Background and Action Plan Concerning Recent Cockroach Complaints at the Ridgefield Park Jr./Sr. High School

Recent Pest Complaints

Beginning about three weeks ago my office received word of a few parent complaints of cockroaches at the Ridgefield Park Jr./Sr. High School. The district takes such complaints seriously and has already acted to institute certain measures to address this issue. Pests such as cockroaches, mice, etc. are a common problem in most large school buildings. Our high school is especially problematic given the fact that this building was erected on top of a swamp and former garbage land fill. As in most districts, we perform regularly scheduled pest extermination treatments throughout the entire calendar year. It is important to note that extermination services in public schools are highly regulated by the State.

Action Plan

- Increase regularly scheduled routine pest extermination service to weekly. There are a few levels/tiers to these types of low-impact treatments and we have always utilized the highest tier of low-impact treatments possible.
- Food consumption and the storage of food has been banned throughout the building with the exception of the Cafeterias, Common Area and some other approved designated areas.
- During the past week additional custodians were retained to perform a deep-cleaning of the building. This effort is ongoing.
- A high-impact pest extermination treatment has been scheduled for Saturday, October 19, 2019. A water soluble pesticide will be used that is perfectly safe for use in schools, hospitals, etc. This pesticide is on the lower-tier of high-impact treatments. The treatment will include a detailed focus on but not limited to areas such as the; gymnasiums, sewer room, kitchen, home economics, bathrooms, locker rooms, hallways, main office, etc. Although the building must remain unoccupied for up to seven hours after this treatment, the building will be closed beginning Saturday morning through Monday morning. A slight odor may be present following the treatment but it is no way considered harmful to anyone.