

Spiders – Friends or Foes

There are approximately 35,000 described species of arachnids, or spiders, in the world. About 3,000 of them are found in North America. While this greatly misunderstood creature has many benefits, most spiders can be considered a “pest” at some point, such as when they decide to invade your home or business. What we must remember is that spiders only set up shop where there is a food source for them.



It is venomous if the exposure results in a bite that injects a venom or poison into the victim. There is only one case of a poisonous spider – until it is about 18 days old, the black widow spiderling (immature spider) can be poisonous if consumed. After that, these spiders become venomous if they are female and non-threatening if they are male.



What do spiders eat?

Insects and other small arthropods are on a spider’s dinner menu; thus the presence of arachnids in your home indicates that these other creatures are also in residence. Discovering the spiders’ food source and removing it often causes the spiders to move back outside where they will find food again. Spiders can provide clues to what is going on in a customer’s house or facility. The location of webs can indicate what other kind of pest activity may be present. Webs close to the ground are most likely capturing crawling insects. Webs high on the wall are trapping some type of flying insect.

What is the difference between poisonous and venomous spiders?

An object is considered poisonous if consumption or exposure results in the transfer of a toxin to the victim.

Spring Is On Its Way

Semi-Annual Season Starts April 1

The large amount of snow our region absorbed over the winter will lead to an excessive amount of ground water this spring. This, together with the downed and now-rotted trees from the 2010 winter, means we can expect an increase in carpenter ant activity.

Be Patient! Carpenter ants need a steady dose of 65 degree weather to maintain steady movement. During the beginning of the spring season you will start to notice bits and pieces of activity. There is no need to panic! Your house will not fall down, and before you know it, we will be out to service your home.

Carpenter ants thrive in high moisture areas. Your cellar, crawl space and your saturated lawn are perfect conductors. Consider strategies, such as dehumidifiers, different types of mulch, and altering your lawn watering pattern, to outsmart these pests. Any change to an

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Service Updates

Prices are going up everywhere, but not at Pro-Tech. Payment terms for 2011 are the same as last year’s, which means our customers will not see any price increases, unless additional services are required. Providing expanded services to include a home addition, shed, or pool house is an example of a situation that could incur an additional charge.

Also, we want to remind customers that Pro-Tech’s popular

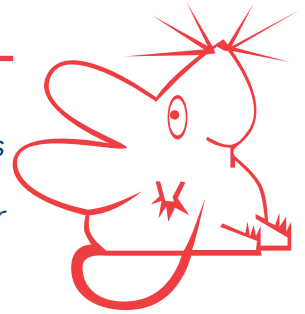
RODENT GUARD program will be offered from September through December 31. Rodent Guard is a specialized service performed at a discounted price and used as a preventative measure, not a clean-out tool. Cleanouts for mice can be performed during the rest of the year at the standard price. To schedule Rodent Guard for your home or business next fall, call our office at 508-757-2409.

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Helpful Hints:

Pest infestations occur because of favorable habitats existing in and close to your home. Eliminating these favorable habitats can prevent most common infestations and save you a lot of trouble and money. Here are a few helpful hints to make your home less attractive to pests.



1 Store firewood off the ground and away from the structure. Firewood is a frequent home for carpenter ants, termites, mice, spiders and snakes. Carpenter ants will forage up to 100 yards away from their nests for food, so further is always better.

2 Trim all trees and bushes away from the house to prevent contact with the structure. This prevents insects from bypassing the foundation treatment by using the vegetation as a bridge.



3 Avoid organic mulches around the foundation of the home and remove dead stumps and other rotting matter from within 50 feet of the home.

4 Correct any moisture problems in the house such as leaky roofs, chimney flashing, plumbing leaks, blocked gutters and poorly ventilated attics. Insects love moist wood.

5 Spiders are drawn to locations that offer good hunting for other insects. By switching to yellow insect lights and discouraging insects in and around your house, it becomes a less inviting environment for spiders.

6 By regularly removing spider webs from your house, basement and attic, you make it difficult for spiders to feed themselves and prevent reproduction.

7 Mosquito breeding around the home can be reduced significantly by reducing the amount of standing water. Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or similar water-holding containers that have accumulated on your property. Do not overlook containers that have become overgrown by aquatic vegetation. Pay special attention to discarded tires that may have accumulated on your property. The unused tire has become the most important domestic mosquito producer in this country.

