EXTERMINATOR — GUIDE

Integrated pest management for homes and buildings

Use inspection evidence, prevention and monitoring to decide what action the building needs.

Updated November 10, 2026

Integrated pest management, or IPM, is a way to make pest decisions from evidence. EPA describes it through action thresholds, pest identification and monitoring, prevention, and control. A useful service plan should explain those steps for your building.

Start with the pest and the place

Ask what pest was found, where it was found and how it was identified. Ask the company to distinguish a confirmed finding from a suspected one. Keep photographs and inspection notes with the service record.

Agree on what triggers action. EPA calls this an action threshold. It depends on the pest and site. Do not let a generic spray schedule stand in for that decision. Ask what evidence would change the method or lead to another inspection.

Fix conditions that support the pest

For rodents, CDC recommends reducing food, water and shelter and sealing access. For termites, EPA recommends addressing moisture and access around the building. Ask the company which conditions it observed on your property.

Turn those findings into assigned tasks. For each task, record the location, proposed action, person responsible and completion note. Examples include repairing a leak, improving waste storage or arranging an entry point repair. Ask the company to inspect completed work.

Compare control methods

EPA's IPM principles recommend assessing effectiveness and risk when selecting controls. Ask why the proposed method fits the pest, location and level of activity. Ask what nonchemical measures are practical and what problem a pesticide is intended to solve.

IPM does not mean a promise of no pesticides. It also does not mean every visit needs an application. Ask for a record of findings and actions, including visits where monitoring leads to no treatment.

Make follow-up measurable

Record monitor locations, new sightings, completed repairs and service findings. Ask the company what result would count as progress and what would cause it to reassess the plan.

For a landlord or business, agree who receives the record and who arranges access. Ask how occupants report new activity. A plan works better when preparation, repairs and monitoring have named owners rather than remaining general advice.

Sources

All sources below were fetched and checked on 2026-11-10. Dates are access dates.

- US EPA, Integrated Pest Management Principles. Accessed 2026-11-10.
- CDC, Controlling Wild Rodent Infestations. Accessed 2026-11-10.
- US EPA, Termites: How to Identify and Control Them. Accessed 2026-11-10.

Frequently asked questions

Does this guide replace a local inspection?

No. Confirm the pest, current licence and treatment scope with the company and relevant authority.