

Logistics & Warehousing Special



What is alexo?

alexo is BPCA's digital magazine designed to keep your business informed about public health pest control.

alexo is packed with professional advice from leading experts in the pest control industry, and is the only magazine you need to tackle your organisation's pest problems.

Why choose a BPCA member?

By choosing a BPCA member you are ensuring the use of a contractor who can provide a professional and consistent service.

All BPCA members meet our strict membership criteria, hold the relevant pest control insurances, and are fully qualified and trained to deal with your pest problems.



contents

Pest control in logistics

How to spot the signs of pests and prevent the outbreak of a pest infestation



A bird in every port

A look at the problems caused by avian invaders



Why is pest control pivotal

Some simple measures to adopt to help prevent pest infestations



The transportation of pests such as rodents and insects via trade routes is not a new revelation, and has occurred for as long as man has traded food and commodities. The majority of pest species present in Britain today, such as the Brown Rat and the Oriental Cockroach, have been introduced and spread as a result of cross-border trade over several centuries. Due to the increasing amounts of trade and freight from all corners of the world, pest infestations can now spread with frightening speed. Anyone involved in logistics or freight, be it road, rail, sea or air, should know the signs and understand the risks associated with pest infestations, and employ the professional services of a company that can control them.

The consequences for freight companies associated with pest activity can be serious and costly. Pest species can transfer disease and bacteria, they can lower the quality of raw material through damage or physical contamination, and can cause damage to property by gnawing or burrowing - requiring expensive remedial works. Should such uncontrolled pest infestations occur, the results can be adverse publicity, product recall, prosecution and the loss of revenue.

Many pest problems are caused by poor hygiene, in which good housekeeping standards will help prevent the spread and harbourage of insects and rodents. Any equipment or containers used for freight should be well maintained and regularly cleaned to

help prevent pests being attracted to commodities. Good housekeeping and the segregation and rotation of stock will also ensure that pests do not find harbourage amongst items that are long standing, removing the chance for pests to establish colonies.

Warehouses and holding depots are potential hives of pest activity as the accumulation of goods and foodstuffs from multiple sources will undoubtedly introduce some form of pest species. The result of cross-contamination by pests in such a location can be the transferral of insects or rodents to multiple end users, such as factories, shops or members of the public. It is essential that warehouses and holding depots have a means of inspecting and proactively monitoring for the activity of pests.

Though much attention is often paid to the freight, the transport vehicle is also susceptible to infestation and needs equal attention, for example mice and cockroaches have been found within aircraft on the ground. Therefore it follows that any area in which a vehicle is parked in between trips should have a pest prevention programme in place to minimise the risk of infestation and reduce possible down time to a business.

The main pest species to look out for are rodents and insects. Insects, in particular stored product insects such as biscuit beetle and rust-red flour beetle can be imported with food commodities, and wood-boring insects can be found in wooden furniture.

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Rodents

In the UK the main rodent species we have to control are the House Mouse (*Mus domesticus*), Brown Rat (*Rattus norvegicus*), which is found widely distributed throughout the UK in both urban and rural areas, and the *Rattus rattus*, commonly known as the Black or Ship Rat. It is this last species that is associated with plague and is now thankfully rarely found in the UK. However, if this species is spotted it tends to be in port areas.

All three species need food, water and harbourage to survive. They will nest in wall cavities, roof spaces and ducts in buildings, and can set up home between sacks where food is stockpiled. The Brown Rat can climb up the outside of walls between the wall and vertical pipes, the Black Rat needs no such aid as its long tail provides balance enabling it to climb along pipes, beams and ship's cables. The agility of the Brown Rat means that it can often be found nesting at roof height.

