

Hospitality & Retail 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.

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Retail Therapy

A look at urban pests in retail



Following the standards

Are you protecting your business from pests?



Summer pests

A look at the pests you'll need to police this summer

Urban pests are proving almost impossible to control in some of the UK's most modern retail, entertainment and leisure complexes, seriously jeopardising the reputations of centres and their tenants and significantly adding to both operating costs and stock losses.

Retail therapy?



In the vast majority of cases the present problems have nothing to do with either pesticide resistance or inadequate individual treatment practices. Instead, they arise from a failure to provide the fully coordinated integrated pest management essential to keep on top of the likes of cockroaches, fruit flies and mice in modern urban environments.

"Today's retail complexes are a haven for urban pests," points out Dave Harrison of Manchester-based pest control specialists, Pestproof Ltd.

"Individual shop units with lots of hiding places for pests are connected by convenient super-highways of water, waste, heating, electricity, data, smoke detection and security alarm services. Then you have cage stores in communal stock areas; year-round warmth; an assortment of food outlets; and a continual coming and going of people and materials from far and wide."

Near perfect environments for pests to arrive and thrive they may be, but Dave Harrison is adamant pest control wouldn't be a problem in these centres were it not for the final ingredient – the vast range of different commercial interests and attitudes involved, coupled with the inability of most to work together to address the issue.

This is complicated by the fact that the major retail chains comprising the majority of the tenants invariably have their own pest management contracts with different professional providers. So, pest control within a single retail complex tends to be organised on a fragmented, individual outlet basis with little or no communication, let alone co-operation, between parties.

Given the extreme sensitivity of the subject, indeed, most pest

management contracts demand complete confidentiality from providers, forbidding them from even sharing any knowledge of a problem with either the centre or neighbouring outlets.

Understandable it may be commercially, but this completely prevents anyone getting on top of the most common and otherwise simple-to-control pest problems" Dave Harrison insists. "Just like residential blocks, we seldom find any

infestation confined to a single unit in retail and leisure complexes.

So, while we may be able to knock a problem on the head in the immediate vicinity, pretty soon we're called back to tackle another infestation in exactly the same place as pests migrate from

nearby areas we can't access."

"Typical of the problems we encounter is a recent German cockroach infestation in a prestigious northern retail complex where we do the pest control for the centre's management and two of its dozen or more food outlets. We've been finding the situation all but impossible to tackle despite throwing every available treatment at it."

"Even after repeated efforts culminating in a night-long programme in which we dismantled and thoroughly treated almost every appliance in the restaurant kitchen concerned we were still picking up large numbers of cockroaches a night on many of our monitor traps. And this despite working through every class of spray, dust and bait active available."

"A number of the cockroaches in our traps were alive and active despite a clear covering of insecticide dust, raising obvious concerns about resistance," he explains.

"Today's retail complexes are a haven for urban pests."



“Thankfully, we’ve been able to get on top of the immediate problem with a sustained programme of baiting and spraying with BASF’s best quality insecticides. But it will keep on recurring as a result of migration from areas beyond the premises we’ve been unable to either identify or gain access to. Without tackling these we’ll always be on the back foot; our clients will be facing the expense of repeated treatments; and other nearby outlets in the centre are likely to suffer too.

“In another case we had a five-fold increase in our contracted visits last year to deal with an intractable mouse problem arising from repeated re-invasion which wasn’t within our power to prevent,” adds Dave Harrison. “It just underlines what we call the ‘terraced house effect’ – your pest control is only as good as your neighbour’s.” Frustratingly, in the same complex we’ve also seen mice escape from common service areas into cage stores centre staff are not permitted to access, going on to cause serious damage to stock. Something that could easily have been prevented with timely, co-ordinated action. “We’ve also traced a fruit fly infestation blamed on the centre’s service areas to a leaking syrup pipe in a nearby restaurant, serviced by another pest control business. In this case the centre management agreed to pay for us to tackle the problem which we did rapidly and effectively to the benefit of a number of neighbouring premises.”

So, what is the solution? Well, it’s hardly rocket science. But, as Pestproof’s experience suggests, it is likely to require a sea change in attitudes by all concerned to enable centre-wide pest management in a truly integrated way. Only then can infestations be tackled as they need to be, with full investigation and co-ordinated ‘block’ treatment regardless of commercial territories, ensuring all the main areas of pest activity are dealt with effectively and simultaneously.

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NINE STEPS TO EFFECTIVE RETAIL COMPLEX TREATMENTS

- 1** Complex management should effectively manage an integrated centre-wide pest management programme - working together with all the tenants’ chosen contractors.
- 2** Agree a clear specification with your contractor, allowing them access to the whole complex, encompassing the need to access to all areas.
- 3** Inform tenants of the reasons for integrated pest control, and the need to access their premises.
- 4** Ensure your contractor conducts a survey of all areas and common parts to establish the nature and extent of the infestation, and conditions conducive to the infestation.
- 5** Advise all tenants on any relevant remedial measures they need to undertake e.g. hygiene improvements or proofing.
- 6** Enable a dialogue and sharing of reports between the tenants’ chosen contractors to establish a joint approach to control.
- 7** Enable the application of appropriate treatments across all areas, including common parts.
- 8** Evaluate the effectiveness of the work, establish any reasons for failure, and improve the procedures if required.
- 9** Continue approach until infestations are resolved.



