

# Green on Green

## GREEN INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT TIPS

### Site Assessment: An Essential Element of Green

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**T**o most customers, green pest management means “less toxic.” How do you get there? A huge piece is preventing pest problems so pesticide use is at a minimum.

The key to prevention is denying pests access to food, water and shelter. The first step is a complete site assessment. It’s critically important, yet often overlooked. Don’t confuse site assessment with brief walkthroughs for bid preparation purposes.

Proper site assessment is both a science and an art. It’s also an enormous opportunity to earn revenue. You’re looking for pest-conducive conditions. When you find them, you’ll also find profitable add-on services to fix them.

Site assessment should be your first step after you win any contract. Your service agreement should provide for a higher first-month-service fee to cover assessment time, and include fees for add-on services.

How much staff training time have you devoted to site assessment? Assessors need both technical expertise and sales savvy to identify needs you can fill. A team approach can work well. Do you have assessment specialists in your company?

Take the time to do it right. It may take a day or more to get through a large facility. Your toolkit should include a clean uniform and vehicle, flashlight, magnifier, binoculars, spatula, vice grips, screwdrivers, clipboard, report form or handheld unit, sample collection vials, knee pads and digital camera.

#### Add-on Opportunities Abound

Add-on services should appear on the service slip for your green service, just as you might list rodent bait boxes, fly traps, glueboards and other common charge items. Whatever services you offer, do top quality work and green customers will beat a path to your door. Here’s just a starter list of potential opportunities:

- Removing clutter
- Raking mulch away from foundations
- Trimming vegetation
- Cleaning gutters, elevator pits and trash chutes
- Painting inspection aisles
- Sealing cracks and crevices
- Installing door sweeps, vent screens, chimney caps, gutters and downspouts
- Repairing wood-destroying pest damage

#### INTERVIEWING YOUR CLIENT

Your ideal client contact is the operation head overseeing the custodial and maintenance departments. Who is responsible for cleaning? How often is cleaning done? What about specialty tasks such as drains, grease pits, elevator pits, trash or laundry chutes? If there are food prep and serving areas, do food service staff share cleaning responsibilities with others?

Who maintains exterior doors, plumbing, electrical? What types of pest problems have occurred in the past? What types of pesticides are used, and how often? How are pest problems reported?

The answers will help you identify how pest management is working — or not working. It will also paint a picture of who does what and how your add-on services fit into the picture.

After the interview, start your inspection outside. Scan the exterior for potential bird roosts, unsealed holes and missing or damaged window or vent screens. Walk the exterior, checking each side and each entry door.

Check the roof carefully. Are adjacent/adjoining areas and properties well-maintained? If they need pest-proofing, they may lead to a potential new client. Take lots of pictures; they’ll sell lots of services.

Next, go inside. Focus on any food storage, serving and prep areas. Are there hard-to-reach drains being neglected? Are pipe escutcheons in place and sealed? Are wall-mounted fixtures sealed around the edges? Are electrical penetrations sealed? Are inspection aisles present?

Check other areas where water is present, such as custodial closets, restrooms, etc. Are drain traps full of water? Check elevator pits, trash and laundry chutes, mechanical rooms, vending, etc.

Based on your assessment, you’ll find chores your client needs done. If they want effective, high-performance, green pest control, they’ll be paying someone to do it — why not you? **PMP**



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