

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How do I figure out how quickly to transition areas from Yellow Zones to Green Zones?

A: First you and your colleagues need to determine what your priorities are. After you mapped for exposure, one option is to designate all the high exposure areas as Green Zones. If this is impossible because of budget or staff resources, the method also allows you the flexibility to transition in stages, incrementally. Choose the areas that have the highest exposure, where the most children play, for example, and manage them as Green Zones. Then, assign a Yellow Zone designation to the other areas—T1 means you will transition it to Green within a year, T2 within two years, and so on. This gives you a quantitative goal to work towards as you reduce risk on your site.

Q: What if we aren't using any of the materials on the lists?

A: The included lists are provided for reference only. The advantage of the lists is that the screening work has been completed by other municipalities. The disadvantage of the lists is that they are comprised of materials used by other jurisdictions, in other climatic regions. If you have a material that doesn't appear on any of the lists, you may screen it yourself through the Beyond Pesticides Database (www.pesticideinfo.org). This database allows you search by active ingredient or by trade name. Select the appropriate material and view the hazard index provided. This is a thorough and comprehensive database with only slightly different screening protocol than those on which the Zone lists are based.

If all hazard indicators show negative impacts with no data gaps, the material could be considered as a GREEN PESTICIDE. If data gaps exist, or if the hazard indicators lead to a 'Bad Actor' status, the material should likely be considered SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE until further reviewed.

Q: We want to include Water Quality protection as a factor in our mapping. Can we do that?

A: Yes. Many public jurisdictions are encouraged or obligated to manage contaminant discharge into waterways. The PHAER model addresses this concern in two ways:

1. GREEN LIST, YELLOW LIST Screening Parameters

Embedded in the screening parameters used to develop the materials lists are several water-quality considerations, including: potential for groundwater contamination, soil mobility, and eco-toxicity to aquatic organisms (Appendix B). If any of these parameters exceed an established threshold, the material is placed on the YELLOW LIST, and the use is restricted on the high-sensitivity Green Zones.

2. Mapping for Water Quality Impairment

The PHAER allows jurisdictions to designate areas with a high potential to impact water quality as Green Zones. This would limit any applied pesticides to those on the GREEN LIST. An example might be a park district adjacent to a sensitive waterway that is regulated by the Federal Clean Water Act. This district may map the parking and hardscape areas as Green, since the impervious surfaces would accelerate off-site movement of any applied pesticides into the sensitive waterway. In this case only GREEN LIST materials that have either been screened for water quality impairment (Hazard Tier 3) or which are EPA Exempt would be used.

Q: Along those same lines, we want to incorporate protection for sensitive and threatened species into our mapping process. How do we do that?

A: A jurisdiction that contains habitat hosting federally-listed sensitive, threatened, or endangered species may wish to ensure that pesticides within, or adjacent to, this habitat will pose minimal threat to the listed species.

Example: A habitat hosting an endangered amphibian. A jurisdiction may wish to map this habitat and surrounding drainages as Green to assure that only materials screened for eco-toxicity or exempt from EPA registration will be used, thus minimizing potential adverse effects on the lower aquatic trophic levels which serve as the food source for this species. Further mitigations may be necessary to protect this endangered amphibian; however, restricting pesticides to the GREEN LIST will provide a significant degree of caution.

Q: Our jurisdiction already has an IPM program in place. How should we proceed?

A: The PHAER method is designed to assist the implementation of an IPM program, and not to circumvent existing IPM policies. If your jurisdiction's policy requires standards of pesticide screening more restrictive than this model, those standards may be applied. Alternatively, if your policy does not require pesticide screening of the same

magnitude as offered here, the sites could be mapped and designated to zones according to the standards set here. Example: If your policy allows YELLOW LIST materials to be used without restriction, the sites should be mapped as Yellow Zones to remain consistent with other jurisdictions.

Q. How does the PHAER system work with the Healthy Schools Act of California?

A: The PHAER System is designed to assist schools, parks, universities, landscape professionals, childcare providers, and residents. The needs of this diverse audience have created a few minor differences between this system and the H.S.A.

