

PLANT HEALTH ATLANTIC

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Certification and Accreditation Program

General Information Guide for Lawn Care Companies

About this Package

Please read this package carefully. It will provide you with useful information about the Plant Health Atlantic - IPM Certification and Accreditation Programs and will guide you through the participation process. All questions should be directed to:

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Important note: In this document, the word *'pest'* or *'pesticide'* applies to weeds, insects, and disease.

What is the IPM Certification and Accreditation Program?

The IPM Certification and Accreditation Program is designed to recognize lawn care companies, golf courses, facilities that manage turf, and other related groups that demonstrate knowledge of, and commitment to, the principles of Integrated Pest Management and plant health for environmentally sustainable turf management.

What are the requirements of the IPM Certification and IPM Accreditation Program?

There are **two components to the Plant Health Atlantic Program**. The *IPM Certification Program* deals with the educational, training, and ongoing professional development requirements for the employees and the *IPM Accreditation Program* deals with the responsibilities and activities of the company or organization. The details of each program are explained below.

IPM Certification Program

Employee Education and Training

Certified IPM Turf Practitioner

An individual can become a Certified IPM Turf Practitioner if they:

- Complete a training program as prescribed by the Standards Committee that encompasses theoretical and applied aspects of integrated pest management in turf and lawn care or have other credentials that satisfy the training requirement.
- Pass an examination as set by the Standards Committee, at a minimum 75% score.
- Pay the examination fee (*See: Fee Structure*). Fee covers the cost of Information Binder, writing of examination, administration of the certification data management system, and annual tracking of Continued Education Credits (CEC's).

Companies and facilities are encouraged to have a number of their staff qualified as Certified IPM Turf Practitioners.

Ongoing Professional Development

To meet requirements for ongoing professional development, a Certified IPM Turf Practitioner must maintain their level of expertise by annually accumulating a minimum of 8 Continued Education Credits (CEC's) or by annually re-passing the examination as set by the Standards Committee, at a minimum 75% score. ***This requirement will take effect following the first full year of certification.***

IPM Program Coordinator

Organizations (lawn care company, facility that manages turf, or golf course) that want to be recognized as IPM Accredited must designate one of their Certified IPM Turf Practitioners as their IPM Program Coordinator. This individual is then responsible for the development of the IPM program, the keeping of any records as required for Accreditation, and for any staff training.

An IPM Program Coordinator must be a fully Certified IPM Turf Practitioner in good standing.

Continued Education Credits (CEC's)

The system of requiring Continued Education Credits (CEC's) is designed to ensure ongoing education and professional development of the Certified IPM Turf Practitioner. Continued Education Credits are awarded to Certified IPM Turf Practitioner when they attend qualified

industry conferences, lectures, training sessions, seminars, or demonstrations that focus on IPM or plant health related principals.

The **Standards Committee** will issue an official registration form designating the number of CEC's for sessions that qualify. Generally a 45-minute session equates to one (1) CEC. A Certified IPM Turf Practitioner must obtain 8 CEC's before the end of their first full year as a Turf Practitioner and during every subsequent calendar year or re-write the examination in order to be re-certified. *For more detail see the heading: Information Guide for CEC's.*

Official registration forms will be issued for sessions that qualify for CEC's. It is then the responsibility of the person presenting the session to have the attendees complete the official registration form. The completed registration form is forward to the Plant Health Atlantic Administrator, who is responsible for compiling and maintaining the list of Certified IPM Turf Practitioners and a record of their CEC's.

What Qualifies for a Continued Education Credit?

The **Standards Committee** will review all requests and decide which sessions qualify for CEC's. The PHA Administrator will notify IPM Certified Turf Practitioners of training and information sessions that qualify for CEC's. CEC's **will not be awarded** for sessions related to operation of the business, human relations, or financial issues.

Certified IPM Turf Practitioners should get an advance ruling from the Standards Committee before attending industry conference or training session outside of the region.

How do I find out about sessions that qualify for CEC's?

Upcoming sessions that qualify for CEC's will be posted on the PHAC official web site (*PlantHealthAtlantic.ca*). It is the individual's responsibility to ensure they annually accumulate 8 CEC's.

All inquiries and questions should be directed to the Plant Health Atlantic Administrator.