8 Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are left out of doors. Drainage holes that are located on the sides collect enough water for mosquitoes to breed in.

9 Use landscaping to eliminate standing water that collects on your property. Mosquitoes will develop in any puddle that lasts more than 4 days.

FAQ's about Semi-Annual Service

Q: Do I have to schedule my service, or is it automatic?

A: Semi-Annual service is not pre-scheduled, unless specially requested. Services are completed on a town-to-town basis, usually starting with the furthest locations and working in towards Worcester.

Q: I've been having some problems with carpenter ants since my first treatment. What should I do?

The materials used in the Semi-Annual program are low-dose and designed to be long-term. This means once a pest crosses the treatment line, it takes 3 to 10 days for the pest to be terminated. You should look for systematic activity. Take the time to observe the surroundings. Has it recently rained? Has there been any light construction around the home? Have you recently received your annual mulch delivery? The smallest change in your environment can cause major issues in the pest world.

Did You Know?

FUN FACTS ABOUT ANTS

- If a man could run proportionally as fast as an ant can, he could move as quickly as a racehorse (40mph).
- An ant brain has about 250,000 brain cells; a human brain has 10 billion.
- An army ant (Eciton Burchelli) of South America can have as many as 700,000 members in its colony.
- The average life expectancy of an ant is 45 to 60 days.



Spring Is On the Way (cont. from pg.1)

insect's environment can have a drastic (and chemical free) impact on its activity.

Should problems occur and you have tried your patience, do not hesitate to call us to schedule an earlier appointment.

Fact vs. Fiction – Fleas and Ticks

FICTION - Ticks jump from tree/bush branches onto their hosts.

FACT - Ticks lie in wait with their first pair of legs outstretched, anticipating a host will pass by.

FICTION - Rubbing petroleum jelly onto attached ticks causes them to suffocate and die.

FACT - Petroleum jelly just causes ticks to become slick. They will survive the coating, feed, and drop off to continue their life cycle. The best way to get rid of attached ticks is to remove them using forceps or tweezers.

FICTION - Host fleas, like cat fleas, routinely jump off their hosts to feed on other hosts and to lay eggs.

FACT - Although nest fleas have that kind of behavior, host fleas are "intimate parasites." Once they have found a suitable host, they remain on that host to feed. Why would they give up on a good thing and risk jumping off into the great unknown? Additionally, female host fleas lay their eggs on their host; the eggs then drop off into the environment.



Bed Bug Education

Bed bugs have recently emerged as a serious health concern throughout the United States. **The Pro-Tech team has created a short, multi-media Power Point presentation to help educate the public about this troubling epidemic.** Using videos and photographs, the slide show is designed to help people identify bed bugs and understand the course of action required for successful removal and prevention. Following the electronic presentation, Pro-Tech extermination experts then answer any specific questions participants may have.

The slide show has proved useful in many different settings including nursing homes, moving companies, housing authorities, and schools that may be susceptible to a bed bug infestation. Pro-Tech can adapt the presentation for any type of facility.

Education about bed bugs is your best defense against this aggressive insect; you can never have too much information. To schedule a showing of Pro-Tech's bed bug presentation at your organization, please call our office at 508-757-2409.



Updated Billing Terms

We are pleased to announce that we now accept the following credit cards: Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover. We would also like to update you on the payment policies for Semi-Annual service customers. If you pay for both of your Semi-Annual visits up front, you can take advantage of a 10% pre-payment discount. If you pay within seven days of service, you can deduct \$3.00 dollars off the price.

We appreciate the fact that most of our loyal customers pay their bills on time; however, due to an increase in past-due accounts, we have been forced to tighten our collection policy. Our terms are still the same: net 30 days. (Most service companies are 7 to 10 days.) In the event that your account is more than 30 days past due, you will be assessed a \$10.00 monthly late fee. After 90 days, your account will automatically be sent to a collection service. You will be responsible for all collection costs.

You have probably noticed that many small businesses have had to close their doors because of the economy. Small businesses do not receive government bailouts, stimulus cash or forgiveness on receivables. Yet, we have had to absorb a 50% increase in health care premiums, rising costs for goods and services, and an increase on the sales tax of all of the above.

We appreciate your continued trust in Pro-Tech. On behalf of the small business community, we ask for your understanding and consideration of the important role small businesses play in the local economy, enhancing the quality of life for our employees' families and yours.



Thank you
Brian White,
President