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NOV/DECEMBER 2011
Pest Patrol News



"Jingle bells, jingle bells,
mice are on their way.
You can scream and you
can yell, but you can't
keep them away!"

'Tis the season of colder weather, warm hearths, and visiting friends and relatives. Unfortunately, friends and relatives are not the only visitors in late fall and winter. Rats and mice think our homes are theirs! In the cooler months rodents seek out warm, dry places, preferably near food, and houses are especially attractive to them.

Many of our customers ask how they

can keep mice and rats out of their homes. We have listed a few things below, but remember there is no absolutely sure way to prevent their entry. If your best efforts fail and the intruders still get in, our trained technicians will send them packing!

HELP KEEP RODENTS OUT:

- Make sure all outside doors, including garage doors, fit snugly at the bottom and around the edges.
- Seal all cracks and openings in your outside walls and foundations, including around water pipes, and gas, cable, phone, and electrical lines.
- Seal around basement windows.

Avoid ATTRACTING RODENTS:

- Keep bird feeders away from the home so fallen seed won't lure rodents close to your home. If a lot of feed ends up on the ground, try a different type of feeder.
- Keep grass and weeds cut short so rodents have less cover. Trim foliage away from your foundation, lower the height of dense groundcovers, and remove the lower branches of dense shrubs.
- Don't leave uneaten pet food and filled water bowls outside overnight.

Termite Prevention Saves \$\$\$!

Termites are among the most damaging and costly of all insect pests. These pests cause **5 billion dollars** of damage to structures in the United States every year.

One reason termites cause so much damage is that most homeowners are completely unaware their home is infested by these hidden pests. Typically it takes a new colony three to five years before it starts producing winged swarmers, the sign homeowners are most likely to see. By the time the swarmers are seen, substantial damage may have occurred. Worse yet, often an indoor colony releases swarmers outdoors, so the homeowner may never see them.

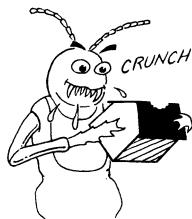
How fast do termites work? A typical mature colony of 240,000 subterranean termites (some colonies are

much larger) consumes an average of about 20 grams of wood in a 24 hour period. This converts to about 16 pounds of wood each year per colony, which gradually weakens a structure.

Termites are like a slow-spreading cancer. It's much better to catch the problem early, and control it then. That's why it's so important to

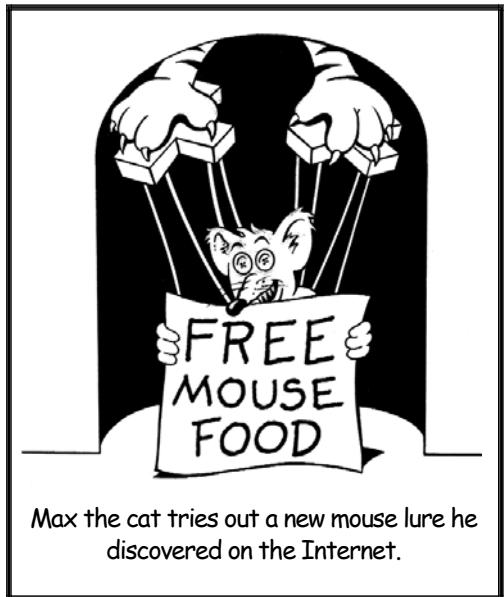
have us do a regular, professional inspection to detect these and other wood-destroying pests, as part of a preventative maintenance program to protect your investment in your home.

Catching these pests sooner rather than later means you spend less controlling them. Additionally, often we catch them before they have done substantial damage, saving you thousands of dollars in repair costs.



Pest Prevention Tip of the Month

Clean leaves and branches out of gutters so that fall and winter rains don't back up in them and overflow. Run a hose through the gutters so you can find and repair leaks. Also make sure the downspouts are not clogged; water should run freely through them.



Max the cat tries out a new mouse lure he discovered on the Internet.

Four Injured in Bee Attack

A man in a wheelchair was attacked by thousands of angry bees after he apparently disturbed their hive in Santa Ana, California. He had fallen out of his wheelchair and was yelling for help when three bystanders ran to his aid. But the bees were so aggressive that they turned on the three rescuers, causing them to retreat. They were eventually able to run back in and pull the man to safety—a very brave rescue.

All four men were hospitalized for their bee stings. Two firefighters who responded to the scene also were stung. The entire street was shut down and businesses closed until beekeepers were able to remove the hive.

Because these bees were especially aggressive, they were sent to a laboratory to determine if they are Africanized bees. In September a 1,000 pound hog was killed by Africanized bees in Arizona. Africanized bees are spreading and now have been found in 11 states.



Home Bed Bug Remedies Cause Illnesses

A new study by the Centers for Disease Control reports that people are getting sick when they treat their own homes for bed bugs. The study investigated 111 people who became ill, and one who died, from the misapplication of pesticides. The death, and nearly all of the illnesses, are the result of homeowners trying to control this pest themselves. The report recommends that people with bed bugs seek the services of a professional pest control company.



BUYING GIFTS? Don't bother giving an electronic mosquito repeller. These cool-looking electronic gizmos are available on the internet and in catalogs. They are supposed to repel mosquitoes. However, a study last year in the *Journal of Vector Ecology* showed they actually increase the biting rates of mosquitoes. Ow! Remember the old adage, "If it sounds too good to be true... it probably is."



The World's 1st Malaria Vaccine

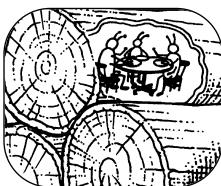
A new malaria vaccine has finished being tested in Africa, and it reduces the risk of children contracting malaria by about 50%. While that might not sound like much, this is a major breakthrough; a huge help in reducing malaria cases. The vaccine took 24 years to develop.

The suffering that malaria causes worldwide is immense. Almost 800,000 people die from malaria every year (mostly children under the age of five in Africa) and 225 million people contract the disease. The malaria parasite is transmitted in the saliva of the *Anopheles* mosquitoes. Although these mosquitoes are still common in the U.S., the malaria parasite was eliminated here by 1951. However, there are still many cases of malaria in this country (1,484 cases in 2009), among people who acquire this disease when they travel outside the United States. Because of these cases, constant vigilance is needed to prevent the malaria parasite from becoming reestablished in our mosquito population.



Don't Move Firewood!

It's never a good idea to move firewood long distances. All sorts of serious pests have been unknowingly spread around the country that way, including gypsy moths, and now the emerald ash borer, and many other plant pests and diseases. More and more states are starting to set up "buy it where you burn it" campaigns to educate the public. *Don't move firewood!*



The Fastest Flying Insects

The fastest flying insects are certain dragonflies and hawk moths, both of which have been clocked at around 35 mph. By comparison, honey bees have been clocked at only 13.9 mph at top speed, and hornets at 15.6 mph.

There is one report of a much faster insect. The male horse fly, in pursuit of a female, was clocked at an amazing 90 mph. But some people question the ability of a horse fly to fly this fast—we'll keep you posted as new information becomes available.



We Are Grateful!

We want to take this opportunity to once again thank all our valued customers. We deeply appreciate your business, and we especially appreciate those of you who referred new customers.

We wish you and yours a HEALTHY, PROSPEROUS, and BUGFREE new year!