Haggerty Pest Services

Dedicated to Safety, Service & Satisfaction

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Bug Bytes Newsletter

Perimeter Treatments Make Life Easier

Many pests can be kept out of a home or office with our *professional perimeter treatments*. Fewer pests is great for many reasons, but one benefit often overlooked is that it means you have a naturally *cleaner home*. It saves you time and work cleaning up dead insect bodies, spider webs, insect excrement, and other messes and damage that pests leave behind.

After all, you have enough cleaning to do! You shouldn't have to clean up after uninvited and unwanted pest "guests", too!

By reducing pests coming indoors, our perimeter treatments also make your home a *healthier place to live*. The treatments decrease the number of disease-causing organisms pests spread, and reduces the chances of being bitten or stung by bugs. Plus, pests, their bodies, cast off skins, and droppings, can unfortunately cause allergic responses in some people.

These are some of the reasons are our perimeter treatments are so popular and important. These professional, protective treatments outdoors create a barrier that helps keep out invading pests. Without these treatments, pests find their way inside your home through countless cracks, crevices, and openings in the exterior walls and foundation. Many of these openings are so small that we humans don't even notice them, but pests easily find them and crawl or slither through them.

Our perimeter treatments are just one of many tools we use to help prevent nasty pest problems. It's our contribution to making your housekeeping easier, and it also helps guard your home, your possessions, and your health.

Insecticides from Nature

As early as 400 B.C., people in the Middle East were extracting an insecticide from the flower heads of a certain species of flower, *Chrysanthemum cinerariaefolium*. They used the insecticide, called pyrethrum, to control head lice. It is amazing to think that this insecticide is still being used nearly 2,500 years later, and it has inspired the production of many similar insecticides.

In 1829, an Armenian brought pyrethrum to Europe, turning it into a lucrative business. Today most of the world's supply of pyrethrum comes from Tanzania, where the plants are grown at altitudes of 6,500 to 9,500 feet.

Because pyrethrum is relatively safe to use around humans and animals, and provides a quick knock-down of pests, it is still widely used. However, it has disadvantages: it becomes ineffective within a few minutes or hour after spraying, and sometimes insects recover after being sprayed.

Today the purified version of pyrethrum, called pyrethrins, is still used in some insecticide products, but chemists have also been able to copy this natural insecticide and come up with similar ones that are more effective. The new products, called synthetic pyrethroids, are an important part of our professional arsenal. They have all the advantages of pyrethrum, yet are more effective in killing insects.

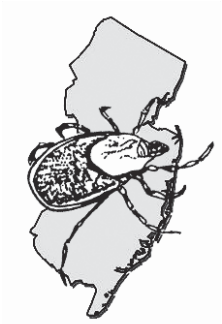
Whenever possible we use pyrethroids, and other products that are either completely natural, or inspired by nature. These are an important part of our arsenal of effective products and tools. Handled expertly, based on our professional training and years of experience, they help us produce the professional results our customers appreciate us for.

Pest Prevention Tip of the Month

Look at trees and shrubs close to your home, and prune back any branches that have grown within 6 feet of your walls or roof. This helps prevent roof rats, mice, squirrels, and raccoons from gaining entry to your roof area. These pests often find or create openings, and build nests inside attics and other areas.

Thank you for your business and referrals!

A New Tick Species in New Jersey



An established population of a tick *never before seen* in the U.S. was discovered last summer in Hunterdon County, New Jersey. The tick *(Haemaphysalis longicornis)* is native to Asia, but has been found in places like New Zealand and Australia on sheep. It is primarily a pest of livestock, but will feed on humans as well.

Health officials have no idea how the tick got here. The ticks were so numerous that they crawled up the pant legs of the people walking on the property. The ticks were controlled, but researchers will return to the property this spring to determine if there are still populations, and set traps for wild animals to see if they are infested and may have spread the infestation.

Any such case of a new tick is alarming because they can carry and transmit diseases. It has also been found that birds can become infested with many kinds of ticks, and may spread them long distances along their migration routes.

Rat Steals Mail

Recently a woman in Brooklyn had been complaining that the U.S. Post Office wasn't delivering her mail. She had been getting late notices for bills she never received. It turns out the postal worker tossed the mail onto the woman's porch each day, but before she retrieved it, a rat was dragging some of it off into its nearby burrow to use as nesting material. The pest management professional who discovered what was happening found *between 30 and 40 pieces of mail*, shredded by the rat, in the nest.

Bed Bug Histamines Persist

A recent study showed that bed bugs emit substantial amounts of histamine that persists even after the bed bugs are eliminated.

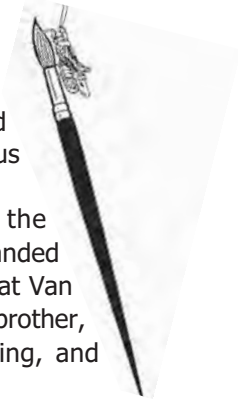
The study found that histamine levels in bed bug-infested homes were *at least 20 times higher* than homes with no history of bed bugs. High levels of histamine are in bed bug feces—they use the substance to mark good places to aggregate, near where sleeping humans are, their preferred food.

In humans, histamine is part of our natural immune system. But it can cause inflammation and respiratory problems, and allergies when inhaled, plus rashes when it contacts our skin.

Histamine persists a long time—the researchers discovered high levels of histamine in homes even three months after the bed bugs had been eliminated. In future tests they will look at if histamine levels decrease after both the bed bugs are eliminated, and rigorous cleaning that removes household dust.

Bed bugs have always been thought of as primarily a nuisance pest rather than a medically important pest, but this study supports further evidence that these pests can be both.

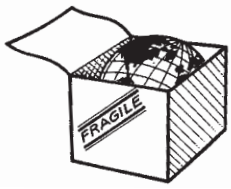
Bug Found Embedded in van Gogh Painting



Surprise! A tiny grasshopper was recently discovered embedded in the paint of one of Vincent van Gogh's famous masterpieces, *Olive Trees*.

The small grasshopper was hiding in plain sight on the painting but had never been noticed before. It must have landed in the paint in 1889, while it was still wet. It is well known that Van Gogh liked to paint outdoors. In one letter he wrote to his brother, he spoke of flies landing on his canvases as he was painting, and needing to remove them. Watch for those grasshoppers, too!

Invading Ants Hurt Ecosystems



Many of the most persistent ant pests are not native to this country. Two of these, Argentine ants and red imported fire ants, are well known to drive out less aggressive native ants, often resulting in severe consequences to the ecosystem.

This has been well documented with red imported fire ants, and more recently with Argentine ants. A study showed that the coast horned lizard in California is threatened because the Argentine ant has taken over areas where native harvester ants use to live. Harvester ants are the primary food for the lizard. The lizard won't eat Argentine ants, apparently because they taste bad.

Another study in South Africa showed that native ants bury large seeds of many kinds of native plants. When a fire comes through, these buried seeds germinate and new plants emerge. But when Argentine ants take over, they don't bury plant seeds. Any fire coming through burns most plant seeds that are above ground. There is *a ten-fold drop* in the number of large-seeded plants that germinate after a fire in areas infested by Argentine ants.