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### Online training available:

<https://eces.ifas.ufl.edu/>

### Contact us:

<http://schoolipm.ifas.ufl.edu/>

#### Faith Oi

[foi@ufl.edu](mailto:foi@ufl.edu)

#### Jennifer Gillett-Kaufman

[gillett@ufl.edu](mailto:gillett@ufl.edu)

## Florida School IPM Focus on Clutter

With summer almost over and teachers returning to the classroom it is time to think about managing clutter. Clutter can happen to all of us but now as teachers are returning to the classroom and students are bringing in supplies that will be stored for the school year, we need to focus on clutter management. One of the best ways to do that is by preparing yourself and the people you work with. If you can only make once change this year at your school it should be to minimize clutter in classrooms.

Please take a minute to look at some of the Pest Presses we have available on **our website**. Don't forget you can customize Pest Presses to fit your needs. Take a minute to modify and forward our Pest Press on clutter or the following article "**What Everyone Should Know About Clutter**" to teachers in your school or district. Our goal is to have every school using IPM to protect everyone in the school from the risks posed by pests and pesticides.

For more information about the Florida School IPM program and how to tailor our material to fit your needs please contact Faith at: [foi@ufl.edu](mailto:foi@ufl.edu) or Jennifer at: [gillett@ufl.edu](mailto:gillett@ufl.edu). We are both happy to help you make this school year a success.

## Eddie Willis on Controlling Clutter



Eddie Willis has had success controlling clutter as an IPM Technician for Brevard County School Board. He has spent the last 32 years working with Brevard Public Schools.

His role in the Brevard School System is as a Certified Training Custodian in the Plant Operations Department that is managed by George Bishop (Central Custodial Supervisor) and Jim Powers (Env Health & Safety Manager).

Eddie has been working shoulder to shoulder for the past nine-years with the district's IPM Coordinator, Earl Lewallen, and others in establishing Brevard as a School IPM Leader for Florida.

His biggest success has been the reduction of clutter with the help of teachers, custodial staff and kitchen managers. He said "You can't be successful without teamwork to remove the clutter."

### Examples of clutter:

Custodial staff play an important role in this team by removing clutter like cardboard and newspaper paper on a regular basis. Having a fast turnover of trash items reduces the potential for pest populations to grow.

In the cafeteria our biggest problem was a stockpile of cardboard boxes and produce containers. We got the kitchen staff to rotate their cardboard storage so no boxes were in the kitchen for more than a week. A key element of the program... under NO circumstance were staff to bring produce boxes into the kitchen or to keep them for storing other items! Banana boxes are a huge problem, they are often the way pests infest a clean kitchen by hitchhiking in on the boxes.

Teachers like to store their teaching supplies in paper boxes. The Brevard team got them to reduce the amount they were storing in the classroom and what they can't part with they are encouraged to move to plastic bins.

Others folks doing battle with clutter in Brevard include: William Arrington, Kim Favazza, Andy Garbutt, Pam Hudson, Ramon Zada and hundreds of teachers and staff members who are working hard to change their behavior to reduce pest conducive conditions.

**If you would like to discuss the Brevard School IPM Program please contact Earl at: [Lewallen.Earl@Brevardschools.org](mailto:Lewallen.Earl@Brevardschools.org)**

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## What Everyone Should Know About Clutter

**Clutter wastes time.** There just gets to be a point in time when you simply can't be efficient anymore because chaos has taken over and everything has gotten piled in corners. When you can't find things where they're supposed to be, you hunt, hunting wastes time. It also takes longer to clean around clutter. If you need to move things off the floor to clean under or around them you can bet the area is not getting as clean as it could.

**Clutter creates a disturbance in student focus.** Clutter is unsettling and doesn't create or maintain a conducive learning environment. Kids need stimulation, but that's different than clutter. If you are distracted by items that flash across your desk, think of what the kids might feel like if they haven't learned to filter unnecessary stimuli.

**Clutter creates pest harborage.** Pests love dark, undisturbed places. These dark, undisturbed places allow them to reproduce without consequence. The resulting young also have a peaceful place to mature. This is how the pest life-cycle continues.

**Clutter creates untreatable zones.** Clutter makes pest management almost impossible. If the pest control technician cannot apply the bait because of clutter, or there is so much clutter and food that the pest has no reason to come out, treatments will be ineffective. Remember as little as grease on a surface can feed pests, it doesn't have to be a buffet!

Information from the [Clutterbugs Pest Press](#).

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## Post Your School IPM News!

We hope you will submit news items and would be happy to help you write a story if you have an idea but don't have the time to write up the information. This newsletter will be published as content arrives please keep the information flowing! Please send news items to [Jennifer Gillett-Kaufman](#).