All forms can be downloaded from www.planthealthatlantic.ca - IPM Programs – IPM Certification.

IPM Accreditation Program

Levels of Accreditation

There are three (3) levels of IPM Accreditation: **Baseline, Introductory, and Fully Licenced IPM Accreditation**. Only facilities that meet the requirements for Fully Licenced IPM Accreditation will be acknowledged in publications and on the Plant Health Atlantic web site, and be allowed to display and use the official Plant Health Atlantic fully licensed IPM accredited logo.

The reader should be aware that the IPM Accreditation Program requirements differ for golf courses, lawn care companies, and facilities that manage turf (e.g., Universities, municipalities) because of different needs and operating practices. It is the IPM Program Coordinator's responsibility to ensure that they are following the IPM Accreditation Program requirements that correspond to their type of facility or operation.

1. Baseline IPM Accreditation (Lawn Care)

The Baseline IPM Accreditation is an introduction to the IPM Accreditation Program and is designed to provide the facility with an indication of where they presently are with respect to becoming Fully Licensed IPM Accredited. A facility is awarded the status of "**Baseline IPM Accreditation**" upon designating a Certified IPM Turf Practitioner as the IPM Program Coordinator, completing a questionnaire, agreeing to comply with the Standards of Practice (*See: Definition of Standards of Practice*), and meeting the requirements of a Baseline Desk Audit (*See: Requirements of a Base-line Desk Audit*).

An auditor designated by PHAC will review the information submitted in the Base-line Desk Audit and work with the IPM Program Coordinator on the development of an **Improvement Plan**. The Improvement Plan is based primarily on the information forwarded in the Baseline Desk Audit and functions as a guide for a facility to move to the next level of accreditation (Introductory IPM Accreditation).

In some cases the auditor, on reviewing the submitted Baseline Desk Audit information, may determine that the facility already meets the requirements for Introductory IPM Accreditation. These facilities can then immediately apply for Introductory IPM Accreditation status.

Each municipality, company, franchise location, golf course, branch office, or business is considered to be a separate entity and therefore must submit a separate Base-line Desk Audit and employ a separate IPM Program Coordinator when applying for Baseline IPM Accreditation.

Inquires should be sent to the Plant Health Atlantic Administrator who will then direct them to the Compliance and Enforcement Committee for a final ruling.

Fee for Application for Baseline Desk Audit - (See: Fee Structure)

* This fee may be credited toward the cost of an application for a Full Desk Audit if applied for within four (4) months of receiving an Improvement Plan.

2. **Introductory IPM Accreditation**

The Introductory IPM Accreditation is the second level of accreditation recognition.

A facility will qualify as **Introductory IPM Accreditation** status when they:

- Employ a fully certified IPM Program Coordinator.
- Pay the application fee in full.
- Meets the required for the **Full Desk Audit** satisfactorily.
- Annually apply pesticides to not more than 45% (aggregate average) of the total property base under a pest management program.

A facility must submit and successfully pass a Full Desk Audit annually to retain its Introductory IPM Accreditation status.

Application Fee for Full Desk Audit - (See: Fee Structure)

3. **Fully Licenced IPM Accreditation**

This is the highest level of accreditation. A facility is awarded the status of Fully Licenced IPM Accreditation on meeting the requirements of Introductory IPM Accreditation and successful completion of an On-Site Audit (*See: Requirements of a On-Site Audit*).

Requests for an On-Site Audit are made directly with the Plant Health Atlantic Administrator.

Facilities that successfully pass the requirements of an On-Site Audit are designated as Fully Licensed IPM Accredited and will be acknowledged on the Plant Health Atlantic web site, and be allowed to display the Plant Health Atlantic – Fully Licenced IPM Accredited logo.

Each municipality, company, franchise location, branch office, and business that is applying for Full IPM Accreditation must request and pass a separate On-site Audit and employ a separate IPM Program Coordinator.

A facility maintains this level by:

- Employing at least one Certified IPM Turf Practitioner on staff.
- **Annually** submitting and passing the requirements of a Full Desk Audit.
- **Annually** apply pesticides to not more than 40% (aggregate average) of the total property base under a pest management program.
- **Every three (3) years** requesting and passing an On-site Audit.

