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## The Pest Bulletin

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# Ants Are Moving In

As ant experts, we notice interesting things about ants. For instance, they are no respecter of property—they invade homes of all sizes equally, and they infest every neighborhood. They are so common a problem that they are the #1 pest listed in Gallup polls.

You can be sure that every day, ants are either invading your home or trying to.

The first ants that march into a home are the "scouts" looking for food, water, or a nesting place. Once they find what they are looking for, they go back to their colony, laying down a scent trail as they go so other ants can more quickly find

their way. Depending on the species of ant, they may prefer sweets, or proteins like meat and grease. Some ants eat both, and they may switch their food preferences—one day they may be attracted to sweets, and another day they may ignore sweets and



go after proteins.

Whenever possible, refuse to provide ants food and water. Clean up crumbs, grease, and liquid spills. Occasionally rinse out your kitchen garbage container, even if you use garbage bags. Place opened food in sealed containers.

Some ant species would like to move

their entire colony indoors. They may nest in the oddest places, but favorite areas are behind walls and baseboards, beneath floors, in the soil of potted plants, and in other hidden areas.

As the area ant experts, we effectively control these common and persistent invaders. If you know someone who suffers from these pests, please tell them about our professional and courteous services!

## Are You Encouraging Termites?



No one knowingly hangs a sign on their front door saying:

**"Termites Welcome Here!"**

But unfortunately, most homes have conditions that practically beg termites to invade.

One of those "welcome" signs for termites is excess moisture in the structure. This is a common problem—one study found that 88% of all homes have one or more moisture problems. Some common moisture problems the study found include: improperly drained air conditioners and downspouts, leaks in the roof, windows, and gutters, poor drainage around the foundation, and sprinklers spraying water onto the side of homes. Excess moisture attracts termites and many other wood-destroying pests, so fix these today. Don't invite termites to move in!

Here are some other important steps

to take to discourage these home-destroying pests.

- Do not allow shrubs or vines to even partially block any air vents.
- Make sure no wood in and around your home is directly contacting the soil. Termites can invade wooden fences, trellises, and flower planters too, and then use these as hidden routes to enter your home.
- Remove pieces of wood, roots, and cardboard buried or lying on the soil.
- Have us professionally inspect all potential termite problem areas on a regular basis (if we are not already doing this), and treat if needed. We can save you money by catching an infestation early, before extensive damage is done, and our inspections and treatments can help prevent termites from ever getting started in your home.

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**\$25.00**  
For your referral

Refer a new customer to us and we will send you a \$25.00 check. Make sure they mention your name when they contact us.



Battling pests is never easy—  
next time call  
the pest professionals!

Thank you for your business and referrals!

## Spiders Cause Car Recall



Mazda is recalling 65,000 Mazda 6 cars because there have been 20 cases where spiders and their webbing have blocked the air flow in the fuel tank vent. This blockage had caused "excessive vacuum" to build up, causing cracking and leaking of the car's fuel tanks. Fortunately there have been no fires or injuries yet.

No one knows at this point why the spiders, all **yellow sac spiders**, are especially attracted to the vents. These spiders don't build large webs to catch insects—they use their silk to construct sacs in tight areas, and hid inside these sacs during the day. At night they crawl out and hunt for prey.

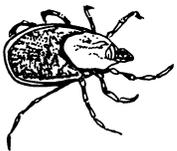
The 65,000 2009 and 2010 recalled cars will be retrofitted with a special spring inserted in the pipe to prevent the spiders from getting inside.

## Clothing Treatment for Ticks

Clothing that has been treated with *Permethrin* insecticide to reduce bites by ticks, mosquitoes, and other blood-sucking insects has been used for many years now, especially by the military and outdoorsmen. This insecticide is based on a natural insecticide that occurs in certain flowers. Permethrin has an advantage that it is tightly bound to fabric so even after the clothing has been laundered many times it still is very effective at repelling insects. Plus, applying any repellent to a fabric, rather than directly to skin, greatly reduces skin exposure.

Many people have the impression that to be effective, such clothing must cover their entire bodies. But a study in a recent issue of the *Journal of Medical Entomology* proved that even summer-weight clothing like treated sneakers, socks, shorts, and T-shirts greatly reduces problems with ticks. In fact, people wearing Permethrin-treated tennis shoes and socks were *74 times* less likely to have a tick bite than people wearing untreated shoes and socks. (Most ticks are close to the ground when they contact a human host, so wearing treated shoes makes a lot of sense.)

You can buy clothes that are pre-treated with Permethrin, or spray it on with a special kit. A combination of treated clothing and repellents on your skin would provide the most thorough protection from ticks, mosquitoes, and other blood-suckers.



## Mosquito Breeding Sites

With all the wet spring weather, it's especially important this year to eliminate water where mosquitoes may be breeding right in your yard. Mosquito larvae don't need a lot of water to live and develop into adult mosquitoes—even a saucer underneath a potted plant can be a place they can breed in.

Inspect your yard regularly and drain any standing water you find *at least once a week*. This includes flower pots and saucers, buckets, wheelbarrows, pet watering bowls and birdbaths (drain and change the water), and any other place where you find standing water. All ornamental ponds and rain barrels should be stocked with mosquito-eating fish, or treated to kill mosquito larvae.



## Cockroaches as Radiation Survivors

Unfortunately because of the tragic reactor leaks in Japan, there is again talk about the effects of radiation. We've probably all heard the idea that if the earth was blanketed in radiation, only cockroaches would survive. How true is that?

Cockroaches are much more resistant to radiation than humans. A human may be killed by a radiation dose of 3 sieverts (Sv), whereas in tests, German cockroaches didn't die until they were exposed to 900 to 1,000 Sv.

This amazing difference is apparently because cockroaches are much less complex organisms than humans. They have less DNA than humans, and they have fewer dividing cells, which are the cells most vulnerable to radiation.

But cockroaches are by no means the most radiation-resistant insect. In tests, flour beetles, fruit flies, and parasitic wasps were all able to survive even higher radiation levels than cockroaches. And one kind of bacterium beats insects. It actually lives in radioactive waste dumps.



## Pest Trivia

The bite of the **hobo spider**, a spider that is spreading in the Pacific Northwest, is thought to cause necrotic tissue lesions. But scientists have recently found that its venom is harmless. Another possibility is that when this spider bites, it introduces harmful bacteria. However, the study found only common, harmless bacteria on these spiders. Therefore, unlike what was previously believed about this spider, the authors of the study suggest that this may not be a spider of medical concern, according to a recent article in the *Journal of Medical Entomology*.

A man in Rhode Island pled guilty to selling **illegal pet pesticides** on the internet. He was selling counterfeit Frontline and Frontline Plus products for flea control on his eBay website, Catsmartplus. The fraud was discovered after a customer complained to the U.S. Attorney's office that her cats had an "adverse reaction" to one of the products she had purchased. The man faces a maximum sentence of ten years in federal prison.