



# Pests and Pesticides in Child-serving Facilities: An IPM Newsletter

## Don't Let Your Tick Guard Down Because Temperatures Have Cooled

By Karen M. Vail, Professor, Hannah Ginn, Graduate Student, and Becky Trout Fryxell, Professor, Entomology & Plant Pathology, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

For you cool-season hunters and others pursuing outdoor activities expecting a tick-free time, be warned. Adult black-legged ticks, *Ixodes scapularis*, the primary vector of the Lyme disease pathogen, are active during the cooler months. So keep your guard up. Our online publication, *Managing Ticks on School Grounds*, at <https://utia.tennessee.edu/publications/wp-content/uploads/sites/269/2023/10/PB1895.pdf>, provides steps for tick bite prevention and, when needed, tick removal.

In late November and early December, when temperatures were in the 40s F, we conducted tick surveillance at schools in Campbell and Fentress counties. Fortunately, we did not find any ticks that day. Unlike other arthropods, tick activity is linked to daylength, so we did expect to find adult *Ixodes scapularis*. Previous research found this species active if the temperature is above freezing, and Hickling et al. (2018) reported this tick from Fentress County and established in Campbell County. If you notice ticks on your hunter-harvested deer, it's probably this species, so please continue to be mindful. One of us continues to find this species on her dog, so make sure you continue to check your pets for ticks too.

### Reference

Hickling GJ, Kelly JR, Auckland LD, Hamer SA. Increasing Prevalence of *Borrelia burgdorferi* sensu stricto-Infected Blacklegged Ticks in Tennessee Valley, Tennessee, USA. *Emerg Infect Dis*. 2018 Sep;24(9):1713-1716. doi: 10.3201/eid2409.180343

## Creating a Tennessee Pest Control Workforce Pipeline: Can K-12 Assist?

By Karen M. Vail, Entomology & Plant Pathology, University of Tennessee, Knoxville and Ryan Griffin, Tennessee Board of Regents, Center for Workforce Development

In the latest *Insec(t)ure* newsletter article, "[Creating a Tennessee Pest Control Workforce Pipeline](#)," I describe our collaborative initiative to expand the pest control workforce pipeline in Tennessee. Many people are unaware that the Tennessee pest control industry contributes more than \$1 billion to the state's economy and ranks 7<sup>th</sup> nationally in sales revenue, yet companies still face challenges in attracting and retaining a workforce. This workforce manages the pests in your school systems.

Help us grow the Tennessee Pest Control Workforce Pipeline by sharing this newsletter with science and vo-ag teachers and encouraging students to monitor for pests in school using the [4H School IPM Publications](#)

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We have created three subcommittees to help develop a pest control workforce: 1) to work with high schools and community colleges in developing curriculum and pathways, 2) to create an undergraduate Certificate for Entomology in the Built Environment at the University of Tennessee, and 3) to develop PR materials to make potential workers and students aware of this lucrative, resilient and recession-resistant industry.

My purpose in this article is to prompt you to consider how you can support subcommittees 1 and 3 in building a pest control workforce pipeline. Sharing this newsletter with science and vo-ag teachers is one way. Anyone interested in working with this subcommittee can contact Ryan Griffin of the Tennessee Board of Regents, Center for Workforce Development. Maybe encouraging the science classes to use your school buildings to monitor for pests is another. In our series on entomology and school integrated pest management publications for K-12 students, [4-H School IPM Publications](#), many of the activities involve inspecting the schools for pests. I'm open to suggestions. The more of us working on this task, the more successful we'll be.



*Cover of 4-H publication [Inspecting the School: An Integrated Pest Management Lesson](#). We want to encourage schools to adopt IPM and for students to participate in school IPM activities.*

## The Obligatory Winter Break Prep for Classrooms

*I'm not going to repeat what I've already stated many times. Please see [Preparing Classrooms for Winter Break](#) for a checklist.*

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Partial support for this newsletter provided by the USDA NIFA CPPM EIP grant  
(#2024-70006-43505) awarded to the University of Tennessee.

For more information about IPM in Tennessee schools and other facilities, or to view past issues of *Pests and Pesticides in Child-serving Facilities*, please visit <http://schoolipm.tennessee.edu>

### **NATIONAL IPM INFORMATION**

eXtension's Pests in the Home  
<https://pestsinthehome.extension.org/>

National School IPM  
[schoolipm.ifas.ufl.edu/](http://schoolipm.ifas.ufl.edu/)

IPM in Schools Texas  
<http://schoolipm.tamu.edu/>

IPM Institute of North America  
[www.ipminstitute.org/](http://www.ipminstitute.org/)

The Pest Defense for Healthy Schools Online IPM Training for School Employees  
[pestdefenseforhealthyschools.org](http://pestdefenseforhealthyschools.org)

EPA schools  
<http://www2.epa.gov/managing-pests-schools>

For further information about the IPM program at your school or in your county, contact your county Extension Agent or the school IPM Coordinator. For county agent contact information, please visit <https://utextension.tennessee.edu/office-locations-departments-centers/>

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To protect people and the environment, pesticides should be used safely. This is everyone's responsibility, especially the user. Read and follow label directions carefully before you buy, mix, apply, store or dispose of a pesticide. According to laws regulating pesticides, they must be used only as directed by the label and registered for use in your state.

### **Disclaimer**

This publication contains pesticide recommendations that are subject to change at any time. The recommendations in this publication are provided only as a guide. It is always the pesticide applicator's responsibility, by law, to read and follow all current label directions for the specific pesticide being used. The label always takes precedence over the recommendations found in this publication.

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