Application Fee for On-site Audit - (See: Fee Structure)

*Auditor will charge a fee if required to re-visit a location to approve On-site audit

STANDARDS OF PRACTICE FOR COMMERCIAL LAWN CARE ACCREDITATION

Commercial lawn care facilities accredited under the Plant Health Atlantic - IPM Accreditation Program must agree to abide by the following Standards of Practice:

1. To support the intent of the Plant Health Atlantic - IPM Accreditation Program and conduct all pest management within the principals of Integrated Pest Management.
2. To first and foremost consider the health of humans and the environment and adherence to all provincial, federal, and municipal laws having to do with pest control products and/or pest management practices.
3. To have a minimum of one fully certified IPM Turf Practitioner on staff, who is responsible for: coordinating the IPM program; developing a program for the continual education of company personnel; and participating in prescribed audits.
4. To never use a pest control product unnecessarily or without justification.
5. To apply pesticides only to properties where pest monitoring records indicate a need and in a manner compliant with established treatment thresholds (*See: Treatment Threshold Standards*).
6. To keep a record of the following information for each client's site under a pest management program: Property identification, total area of turf (M²) in the pest management program, pest(s) identified, monitoring method, pest numbers/unit area, date of any treatment, product used (PCP No.), product application rate (amount/M²), amount of mixed product applied (L), and calculated calibration of the equipment.
7. To foster conditions where non-pesticide management tools can be effectively utilized and pesticide use can be reduced.
8. To promote property improvement efforts and cultural practices such as using optimum soil depth and quality, suitable turf varieties, over-seeding, proper mowing heights, and proper fertilization, aeration and de-thatching as components for maintaining healthy turf and reducing pest problems.
9. To maintain and regularly calibrate application equipment and to keep records thereof.
10. To manage pest populations at acceptable levels using biological, physical, cultural, mechanical, and behavioural management tools preferentially.
11. To neither promote nor sell programs/packages based on numerous pesticide applications.
12. To strive to annually apply pesticides to not more than 40% (aggregate average) of the total property base under a pest management program.

ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE

The Enforcement and Compliance Committee under the Plant Health Atlantic Council is responsible for ensuring the credibility of the IPM certification and the accreditation programs and agrees to look into all possible violations, complaints, and enforcement related inquiries. Findings will be brought before the PHAC Executive for a final decision. The Executive has the authority to suspend, revoke, or cancel certification or accreditation under the program for the following reasons.

Reasons for Cancelling Certification or Accreditation Certified IPM Turf Practitioner

The Executive may suspend, revoke, or cancel an individual's certificate for the following reasons.

1. Failure to annually accumulate a minimum of 8 Continued Education Credits (CEC's) or annually re-pass the examination as set by the Standards Committee, at a minimum 75% score. This requirement will take effect following the first full year of certification.
2. Knowingly present false or misleading information to an auditor in a Desk Audit or during an On-site or Spot Audit.

IPM Accreditation Status

The executive may reduce, suspend, revoke, or cancel IPM Accreditation status of a company for the following reasons.

1. Failure to have a Certified IPM Turf Practitioner on staff for a period of 20 consecutive working days.
2. Failure to follow the **Standards of Practice for Commercial Lawn Care Accreditation**.
3. Failure to annually meet the requirements for maintaining their level of accreditation (See: Requirements of a Full Desk Audit).
4. If at the Baseline or Introductory IPM Accreditation level is found to be using the Plant Health Atlantic - Fully IPM Accredited logo in their promotional material or for any other use.
5. If at the Baseline or Introductory IPM Accreditation level is misrepresenting their status of IPM Accreditation.
6. Knowingly present false or misleading information to an auditor on a Desk Audit or during an On-site or Spot Audit.
7. Knowingly present false or misleading information to a client.
8. Found to be in violation of provincial or federal pesticide legislation.

All inquiries, complaints, and concerns for the IPM related operation of any commercial lawn care company operating in the Atlantic Region that are brought to the attention of the PHAC Administrator will be treated in confidence and investigated by the Enforcement and Compliance Committee.

