

# EPA's Role in Bed Bug Control

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September 15, 2010



# Overview

- EPA's roles and responsibilities
- EPA's combat plan for bed bugs
  - Quest for new control techniques
  - Education and outreach activities
  - Collaborating on the Federal, State and local levels
- Next Steps

## EPA's Mission

- Protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment
- EPA's primary responsibility for pesticides used to protect public health is to ensure that they are:
  - Safe for human health and the environment, when used according to label directions
  - Effective against the pests on their labels

# EPA and Bed Bug Control

- EPA's primary responsibilities include:
  - Ensuring current scientific standards are used to regulate all pesticides, both new and existing
  - Educating the public about proper use of pesticides and encouraging the use of IPM
- Solid education and outreach is critical to:
  - Minimize incidents and poisoning due to misuse
  - Discourage over-reliance on pesticides, which can lead to resistance

# National Summit – the kick off

- Held April 14 and 15, 2009
- Goals and Objectives
  - Share information
  - Identify ideas and options
  - Develop recommendations for action
- Widely attended by over 300 stakeholders from academia, government, industry
- Under the auspices of EPA's PPDC, Summit concluded with formal recommendations to OPP

# Recommendations from Summit

- Many recommendations arose from Summit
  - Some within federal jurisdiction others not
- Recommendations were varied, including:
  - Increased federal collaborations;
  - Further research into control methods;
  - Additional training for pest management professionals; and
  - Suggestions for local legislation or codes

# Bed Bug Strategy

- EPA strategy focuses on:
  - Encouragement for the development of new tools;
  - Integrated Pest Management efforts;
  - Education and outreach to encourage appropriate control techniques (and discourage misuse) ;
  - Coordination and outputs with the federal partners (including research activities)

# Regulatory Activities

- EPA is encouraging the registration of new pesticides to control bed bugs by:
  - Working with industry to identify and register new compounds or new uses of existing compounds
  - Committing to expedited registration of any new products
  - Working with USDA-ARS on a program to test efficacy of potential compounds
- Several applications are currently under review
  - New applications may be submitted under Section 3 or Section 18 of FIFRA

# Regulatory Activities

- Improving Efficacy Guidelines and Evaluations for Bed Bugs
  - Added testing of bed bugs from pyrethroid-resistant strains and field populations
  - Working with USDA/ARS on some new approaches to crack and crevice testing and on standardized insecticide screening

# IPM Activities

- Recognition that IPM is critical for any bed bug control program to succeed long-term
  - Web page and joint statement both emphasize IPM, especially in community-wide efforts
- PRIA grant program supports bed bugs
  - Baltimore developing materials to help community residents that cannot afford professional help

# Education and Outreach

- Some old news:
  - EPA web page launched Spring 2010
    - Focuses on control, bed bug biology, debunking myths
  - Joint statement with CDC issued August 2010
    - Reiterates agencies' position on bed bugs as a “pest of significant public health importance” (PR Notice 2002-1)
  - Funded NCHH's publication “What's Working for Bed Bug Control in Multi-Family Housing” last Spring

# Education and Outreach

- EPA's web page improvements to stress:
  - Proper use of pesticides and IPM techniques
  - Searchable list of EPA-registered products
  - New and better links needed as situation changes
- Developing materials, such as bed bug video
- Working to provide mechanism for communities and states to share information

# Education and Outreach

- \$550K worth of STAG (State and Tribal Assistance Grants) funds for education and outreach in communities with concerns about environmental justice
  - Preferred proposals should demonstrate a partnership with communities
  - Outputs generated through awards are to be made available for use in other communities
  - Grants to be awarded in 2010 for use in 2011

# Collaborating on Bed Bugs

- Summit participants recommended creating an interagency taskforce on the federal level
- Federal Bed Bug Workgroup held its first meeting in August of 2009
  - Comprised of representatives from CDC, DoD's Armed Forces Pest Management Board, EPA, HUD, NIH, USDA-ARS, USDA-NIFA
  - Meets at least monthly, more when needed

## Federal Workgroup - Communicating

- Workgroup helps foster communication across federal agencies
  - At least 15 minutes of each meeting is devoted to updates from the individual agencies
- Helps foster communication with public
  - Provides easy access to multiple agencies
- More effective and efficient than individual agencies working in isolation

# Federal Workgroup - Outputs

- No workgroup-specific funding
- Nonetheless, group collaborates on several outputs
  - Prioritizing and developing action plan for recommendations from the Summit;
  - Bibliography of research articles;
  - EPA/USDA-ARS working to identify new compounds for bed bug control;
  - CDC/EPA Joint Statement (not official workgroup output, but resulted from collaborations).

# Other Collaborations

- OPP has created a public health working group under the Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee;
- First meeting April 28, 2010; follow-up August 2010;
- Some issues workgroup may address include:
  - Follow-up to the Bed Bug summit;
  - International work/data sharing initiative;
  - Label improvements specific to PH uses;
  - Efficacy issues.

# Collaborations – Moving on

- Reducing bed bug infestations requires collaboration and cannot be done in isolation
  - Local organizations to combat problems on a community-wide level;
  - States and local governments to provide legislative support and structure;
  - Federal government to facilitate information exchange, encourage research, and promote safe control.

## Next Steps

- All stakeholders need to work together to maximize limited resources
- A focused strategy on bed bug control could address different facets of problem:
  - Research agenda
  - Extent of infestation nationally (data)
  - Which interventions work (according to the data)
  - Additional research in new control methods

## Next Steps (cont.)

- Federal and State governments could help facilitate community information exchange
  - Conserve scarce resources
  - Increase the potential for success (learn through others' wins and losses)
  - Allow communities to focus on implementing a program for their unique community
    - Using solid underpinnings from others

# EPA and Bed Bug Control

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Questions??