Colwell agreed to make the correction and asked for a motion to approve the document after amendment. Scott Beckerman so motioned and Gary Pietrucha seconded it. Minutes were then approved by unanimous vote.

- Gary Pietrucha led a discussion of the Chicago Bed Bug Ordinance which is slated to be effective in late 2013. He stated his disappointment that the pest control industry, and in particular the Greater Chicago Pest Management Alliance (GCPMA), had not been consulted prior to the Ordinance's passing. He also voiced displeasure with the language of the Ordinance, which he contended was ambiguous, for example, in requiring pest control operators to declare a room or building free of bed bugs – essentially asking them to do the impossible. Dr. Susan Ratcliffe stated that it would be impossible to know where the bed bugs came from in situations where a company declared a building free of bed bugs one day, when bed bugs were subsequently found. Colwell added that any so-called "Clearance Letter" issued on a structure thought to be free of bed bugs would or should have the same limitations as existing termite inspections for real estate transactions, citing that those inspections do not claim a home is free of termites, only that the inspector has seen no visible termite activity on that date.

- Gary Pietrucha added that the GCPMA was preparing a letter to the three Chicago Aldermen backing the Ordinance, a letter that would express his and the Alliance's perspective, and offer assistance in revising Ordinance to improve it before it is adopted. He said that the letter would be sent to Advisory Council members for comment prior to its submission to the Aldermen. Dr. Colwell asked if it might be beneficial for the Advisory Council to endorse the GCPMA's letter. Pietrucha said this would definitely add to the letter's impact, and that having an Advisory Council member or members sign on to it would be appreciated.

- Scott Beckerman asked if the Chicago Department of Public Health would be charged with enforcing the Ordinance. The Council determined that the Chicago Department of Buildings would apparently be the primary enforcer. Chris Haggerty said there seemed to be language in the Ordinance that was quite similar to that found in the report of the Advisory Council's Subcommittee on Bed Bugs, filed with the state legislature in 2012. He said that an early version of the Ordinance looked like it would not be passed, but some of the language was improved, or at least changed, which apparently facilitated passage.

- Mr. Pietrucha mentioned that the insurance industry may soon refuse to provide pest management companies with the necessary insurance to operate, if those companies provide bed bug control, due to the perceived liability of bed bug services. Chris Haggerty said that he had already encountered this, and furthermore that even if bed bug control constituted only a very small percent of a company's work, this would be

enough to deny insurance coverage. Pietrucha said that in lieu of denying coverage, premiums might rise dramatically.

- Dr. Colwell moved to the next topic for discussion, announcing that his Department's Insect and Rodents subcategory exam had been revised and administered to examinees beginning April 1 of 2013. He was pleased to announce that the revised exam experienced a passing rate three times higher than that of the previous exam, bringing the passing rate in line with those of other subcategory exams. Colwell went on to say that the Bird Control subcategory exam was also being considered for revision. He thanked Scott Beckerman for being instrumental in making progress toward not only a revised Bird Exam, but also a new Bird Control manual for use as a study guide. Beckerman explained that he had discussed this with the authors of a national wildlife manual, and they had tentatively agreed to excerpt bird-related segments from that manual which would then become the Department's manual, at little cost to the Department. Colwell said the authors had agreed to forward a written proposal for his consideration. Beckerman added that any proposal should discuss the cost of revising the manual as needed in the future. Chris Haggerty advised that he had found that the National Pest Management Association was currently preparing a termite control manual, possibly coming available in October, that might serve, as suggested at the last Council meeting, as the primary study reference for the Department's termite control exam. Gary Pietrucha said that he was attempting to contact persons at Fumigation Service & Supply, known as experts in fumigation, to possibly participate in updating the Department's fumigation exam. Chris Haggerty volunteered to pursue this by contacting the company's facility located in his area.

- Dr. Colwell asked for other Old Business. Scott Beckerman asked how the Structural Pest Control Program's newly established reciprocity was working. Colwell advised that reciprocity had been established and was working well with the border states of Indiana, Missouri and Wisconsin. He added that Iowa and Kentucky had been contacted, but Kentucky had been revising their certification categories then and asked to be contacted after that revision. Colwell said that regulators in Iowa were slow to react to requests to establish a reciprocal agreement, but with persistence he was able to finally get an agreement document to them for approval. However, Colwell said that months had transpired and when the Iowa regulators were contacted again they stated the 2-page document remained in their legal department under review. At this point, Colwell stated he had done all he could to pursue an agreement with Iowa, and would wait to see if the state would ever get back to him with their approval. Scott Beckerman suggested that the Illinois Pest Control Association (IPCA) might contact the Iowa Pest Control Association to build support for the reciprocity agreement. Eric Ruesken, President of the IPCA, agreed that the IPCA should do so.