1. H.S.A. Exempt Materials

The Healthy Schools Act exempts certain materials and application methods from posting and notification requirements. These include EPA Registration Exempt materials; crack and crevice applications of gels and pastes; and self contained bait stations.

The PHAER System assigns EPA Registration Exempt materials to the GREEN LIST, requiring minimal posting at a central location on-site. The PHAER System evaluates gels, pastes, and baits individually based upon hazard. Many of these materials are on the San Francisco Allowed list, and thus would also be considered GREEN LIST materials requiring minimal posting.

If a gel, paste or bait is not on the GREEN LIST, there could be some elevated hazard concern and it is likely included on the YELLOW LIST. A suggestion would be to substitute for a similar product found on the GREEN LIST.

2. GREEN LIST materials Not H.S.A. Exempt

Many products are considered reduced-risk and are included in the GREEN LIST that are not exempt from posting and notification requirements of the Healthy Schools Act (insecticidal soap for example). In this case schools must follow the Healthy Schools Act, which requires full posting and parent registry notification. Parks and municipalities not regulated by the H.S.A. would only need minimal GREEN LIST posting.

Q: Our school has asphalt playgrounds that are common weed problem areas. Currently we treat them with herbicide applications. How do decide whether to map them as Green or Yellow Zones?

A: Asphalt playgrounds are areas of high potential exposure to applied pesticides, since children have frequent skin contact with the treated surface, or with balls/toys that may carry pesticide residues from the treated surface.

Using exposure potential as a guide to mapping this area, the asphalt playground would clearly be designated as a Green Zone. However, the reduced-risk pesticides on the

GREEN LIST may not provide adequate control, and the labor of hand-weeding may be prohibitive. Thus, you may choose to map these areas as Yellow Zones T1 or T2, to indicate that they will soon be transitioned to Green Zones.

The best long-term solution to this weed problem would be to modify the habitat through re-asphalting, slurry sealing, and/or crack-sealing. Evaluate the total five-year asphalt repair/replacement budget and prioritize activity towards playing surfaces and away from parking lots. Sites that will not receive new asphalt should be crack-sealed as soon as possible. Schedule asphalt repair/replacement according to your Zone priorities, focusing first on playgrounds and last on single-use parking lots. Designate playgrounds as Green Zones as the surfaces are repaired, demonstrating incremental reduction of pesticide risk.

Q: How do we address ground squirrels or gophers?

A: In short, efforts should first be made to improve sanitation and stop any feeding of the squirrels. Second, the GREEN LIST should be reviewed for any reduced-risk squirrel or gopher baits. If YELLOW LIST baits must be employed, steps should be taken to reduce exposure to the baits as well as exposure to dead and dying animals. These baits are allowed in Green Zones if care is taken to minimize potential exposure. Review Figure 4 for additional guidance.

Q: How do we go about posting a sign that explains our pest management practices?

A: We've included on the next two pages a sample of a posting, for your information.

SAMPLE POSTING

Pest Management Zone Map

The GREEN areas on this map are managed with reduced risk pesticides only. These materials might be of 1) household or food grade ingredients, 2) materials showing no known, probable or suspected negative human health effects and limited environmental effects, or 3) materials applied so as to reduce or eliminate exposure to the materials. These standards are accepted by a statewide coalition of progressive schools and parks seeking to reduce the risk of their pest management activities.

The YELLOW areas on this map are managed with pesticides with an elevated health or environmental concern, but which are considered necessary at this time to maintain the function of the site. These YELLOW materials might include Round-Up, or other common pesticide.

Posting and Notification

If GREEN pesticides are used anywhere on this site the information will be posted at this location. These are materials with low exposure concern.

If YELLOW pesticides are used anywhere on this site, then signs will be posted in the immediate vicinity of the application for a minimum of three days, and a maximum of 14 days following the treatment.

For more information about this Zone System and for a complete list of GREEN and YELLOW pesticides, please visit www.home.earthlink.net/~phaerzones or contact the author of this report.

GREEN LIST MATERIALS USED ON THIS SITE:

Date	Trade Name	Active/Inert Ingredients	Reason
07/07/04	Sluggo	Iron phosphate	Snails
11/04/04	Matran 2	Clove oil/water, lecithin	Tree basins