

Two Shades of Green Spotlight



Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

MID-BRONX DESPERADOES INTEGRATES IPM PRACTICES



Our Story

Mid-Bronx Desperadoes (MBD) Community Housing Corporation is a Bronx based not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life in communities through housing development, property management, and delivery of human services. MBD owns 40 residential buildings totaling 1,216 units in the Crotona Park East Section of the Bronx. With a goal of reducing rats and cockroaches, MBD partnered with Two Shades of Green (TSG) to implement an IPM program. Unlike traditional pest contracting, which relies exclusively on pesticides, IPM controls pests by repairing housing conditions conducive to pests (cracks, holes, leaks, garbage). If pesticides are needed, the team uses safer options and targets their application, minimizing contact with people and pets. The TSG program provided technical assistance, including an onsite building inspection, to help MBD identify ways to improve pest control activities.

The Benefits

- Fewer pests and tenant complaints
- Reduced asthma risks
- Safer use of pesticides
- 2/3 reduction in use of pesticides for rats

The Process

To address a chronic rat problem, MBD took creative steps to reduce garbage that was attracting rats. Building design issues — limited space and narrow stairs — made it difficult to store garbage and move it to the street for pickup. To compound the problem, the buildings



“Working with the Two Shades team, we took a hard look at our pest control services and now ask more from our contractor.”

Derrick Lovett, President/CEO, MBD Community Housing Corp.

“Controlling pests, which trigger asthma attacks, is a priority. We are now more proactive in fixing building problems to prevent pests.”

Michael Thomas, MBD Community Housing Corp. Development

Before



After



“We now include pest-proofing strategies in renovations. It just makes sense.”

Derrick Lovett, President/CEO, MBD Community Housing Corp.

 **State Farm**

 

were at the end of the sanitation route, with late pickups. Some nights not all the trash was collected, attracting rats. Instead of turning to pesticides, MBD worked with the Sanitation Department to reschedule pick-ups, resolving the problem.

The TSG building inspections also identified opportunities to:

- Prevent pests from entering buildings (covering pipes/vents with wire mesh).
- Fix water leaks attracting pests.
- Use baits to control cockroaches.

TSG’s information on best practices also helped MBD recognize that they could get better service from their pest control contractor.

After considering a change in contractors, MBD chose to retain their vendor and establish clear performance expectations consistent with IPM practices. Now more emphasis is placed on identifying and repairing building conditions that attract pests.

Building IPM Into Renovation

During a substantial \$11 million renovation of 1490 Crotona Park East (39 units), MBD included IPM pest exclusion strategies in the project scope. Simple additions such as adding diatomaceous earth to wall voids and sealing penetrations helped to “pest proof” the property. Tenant behavioral change was facilitated by breezeway to garbage area so tenants would take trash out even in bad weather, rather than leaving in hallway of building.

Challenges Overcome

The biggest challenge was shifting from regular pesticide spraying to integrated pest control. As a result of this, property maintenance improved, as well as the use of targeted pesticides.

Two Shades of Green Project Team

Two Shades of Green (TSG) is a partnership between LISC New York City, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the NYC Coalition for a Smoke-Free City to assist affordable housing owners in New York City adopt green and healthy property management practices that both reduce operating expenses and create healthier living environments for tenants and workers. Two Shades of Green focuses on water conservation, smoke free housing, integrated pest management, green cleaning, and active design. For more information visit: http://www.lisc.org/nyc/programs/green_and_healthy_neighborhoods/two_shades_of_green.php or contact Colleen Flynn at cflynn@lisc.org.