- Colwell reported that a "General Standards Manual," intended as a study guide for persons taking the IDPH's General Standards (GS) Exam to become certified pest control technicians, had been written, along with two new versions of the GS Exam,

based on the new manual. However, the manual's disposition was in doubt due to an internal review of the document mandating that significant portions of it be deleted before it could be approved for use. Marked for deletion was material written to motivate prospective technicians to take pride in their job, to see its importance, and thus to apply pesticides correctly. Colwell said he disagreed with the deletions because he believed they were essential parts of the manual that would promote compliance with the pesticide laws the Department is charged with enforcing. Nevertheless, Colwell said he had made the dictated deletions and resubmitted the manual for approval, not knowing if further deletions would be called for, or when the manual might be approved.

- Chris Haggerty asked if any kind of justification was expressed for deletions. Colwell related that he was told that the Department does not need to motivate technicians. Warren Goetsch, director of the Illinois Department of Agriculture's pesticide regulatory program, wondered who would need to "approve" the manual, relating that his Department (the EPA lead agency for pesticide regulation in Illinois) had 19 such manuals for their program, and that they were not required to be approved by anyone outside the program. Goetsch said he didn't understand why the Department of Public Health would have a different protocol. Colwell said he believed that leaving the "motivational" material in the manual would not cost the Department anything or result in a negative consequence of any kind. While leaving the motivating material in the manual might work to increase compliance with pesticide regulations and decrease the likelihood of pesticide misapplications that could threaten human health – something that the Department's Structural Pest Control Program was tasked with.

- Joe Mitchell stated that this was a formatting issue, that the Department believed its manuals should stick to the facts, without promoting any profession. Mike Boyle questioned why the Department would have a fact sheet advising the public how to select a pest control company, but would not promote professionalism among those companies' employees. Scott Beckerman asked if the Advisory Council could make a recommendation to the Department to approve the manual with the information in question left in. Colwell said he believed that would be ineffectual. Colwell said he was inclined to wait, hoping that his modification of the document would satisfy and gain its approval.

- The discussion moved to new membership on the Council. Colwell announced that Rachel Rosenberg, formerly of Safer Pest Control Project, tendered her resignation from the Council, after acquiring a position with another employer. Gary Pietrucha suggested the Council contact Rosenberg's successor, Ruth Kerzee, who was also well-known to some Council members. Colwell said he felt the position, slated for a member of the general public, could be filled with someone affiliated with the public schools or licensed day care centers which the Department regulates via existing Integrated Pest Management (IPM) rules. He later added that Ruth Kerzee might qualify in this regard because her organization was actively working to educate school and daycare staff on IPM principles and regulations. Dr. Ratcliffe agreed that

Kerzee might be a good choice, but cautioned that Kerzee's organization (Midwest Pesticide Action Center, formerly Safer Pest Control Project) has on occasion presented pesticide/pest management information that was not entirely correct. Colwell cited similar instances, but the Council agreed that Gary Pietrucha should approach Ms. Kerzee with the possibility of joining the Council.

- Dr. Ratcliffe was asked to explain the nascent "IPM Practitioners Group" she was forming with others. Ratcliffe said the group included colleagues from the Northwest IPM Institute and other organizations. She added that they hoped to make IPM verifiable in schools, and that another goal was to provide IPM training to pest management professionals as well as for various staff of schools, including food service workers, maintenance workers and others. She mentioned two IPM seminars being offered to all the above on October 11 and 15, 2013,in cooperation with the IPCA and IDPH. Dr. Ratcliffe said pest management professionals could play an important role in educating and promoting IPM to school and day care employees. Colwell seconded the point, saying he believed that pest management professionals who understood the IPM requirements for schools and daycares could not only serve to educate the staff of those facilities, but might also use that knowledge to obtain more business from them.

- Colwell then related that he and Joe Mitchell had, during the previous week, sent out over 500 Warning Letters to schools and daycares who had not complied with the State's IPM regulations. The letters stated the facilities were in violation, and that a fine would be imposed if they did not comply by a given date. In response, Colwell said he had personally received over 300 phone calls in 4 days from those facilities, asking for direction on how to comply – which was included in the letters but which the respondents apparently did not read or understand. Subsequently, he had received over 300 of the required IPM forms from the noncompliant facilities, bringing most of them into compliance. Colwell cautioned though, that compliance with the regulations did not necessarily mean those facilities were actually implementing IPM as stated in their forms, or even that they had an understanding of IPM. On this, the notion of verifiable IPM, Chris Haggerty related that the National Pest Management Association had a special certification course for pest control companies who could demonstrate their understanding of IPM in schools.

- Colwell moved to the next topic, asking guest Cindy Stricker to explain to the Council how her position in quality assurance at Archer Daniels Midland related to pest management. Ms. Stricker gave an overview of her involvement with IPM and pest management in the sensitive food processing situations she oversees. She stated that she works closely with the United States Department of Agriculture in managing vertebrates at the ADM facility. Colwell then described the appointment process for Council members and said he would happily forward the necessary documents to Stricker.

- The planned special session to review the new General Standards Exams was postponed due to the uncertain status of the new General Standards Manual.
- Colwell advised the next Council meeting would take place in 2014, and that he would send queries to all, as usual, to ascertain a mutually acceptable date. The meeting was adjourned.