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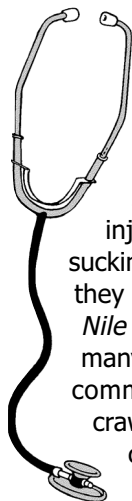
WINTER 2019/20

# Pest Patrol News

## A Prescription for a Healthy Home

Pest Management professionals are increasingly being recognized as **"Protectors of Health & Property"**. Regular pest control not only means *fewer encounters* with nuisance pests, *less pest-caused filth* in our homes, and *less damage* to our homes and possessions—it also means **a healthier place to live**.

It is now well established that pests can cause allergy problems. The National Institutes of Health has estimated that over *15 million* Americans have allergic reactions to cockroaches. Fleas, rodents, and a variety of other pests can also cause allergic reactions.



Pests can also affect our health by their biting and stinging, and by carrying and spreading diseases. Various bees, wasps, ticks, mosquitoes, ants, fleas, and spiders bite or sting us, injecting their venom or saliva, or sucking up our blood. In doing this they transmit everything from *West Nile Virus* to *Lyme disease*. Also, many pests spread diseases such as common food poisoning by simply crawling on our food or our kitchen counters.

By controlling these pests,

we make your life easier and more enjoyable, and help guard your health. We also eliminate the need for you to handle and store most pesticides, adding to the safety of your home. This is especially important when severe weather or other natural disasters strike.

So, **thank you** for trusting us as we take a vital role in protecting you and your loved ones!

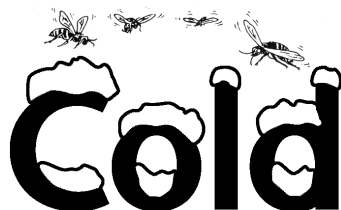
### Pest Prevention Tip of the Month

Food from bird feeders often gets scattered on the ground, where it attracts and feeds hungry rats and mice. To prevent this, always use feeders that have a seed catch tray underneath them. Clean up any spilled food daily, before evening. Use non-climbable poles, or poles that have guards on them, to prevent rodents from climbing up the pole.

## Pests Waiting to Rebound in Spring

What do pests do to survive the winter cold? **Indoor** pests like rats, mice, cockroaches, ants, and even bed bugs are still active during the winter months, eating and multiplying and carrying on their lives as pests, though they may not be multiplying as fast as before.

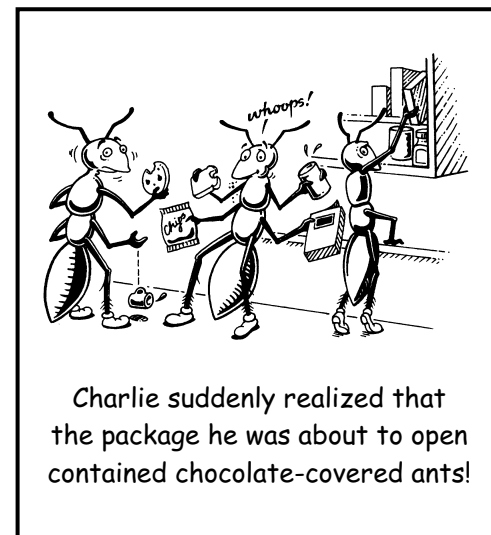
(much more so than hibernating bears), allowing them to survive until conditions are better again.



But what about all the pests **outdoors**? These mostly have stopped multiplying, but they have diverse methods of surviving adverse weather. They may crawl under bark or in cracks in walls that offer protection from extreme weather. Some kinds hide beneath rocks, boards, or sidewalks that keep them warmer. Others survive the winter only as eggs or pupae, both of which are often more weather-resistant than adult pests. Some pests go into a state of diapause where their body functions slow down

Some insects, including carpenter ants, produce glycerol—a kind of antifreeze—that allows them to survive colder temperatures without their bodies freezing. Ants nesting in the ground also move up and down in the ground to stay warmer, and they cluster together to stay warmer on cold days.

So, while we hope that cold weather will kill off enough pests so that next year will be pest-free, unfortunately that doesn't happen. If certain pest species are living in our area, they have already adapted themselves to our conditions, and unfortunately, we'll see them again and again every year. *We'll be ready for them!*



Charlie suddenly realized that the package he was about to open contained chocolate-covered ants!