In terms of gaining control of a rodent infestation, it is important to assess which species are present as the control technique and the product used may vary depending on which is present. The Black Rat only lives indoors but the Brown Rat and House Mouse can live both indoors and outdoors. The Black Rat tends to be smaller than the Brown Rat and has a tail longer than the head and body. The tail of Brown Rat is shorter than its combined head and body. House Mouse is much smaller than the other two species with a combined head and body length of 70-90mm. Despite the common names, colour should not be used as a diagnostic tool when determining which species of rat is present. Droppings are a more accurate indicator. The droppings of a Brown Rat are on average about 12mm long and spindle shaped. Those of Black Rat are generally thinner and curved. Another feature are dark coloured smears left on regularly used runs. At roof level smears are sometimes seen as loops beneath ceiling joists. Those left by Brown Rat form a continuous loop whereas those of Black Rat are generally broken, reflecting the climbing ability of this species.

Insects

There are a number of specialist insect pests that can have detrimental impact on foodstuffs and stored items - all of which should be a cause for concern for the freight logistics and storage industries.

“The potential consequences of a load reaching a destination with an infestation can be disastrous!”

In the right conditions insects can breed rapidly, in turn damaging and contaminating stock. The Saw-toothed Grain Beetle, Rust Red Grain Beetle, Lesser Grain Borer, and the Grain and Rice Weevils are all well known pests of stored grain and foodstuffs, and can be the difference between the stock being accepted or rejected. However these aren't the only pests to look out for; the Biscuit Beetle is a small reddish-brown insect, only about 3mm long which is known for attacking stored foods such as flour, biscuits, cake mixes, cereals, spices, meat and soup powders. They have even been found thriving on poisonous substances such as strychnine, belladonna and aconite.

If insects do find their way into a store then problems can quickly arise as BPCA Technical Manager Richard Moseley explains. "When loads from different deliveries meet up with one another the insects migrate to the warmest area and can quickly create their own micro-climate, generating the perfect breeding environment as it accelerates the reproductive cycle." Richard adds "if an insect presence is found then action needs taking. The potential consequences of a load reaching a destination with an infestation can be disastrous!"

Gaining Control

In terms of gaining control of a pest infestation, the services of a professional pest control company will be required. A professional company will carry out a survey of the area in which transport vehicles and/or goods are stored to determine which pest species are present and then propose a plan to gain control. This may involve clearing overgrown vegetation, proofing of buildings in which commodities may be stored, improved housekeeping as well as laying baits or traps. Even if an infestation is not present, it is useful to have a pest control contract in place. Again, the company will conduct a survey to assess areas that may need proofing and will make recommendations to make areas less attractive to pests, potentially preventing a future infestation.

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BPCA online

Searching for a professional pest controller? Our database of hundreds of UK pest control companies with thousands of branches across the UK allows you to search by:

- Domestic or commercial contract
- Pest type – bed bugs, wasps, rats, mice, birds, mammals, and many more
- Distance from your premises
- Area covered

Fumigation

In some situations concerning the transport of freight, fumigation treatments may be required. Fumigation is a highly specialised area of pest control and in the UK may only be conducted by personnel that hold the relevant qualifications.

In the area of fumigation, those in charge must hold the relevant qualification for the particular situation that needs fumigating, i.e. someone who holds the certificate for Aircraft fumigation will not be able to fumigate containers unless he or she also holds the certificate for Container fumigation. Should you require further information on BPCA Fumigators in your areas, or to ensure that your current Fumigator is suitably qualified to carry out the work they are doing, please contact us.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Pest controllers will need to work closely with their customers in the freight and other industries to eradicate and prevent pest activity. Measures such as good hygiene, regular inspection, careful attention to building design and better training will all contribute to establishing Integrated Pest Management (IPM). This is a pest control strategy that combines physical, chemical and biological methods to achieve comprehensive control and pest eradication. IPM is a long term solution that allows the customer and the pest controller to work together and gain control without the continual use of poisons, which can only be positive for the environment. IPM is the future of pest control and will require positive input from all those involved in pest management.

