

# Merrimack Valley

## *housingreport*

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University of  
Massachusetts  
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### Volume 6, Issue 7 July 2013

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## A Healthy Home is Pest Free

By Joann Vaillette

Pests can cause serious health problems. Pests such as rodents and cockroaches, as well as the chemicals we use to control them can cause and trigger allergies and asthma by contaminating our indoor air quality. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is part of a nationwide Healthy Homes movement to reduce housing-based health hazards. IPM is a comprehensive approach to reducing and eliminating pest problems in the home. IPM uses a systems-based approach with the goal of providing the safest, most effective, most economical and sustained remedy to pest infestations. IPM techniques focus on pest prevention by eliminating conditions in the home that lead to infestations.

The IPM intervention begins by conducting a thorough examination of indoor and outdoor areas to identify where and why pests are active. It is important to “think like a pest.” Pests need shelter, food and water in order to survive. It is important to identify how pests are entering the home as well as their sources of food and water. Be aware of any pest entry points within your home. There are usually openings under the kitchen or bathroom sink that would be a perfect entry way for pests. Cockroaches take shelter in cracks and crevices and mice only need a ¼ inch opening to enter the home! In addition, be aware of food and water sources for pests. Pests will eat just about anything including crumbs, grease, and trash. When conducting the inspection also take note

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## Deeds, Mortgages, Foreclosures and Orders of Notice Recorded

June 2012 and June 2013 compared

	Haverhill		Lawrence		Lowell		Methuen	
	June-12	June-13	June-12	June-13	June-12	June-13	June-12	June-13
Deeds	98	103	93	87	129	139	110	96
Mortgages	182	182	107	115	231	221	199	183
Foreclosure Deeds	12	6	14	3	10	6	6	1
Orders of Notice	14	9	21	7	24	4	15	2

of water sources for pests. These sources can include leaky pipes, pet bowls, or refrigerator drip pans.

Sanitation and exclusion play important roles in the IPM process. Keeping a home clean is a simple and effective way to prevent or eliminate unwanted pests. Simple steps such as immediately cleaning up spills, storing food in tightly sealed containers, removing clutter, keeping trash in a closed container and taking it out frequently, and fixing leaky pipes help to eliminate food and water sources that pests need in order to survive. Exclusion involves sealing any cracks, peeled wall-paper or holes that cockroaches or rodents could get through. Pest entry ways such as holes can easily be blocked by stuffing copper mesh into the holes and sealing the entry way with silicone caulk.

Pesticide use is always the last option when using IPM techniques and the safest and most effective pesticide option are baits. When using this option, the baits are placed close to the pest's hiding spot. The pests will feed on the bait, take it back to their hiding spots, feed their friends and die. The baits are a much better way to get rid of pests than routine spraying of pesticides. There are many health concerns involved with spraying pesticides. Children with asthma are particularly vulnerable or sensitive to spray pesticides. Moreover, pests can become tolerant of or avoid these chemicals.

Children are particularly vulnerable to the negative health effects triggered by pest problems. A successful IPM intervention can reduce the burden of the child's asthma and improve the health and quality of life for the family.

For more information on IPM: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/controlling/resources.htm>

*Note: this article is an edited version of an article previously published in the March 2010 issue.*

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*A Healthy Home is Pest Free continued*

## Deeds, Mortgages, Foreclosures and Orders of Notice Recorded During First Six Months 2012 and 2013 Compared

Haverhill			
	2012	2013	% Chng
Deeds	570	586	3%
Mortgages	1001	1080	8%
Foreclosure Deeds	71	25	-65%
Orders of Notice	104	62	-40%

Methuen			
	2012	2013	% Chng
Deeds	480	468	-3%
Mortgages	983	1149	17%
Foreclosure Deeds	41	27	-34%
Orders of Notice	83	30	-64%

Lowell			
	2012	2013	% Chng
Deeds	704	854	21%
Mortgages	1249	1522	22%
Foreclosure Deeds	98	39	-60%
Orders of Notice	150	85	-43%

Lawrence			
	2012	2013	% Chng
Deeds	412	458	11%
Mortgages	565	694	23%
Foreclosure Deeds	74	22	-70%
Orders of Notice	116	74	-36%

**Looking to Showcase Your Vacancy or Looking to Move?**  
**Community Teamwork Inc. (CTI) developed a new website designed to help landlords showcase their vacancies, and tenants to easily find them.**  
**This free service is offered throughout the Merrimack Valley and the North Shore.**  
**For more information go to:**  
**[www.nearlistings.org](http://www.nearlistings.org) or contact Avi Glaser at [aglaser@comteam.org](mailto:aglaser@comteam.org)**

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