## Termites Are Killing Trees

The *Asian subterranean termite* probably arrived in the U.S. on oceangoing ships. They were first detected in Miami in 1996 and have now spread throughout southern Florida.

Asian subterranean termite workers are unusually large for termites—about *half an inch long*. This new invader not only infests wooden structures, but like Formosan termites, readily infests trees. There are now many documented cases where they have hollowed out huge oak trees, weakening them enough so that they toppled over during hurricanes.

These termites also have the very unusual habit of killing slash pine trees outright. They don't hollow out the sappy, inner, dead wood of this pine species, but instead eat the live wood in the outer layers of the tree trunk. When they eat this area, they interrupt the tissues that carry water, sugars and nutrients up and down the tree, killing the tree.

In one survey last year, Asian termites had already killed 12% of the slash pines around homes, and had infested about half of the trees. Unless the termites are killed, many more of these beautiful trees will die in the years ahead.

## Flies In Hospitals Carry Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria



A study of nearly 20,000 flying insects (mostly flies) collected from hospitals in England revealed disturbing news. Of the 86 bacterial strains that the flies were carrying, 53% were resistant to one or more classes of antibiotics. *Of this figure, an amazing 19% were resistant to multiple antibiotics.*

Hospitals are constantly looking for ways to stop the spread of harmful and antibiotic-resistant bacteria. This study shows that flies are carrying these bacteria. Because flies are known spreaders of bacteria, professional fly control is extremely important to help stop the spread of these bacteria.

## EEE Hits U.S. Hard, Kills 14

You may have seen in the news—the number of cases of mosquito-transmitted *Eastern equine encephalitis* (EEE) was unusually high this year. The U.S. averages 7 cases a year of this often-deadly disease, but as of November 19, 2019, there were **36 cases**, including **14 tragic deaths**.



EEE is an especially brutal virus that causes swelling and dysfunction of the brain. It is untreatable, and about 30% of people who contract it usually die. Unfortunately, many people who do recover are left with permanent mental disorders and brain dysfunction.

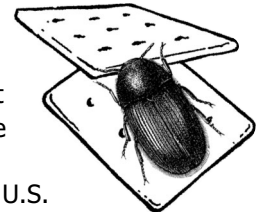
The disease is most common in eastern and southeastern states. This year it was contracted in 8 states, with people in Massachusetts and Michigan hit the hardest.

EEE is mostly cycled between birds and the mosquitoes that feed on birds. Many of these types of mosquitoes don't bite humans, but when one of the common human-biting mosquitos bites an infected bird and then bites a human, the deadly virus is transmitted to us.

Taking steps to reduce mosquito populations and wearing an effective repellent such as *DEET* when outdoors, are important steps to reduce the chances of contracting EEE and other, more common mosquito-transmitted viruses, like *West Nile Virus*.

## Pests Come out of Hidden Underground Bunker

What people first thought was a bed bug infestation in the city hall offices in a town in Massachusetts turned out to be stored product beetles. But even more bizarre was the source discovered by the professional pest control operator—a hidden underground bunker under the city offices that had been forgotten for decades.



The bunker was built in the early 1960's when the U.S. government was preparing to feed citizens in case of a nuclear war. It was stocked with hundreds of boxes containing metal cans filled with crackers—civil defense rations. Because of apparent periodic flooding of the bunker, the cans were in poor shape, and drugstore beetles, a common pest of stored food, had gotten inside the cans and were feeding on the crackers. The beetles covered the walls and floors of the bunker.

The bunker was sprayed to kill the beetles, and then the arduous task of removing the dead beetles and infested cans started. There were so many dead beetles that they had to be shoveled up off the floor. Each can of crackers weighed nearly 30 pounds, and 30 tons of these and other debris were removed from the bunker, filling 13 dumpsters.

Interestingly, the U.S. Government hired several cracker companies to produce more than **20 billion** crackers by 1964. These were stored in bunkers, shelters, and caves across the country. The all-purpose survival crackers were often made with bulgur wheat. It is unknown how many of these containers are still out there...

***We wish everyone a Merry Christmas,  
Happy Holidays, and a wonderful New Year!***

