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## The Pest Bulletin

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**McKINZIE PEST CONTROL**  
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# A Safer, Healthier Living Environment

What if we were not able to adequately control all the pests around us? In the past, pests have often had the upper hand. The phrase "don't let the bedbugs bite!" came about because this pest was once all too common. Huge populations of uncontrolled bed bugs fed on people as they tried to sleep. *Yuck!* There are countless cases of rampant rodent, flea, lice, and other pest problems that have spread disease and famine in the past. Man's efforts to stop them or slow them down have often been largely futile.

Pests and pest-transmitted dis-

eases are still with us, but luckily, we are in an era when our knowledge of pests and diseases, and our ability to control them safely, has never been better. This is a daily battle. Diseases and the pests that spread them are everywhere, and include everything from the new West Nile Virus spread by mosquitoes, to Lyme disease transmitted by biting ticks, to common food poisoning and dysentery spread by flies, roaches, rats and mice. There are literally thousands of diseases that



pests spread, as well as the problem of stinging and venomous pests.

Even the friendly ladybug is not exempt in causing health problems. Huge numbers of the new Asian Lady Beetle has started to invade homes. Studies show these and some other pests can trigger allergies.

McKinzie Pest Control is proud to be called the "**Protector of Health**" when it comes to controlling pests. We are all very fortunate that, though it may take constant effort, we live in a time when we've got the upper hand against pests!

## Pests in Commercial Settings

 Pests breed so quickly, and are so adept at invading new places and finding food, that they are universal problems for businesses. Whatever man builds, pests will invade and use for their own purposes. We offer professional pest management services for all kinds of businesses, including office buildings, restaurants, hotels, supermarkets and stores of all kinds, and warehouses and storage facilities, to name a few.

While safety and effectiveness is important in all these places, we also offer specialized professional pest management programs for what we call highly sensitive environments, like health care facilities, rooms with computers or other electronic equipment, and schools. As you can guess, it is critical in these environments to prevent pest infestations of all kinds.

Pests that can spread diseases, or bite or sting, can not be tolerated in places like health care facilities. We use a very specialized set of products, skills, tools and procedures to service these accounts successfully.

In fact, every account we service has a unique set of pest problems that requires designing and implementing a unique program. The program must prevent pest infestations as much as possible, and eliminate those that do get started, without affecting customers and employees. A successful program requires knowledge of the pests involved, areas they infest, the source of the pests, practices the business is engaged in that contributes to the problem, how to alter those practices, and much more.

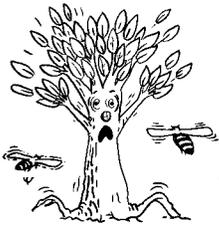
We are the company you can rely on to do all this for you!

## Pest Prevention Tip of the Month

Many pests, including ants, crawl onto buildings from branches of trees and shrubs that are touching the building. But some pests don't even need the branches to be touching—rats, mice, and squirrels can gain access to roofs on branches within 6 feet of the building. Prune accordingly.



This is ridiculous! He feels so at home, now he even gets his e-mail here!



## Hornet's Curious Habit

The European Hornet, now found in most of the eastern U.S., has the rather curious habit of stripping bark off twigs and young branches, girdling and killing the branch. This huge insect (the queens are almost 1-1/2 inches long, and workers are 2/3 this size) can do considerable damage when they come together from several colonies and concentrate on certain plants. They seem to prefer lilac, ash, and birch, but will strip bark off many other plants as well.

The hornets love the sugary sap under the bark. It is not clear yet whether the sap gives the hornets something close to a "sugar high", or if it ferments into an alcohol, but their attraction to the sap is similar to an addiction. Instead of returning to their nest before it gets dark, as would any normal hornet or wasp, a recent test showed that some hornets arrive back to the colony after 1:00am, and more than a quarter of the workers are staying away from the nest all night, feeding on the sap. Mostly they remain motionless in the cold night as in a trance, clinging to the stripped branches. In the morning they slowly make their way back to the nest.

## Roach Robot Shows Promise



C'mon

In the future a new robotic cockroach, called the *InsBot*, may be used to lure cockroaches to their death. About the size of a matchbox, the roach is a joint effort between France, Belgium, and Switzerland. It's been found that real roaches like spending time with these robotic roaches—especially when the robots are sprayed with various cockroach scents.

Tests have been conducted with special boxes that are split in half, one side dark and one side light. Normally cockroaches will congregate in the dark side of a box, but according to the tests, if the robots go to the light side of a box, other cockroaches will follow them. Perhaps someday the robots can be programmed to help control roaches by leading them into traps or sprayed areas.

## Drugged Pigeons Poop & Tell

The allegations of steroids being used to boost performance in baseball, cycling, and field and track have rocked the sports world recently. The same trouble is being experienced in the world of pigeon racing.

Belgium began testing racing pigeons for drugs in 1995 out of concern for the birds' welfare. Since then, scores of pigeons have tested positive for steroids, causing their

owners to be suspended from racing.

The British began testing the droppings of their racing pigeons last year in order to show that they have a clean sport. So far, all their tests have come back negative. But you never know if all that pigeon poop you see on your car window might turn out to be drug evidence!



## Cockroaches Get Old Too

A cockroach's reaction time is incredibly quick. Puff wind on one, and it will be off and running in an incredibly short 50 milliseconds. Their simple brain definitely wins out over our more complex brain in response time—a human requires 200 milliseconds (a fifth of a second) to respond to a stimulus under the best of conditions.

But recent studies show that cockroaches change when they get old, and their escape response becomes less reliable. Older cockroaches are actually more likely to trip over their own feet: time-lapse photography shows their front legs literally snag their middle legs. Old roaches also begin to slip while walking uphill. And interestingly, if you touch an old cockroach, or hit it with a puff of air, sometimes it will run, but other times it will just stand there motionless.

Were you ever able to sneak up on a roach, smash or catch it, and then congratulate yourself on how speedy you were? Don't pat yourself too vigorously on the back--it may have just been one of those over-the-hill roaches!

## Did You Know?

❶ Some **artificial Christmas trees** made in China have brought with them a potentially destructive beetle pest new to this country. Certain artificial trees, that should have been kiln-dried to destroy the beetles before they left China, are infested with the Brown Fir Long-horned Beetle. The dark brown beetle, whose larvae were tunneling into the wooden base of the artificial trees, has resulted in the trees being recalled.

❷ **Drunk bees**, researchers have discovered, act much like humans who are intoxicated. Drunk bees get lazy, spending less time crawling and flying about and more time grooming. They also have impaired learning, are forgetful and more aggressive. *Really* drunk bees keel over on their backs and sleep it off, or never wake up if they have consumed too much alcohol.

❸ **Human lice** can be used in criminal cases where there has been close contact between an assailant and the victim. Recent research showed that the blood meal inside lice can have a mixed DNA profile for up to 20 hours after feeding.

❹ European plant breeders report having to discard several new roses with beautiful flowers because they have unpleasant scents such as "dust, metal, wet carpet, cold tobacco, and **squashed bugs**"!