Choosing a Pest Controller

The British Pest Control Association is the trade association for the

UK pest control industry. When purchasing services, unlike goods, buyers cannot see what they are getting before making up their mind. The decision to take on a service contractor is, therefore, something of an act of faith, and buyers cannot afford to make a mistake. By choosing a BPCA member you are ensuring the contractor is able to provide a thoroughly professional and consistent service. All BPCA Members have to meet the following criteria before they can join the Association to ensure they are a reputable and professional company:

- 1 All staff involved in the eradication and control of pest species must hold the RSPH/BPCA Level 2 Award in Pest Management or equivalent.**
- 2 All staff involved in the eradication and control of pest species must be members of a recognised Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme.**
- 3 Complete a regular audit and assessment undertaken by the BPCA.**
- 4 Hold the relevant pest control insurances.**
- 5 Compliance with the Association's Code of Conduct and Codes of Best Practice.**
- 6 To be trading for a minimum of 12 months in pest control.**

Further information

Should you require further information on contractors who meet BPCA specifications and are members of our Association, or on any specialist treatment advice, please contact BPCA on 01332 294288 or visit our website at www.bpca.org.uk

Fumigation Conference

The BPCA Fumigation Conference addressed the serious issue of cargo containers that are regularly fumigated for pests, without being satisfactorily labelled to indicate this.

BPCA's Fumigation and Controlled Environments (FaCE) forum is aware that the lack of information on thousands of containers fumigated every day globally, could be a serious risk to the health of those involved in shipping, storing, hauling and handling. Containers without correct documentation could make it all the way to the major retailers store without them being aware of the risk – an issue that must be drawn to their attention.

The one day event featured keynote speakers to raise awareness of best practice,

starting off with the very well respected and fumigation industry trainer Mike Kelly, along with the Marine Accident Investigation Bureau, Port Skills Safety, product manufacturers Detia Degesch GmbH, and an open discussion on the the proposed new RSPH Level Two qualification in fumigation

Richard Moseley, Technical Manager for BPCA and part of the FaCE forum explained "The Conference was an incredibly informative and interesting event. All parties, from fumigator to retailer and end user, had the opportunity to improve their knowledge, their safety, and perhaps even put measures in place to manage the risk from fumigated containers."





A special report by CIM Fellow and bestselling business author, Dee Blick.

Pest Control - two words that should be on the 'essential to address' list of any business owner from the logistics and associated sectors. Yet these two words are often conspicuous by their absence. The business owner will often have a proactive attitude to reducing risk by, for example, ensuring their building is protected from extreme weather and, that alarm systems are in place to deter thieves. The risk of an infestation of say mice, rats or pest birds is usually far from their mind. It's only when an outbreak of pests has occurred that pest control suddenly assumes its importance on the business agenda.

Why is this?

Ralph Izod, Managing Director of pest prevention and pest management specialist Dyno-Pest said, "What we usually find when we're called to a warehouse or storage unit because there has been an outbreak of pests is that it has taken the business owner by complete surprise. Yet on close inspection of the problem, we can see why the problem has occurred and by putting in place robust proofing measures, scheduling regular technician inspections and training the on-site team in early detection, we can ensure it's unlikely to re-occur." If you are yet to embrace the importance of pest control and pest prevention, Ralph recommends that you start by adopting these powerful but simple measures:

1 Ensure that your building is surveyed by a member of the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) so that you really are benefiting from expert and up-to-date advice. This is often provided at no charge and you should receive a detailed report.

2 Ensure that the rest room, kitchen and washroom facilities you provide for your staff are regularly (and professionally) cleaned to the highest standards. A dirty kitchen with opened packets of chocolate, biscuits and sugar plus an accumulation of food stains and dirt both in and under the cupboards could attract such as cockroaches, mice and rats. Yet these areas are often neglected because they are used by staff and not customers.

3 Commit to scheduled inspections from a BPCA member. Your accredited technician has been trained in how to identify the

earliest signs of a pest infestation and can nip it in the bud before it spreads to other areas of your building. If in the past you have relied on fire fighting, i.e bringing in a pest controller to tackle an infestation but doing nothing afterwards to prevent it from happening again, you're walking a risky path and probably not even saving any money in the long run.

4 Ask your pest controller if they will help you train your staff in how to identify the 'evidence' of the pests most likely to infest your building from deliveries.