Definitions

Blanket Pesticide Application – is the application of a pesticide to more than 50% of a property in a single treatment that includes portions of an area not presently showing symptoms of disease or infestation. A Blanket Application shall only be carried out on a site that has first been monitored for the pest and where the number of pests present warrants this type of treatment (*See: Treatment Threshold Standards*). **Check with your local regulatory agency as some provinces may prohibit Blanket Pesticide Applications or require a special government permit for the blanket application of an insecticide.**

Buffer zone – untreated vegetative strip separating treated area and water body or other sensitive areas.

Cultural practices - creating growing conditions for turfgrass to minimize its susceptibility to all pests.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) – decision-making process that uses all necessary techniques to suppress pests effectively, economically and in an environmentally sound manner to sustain healthy turf with the goal of respecting genetic diversity and reducing risks to human health and environment.

On-site Audit – is a mutually agreed to planned visit by an auditor designated by Plant Health Atlantic. The auditor will examine records, review documents, interview staff, and evaluate the operating practices of a facility to determine if it satisfactorily meets the requirements for obtaining or maintaining Fully Licenced IPM Accreditation status.

Pesticide – federally-approved products (with current Pest Control Products Act registration number) designed to control pests (insects, diseases, weeds) on turf.

Property in a Pest Management Program – is the total turf area of a client property on which you are carrying out an Integrated Pest Management program. Information on pest monitoring records (See: *Pest Monitoring Form (LB4)*) must be kept for each of these client properties. **NOTE: A pesticide cannot be applied to any client property unless the property has first been monitored for the pest and the number of pests found warrants a treatment (See: *Treatment Threshold Standards*).** Client properties not monitored for pests (e.g., under a mowing contract only) are not considered as *Property in a Pest Management Program*.

Spot Pesticide Application – is an application of a pesticide targeted directly to the exact location of the pest infestation and where the overall application does not exceed 50% of the area where the pest infestation is a problem in a single application. A Spot Application shall only be carried out on sites that have been first monitored for the pest and where the number of pests present warrants this type of treatment (See: *Treatment Threshold Standards*).

Treatment Threshold Standards (Apply to New Brunswick in 2010)

	Spot Application may be warranted where pest numbers exceed:	Blanket Application may be warranted where pest numbers exceed:
All Weeds		
- Class A Site	More than 5 weeds/m ² .	NOT PERMITTED in New Brunswick
- Class B Site	More than 10 weeds/m ² .	NOT PERMITTED in New Brunswick
- Class C Site	More than 20 weeds/m ² .	NOT PERMITTED in New Brunswick
Insects		
Hairy Chinch Bug (HCB)	More than 10 HCB/ 0.1m ² (ft ²)	More than 10 HCB/ 0.1m ² (ft ²) found over more than 50% of client property under a pest management program.

General Questions and Answers

Do I immediately lose accreditation status if the IPM Turf Practitioner leaves?

No! You will retain your present IPM Accreditation status if you have immediately notified the PHA Administrator of their departure and indicated your intent to replace them within a reasonable period of time. Failure to notify may result in cancellation after 20 working days. Replacement would involve hiring an IPM Certified Turf Practitioner or having an existing staff meeting the certification requirements (*See: General Information Guide*). PHA recommends having more than one certified turf practitioner on staff.

Do Provincial/Municipal regulators endorse this level of Accreditation as ‘being enrolled in an approved IPM program’?

Check with your provincial pesticide regulatory agency for latest requirements. Plant Health Atlantic will post provincial legislative updates on the web site (PlantHealthAtlantic.ca)

The New Brunswick Department of the Environment officially endorses (January 2010) the IPM Certification and Accreditation Programs managed by Plant Health Atlantic Council.

Facilities will be considered by NB Environment to be ***enrolled in an approved IPM Program*** when they:

1. Have on staff an IPM Certified Turf Practitioner.
2. Obtained the Baseline IPM Accreditation level from PHAC (Required to have made an application for a Baseline Desk Audit).
3. Received an Improvement Plan from PHAC.

For updated details on the New Brunswick pesticide regulations visit:
<http://www.gnb.ca/0009/0369/0024/index-e.asp>

Municipal Requirement

Check with your local municipality as some may still have a ban on pesticides or require companies to be enrolled in an approved IPM approved programs administered by PHAC (e.g, Truro, N.S.).