5 When checking goods coming into your building, be on the lookout for signs of an infestation. Gnawing on packaging, shredded material, piles of dust when you remove goods from the pallets could be signs of unwanted pests that are inside the goods you're about to transport or store for a few days or months.

6 When goods are removed from your warehouse or vehicles, examine the space they've occupied before filling it again. This may be your only opportunity to check for signs of unwanted pests. Look for signs of droppings, unusual smells, smear marks on the walls, gnawing on any woodwork. Make sure that the space is thoroughly cleaned and any leftover packaging removed. Don't provide a welcoming haven for pests. Ensure your staff understand what to look for - and what to do about it.

7 Don't shrink from implementing the pest prevention measures recommended by your pest control contractor. "It's vital that the business owner or the manager of a warehouse recognises the importance of pest control and, is willing to work closely with their pest prevention partner. This entails putting pest control firmly on the business agenda, and not treating it as an afterthought" said Ralph.

Further information

You can find your local BPCA member either on the website at bpca.org.uk or by calling 01332 294288

A bird in every port



The problems of birds in ports and marinas should not be underestimated. Not only do they carry diseases but they can also damage port buildings and shipping causing a public health and safety hazard. Richard Moseley, Technical Manager of the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) looks at the problems birds can cause and considers some of the control methods available.

The key bird pests found in and around ports can cause significant economic damage. The predominant species are Pigeons (*Columba livia*) and Herring Gulls (*Larus argentatus*).

Bird droppings are acidic which means that they can react with metals on port structures and shipping as well as certain building materials such as stonework, which leads to increased corrosion and erosion. Not only that, port buildings and ships covered in bird fouling look unpleasant, can smell, can pose a risk by making walkways and staircases slippery and generally projects a poor image. Seagulls can also be very aggressive and will readily attack people or pets. There have been a number of cases where serious injuries have been caused by gulls.

Birds can spread disease

There is evidence that birds carry a wide variety of disease-causing organisms such as Salmonella, Listeria and E.coli var 0157. The chances of catching these diseases from birds are fairly remote however poor standards of hygiene after contact with bird droppings significantly increase the risk. Much more serious is the potential for inhalation of the air-borne disease agents that these birds can carry; such respiratory diseases can be fatal.

Birds can lead to litigation

Birds that gain access to food storage premises e.g. grain stores can contaminate food with their droppings, feathers or nest materials. Legislation controlling such contamination varies from country to country, with some requiring bird-proofing of food premises by law. However, one thing is certain, if there is any

contamination with bird droppings or feathers, the likelihood is that legal action will be taken. "In Liverpool docks back in 1984, there was a feral pigeon infestation in the grain storage areas," explains Kevin Higgins, Membership Manager of BPCA. "It is believed that diseased pigeons infesting the food stores infected the grain with highly contagious Newcastle disease. There were 19 outbreaks of the disease and one million chickens needed to be slaughtered as a result."

Birds can slow things down

Cleaning up gull droppings on shipping and yachts in marinas takes both time and money. In Cornwall for example, sailors on the local lifeboats were spending 20 minutes cleaning gull droppings off the deck before it was safe to set sail. "Slowing up the launch of a lifeboat because it needs to be cleaned, was an unacceptable situation," says Kevin. "Fortunately one of our members was able to proof the boats with netting which hung down the sides of the boat. It now only takes 30 seconds to gather the net up and stow it prior to launching."

Options for bird control

As with any pest control problem, the starting point for bird management is to try to remove the reasons why the pest is present. This means denying the pest species access to food and harbourage. In ports where there are large populations of seabirds, having a bird management strategy is important. Such a strategy may include the continued control of hygiene and housekeeping standards, proofing with exclusion systems to keep the birds out, scaring the birds and finally, where absolutely necessary and only where it is legally allowed, culling specific persistent individuals.

Improving hygiene and housekeeping standards

Preventing access to food supplies is often the key to controlling a population of birds, such as pigeons, which might frequent stores at ports. Where birds are flying into a building, basic housekeeping, like ensuring that un-proofed doors and windows

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Proofing

With birds, by far the most effective solution for an individual building is proofing. This involves the protection of individual buildings or shipping against birds through the installation of physical barriers. Even so, it is critical that the right proofing system is selected for each proofing installation. Examples include spikes, birdwire and other ledge systems, wire mesh and nets. Also, when installing on marine applications, it is important to ensure metal products used are stainless steel rather than zinc-coated as the former is more resistant to corrosion in a salt-laden atmosphere.

For pigeons and gulls in areas of light to medium pressure, for example ledges used for sunbathing or areas overlooking an important food source, a good spike system will generally solve the problem. However, the most determined birds, such as individuals with nests behind the proofing barrier, can overcome most proofing systems apart from properly installed bird netting. Indeed, where pigeons or gulls are nesting, netting is the only viable option.

Bird problems were recently encountered at one Northern-based harbour, Kevin explains: "There were real problems with gulls returning to the previous year's nesting sites on buildings across the harbour. We were asked to provide technical advice for proofing some of the buildings. This involved designing systems that successfully excluded the gulls from the asbestos cement roofs whilst ensuring that the integrity of the roofs was maintained. We recommended some of our qualified bird specialists to install the proofing which successfully resulted in a reduction in the size of breeding colony in that part of the harbour area."

Whatever method is chosen it makes good sense to go back to the site after installation to check that no birds are trapped or eggs left. It is also important to understand that regular inspection, once or twice a year, is essential to make sure the installation continues to work effectively. All bird management systems can be susceptible to damage by both people and the weather. They can also collect debris which may need to be removed.

Scaring

In specific situations, scaring techniques, using recordings of the birds' own distress calls, have been successful with Herring Gulls. The use of these techniques however requires specialist knowledge and training. Flying predator birds can be effective in some situations. Plastic predator birds, ultrasonics and random noise machines can work in some circumstances, however there is evidence the effect can wear off over a long period of time.

As well as the proofing work at the harbour, we recommended looking at some of the commercial properties bordering the harbour area, along with installing an acoustic deterrent control system in conjunction with flying live birds of prey. "Using both systems together produces far better results, as the association

"The chances of catching diseases from birds are fairly remote, however poor standards of hygiene after contact with bird droppings significantly increases the risk."

between the sound and seeing the falcon gives a much stronger deterrent effect on the birds," advises Kevin.

Culling

It is sometimes necessary to cull specific, problem birds. Where this is the only option it must be done within the law and as discreetly as possible to avoid any public relations difficulties. And remember large scale culls are rarely, if ever, successful – immigration from other flocks and rapid reproduction mean numbers soon recover.

One final thought

A successful bird management programme is likely to require an integrated approach combining some, if not all, of the elements outlined, backed up by a regular maintenance contract for a lasting solution. "Bird management is a specialist activity and not all pest control companies are equipped to tackle this problem," advises Simon Forrester, Chief Executive of the BPCA. "Within BPCA we have member organisations that specialise in this type of pest problem; we would advise checking the BPCA website to ensure you select a professional."

BIRD CONTROL TOOLKIT:



PROOFING TECHNIQUES AND DETERRENTS:

- Scaring – using other birds or imitations to mark their territory
- Netting – cover harbourage areas to prevent nesting
- Spiking – series of plastic or metal pins that prevent birds landing
- Optical gels – gels that make the building seem as if it is on fire in the birds vision
- Contact gels – contain an irritant that discomfort the bird if it contacts the gel
- Electric systems – give the bird a slight shock to deter them but not harm them
- Trapping – live capture traps set and visited by the pest controller on a regular basis
- Shooting – may not be appropriate in urban areas
- Food restriction – an essential part of any pest control measure

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- Have you bought pest control solely on price?
- What criteria did you use to select your servicing company?
- Are you convinced it will protect your business?

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- Pest awareness training
- Associate membership of BPCA
- Consultancy services
- Pest identification
- Finding you a professional contractor
- General pest advice

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