“Contract confidentiality is completely preventing anyone getting on top of the most common and otherwise simple-to-control pest problems.”

The integrated answer

“It’s high time retail and other centres in multiple business use appreciated that a fragmented approach to pest control means serious problems for everyone involved,” stresses BASF insect control specialist, James Whittaker who has been working closely with Pestproof on the recent cockroach challenge.

“We have the tools and professionalism to provide the comprehensive insurance against troublesome pests that is particularly important for public-facing businesses. However, we can’t do so if short-termism and commercial boundaries that present no barrier to the pests continue to prevent pest controllers accessing them.”

James Whittaker sees individual pest controllers working for all the businesses in a centre getting together to share information on a regular basis and co-ordinating their action, wherever necessary, as the simplest solution. In reality, though, he accepts that commercial sensitivities, competitive pressures and a reluctance on the part of many businesses to take joint responsibility for pest problems makes this impossible in most cases.

So he urges facility managers to take responsibility for pest control in exactly the same way they already do for other services like power and water supply, recycling and waste management and security, and provide it through a single professional BPCA-registered operator.

A degree of boldness will almost certainly be required to cut through the inevitable ‘turf wars’. Nevertheless, it should be easy to justify given the extent to which the reputation of both centres and their retail tenants is at risk, and the scale of cost savings available from more effective, fully integrated pest control in a single well-negotiated contract.

“Interestingly, the same recipe already works well in other areas,”

James Whittaker points out. “Many motorway services and leisure centres with franchised outlets have single pest control contracts. Cruise liners do it as a matter of course and necessity too – as it’s simply impossible for multiple pest control businesses to reliably service ships at sea. And security considerations mean we see similar arrangements in airports across the country.”

“So what’s to stop retail complexes taking the same approach? All it needs is an appreciation that pest infestations almost always need to be tackled across commercial boundaries. Which, in turn, requires facilities managers to develop and enforce co-ordinated control.

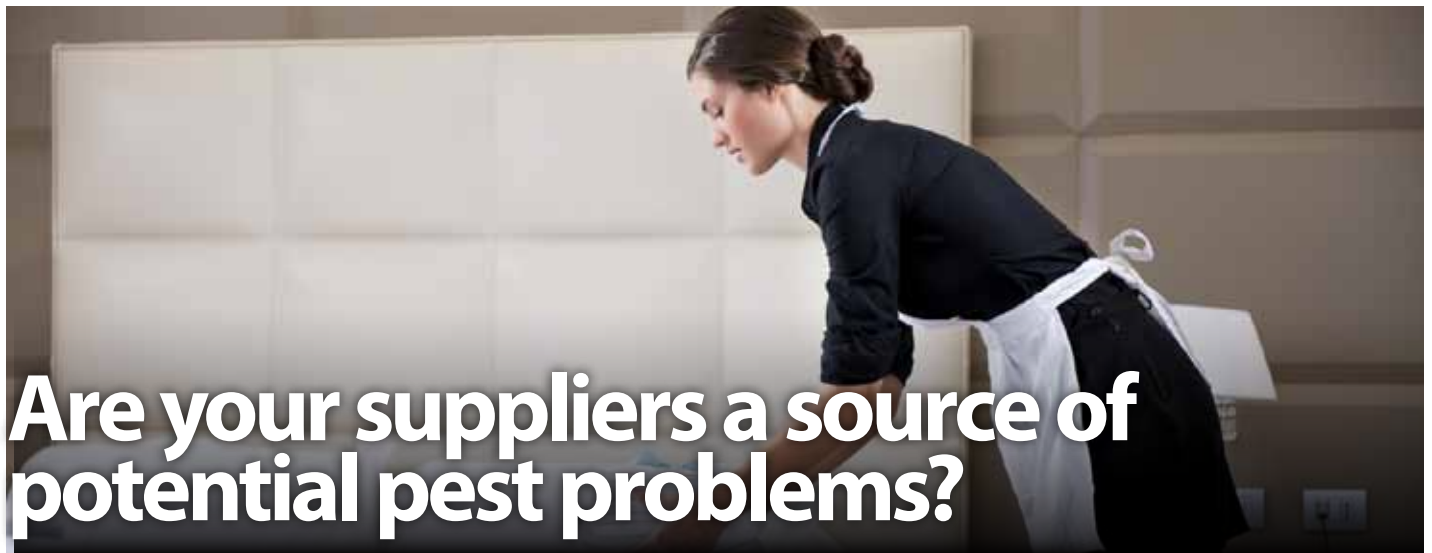
“With public confidence such an important and delicate thing on the High Street these days, this is an issue they ignore at their peril,” he concludes. “Rather low down the priority list of many it may be at this time. But it’s something with the potential to cause major reputational damage for those who fail to address it effectively.”

Further information

BPCA can help with:

- Designing effective pest control specifications
- Tendering: selection of a suitable company
- Drawing up contracts with your chosen supplier
- Pest control awareness training for staff

Find out more and search for your local BPCA member at bpc.org.uk or call 01332 294 288.



Are your suppliers a source of potential pest problems?

A special report from bestselling business author, Dee Blick

Your hotel is immaculate with hygiene standards as good as it gets. Front and back of house you're running an orderly ship, and then you get an infestation of pests. A mouse is spotted running across the kitchen floor... a guest complains of bedbugs. All is not well. It's baffling, or is it?

Ralph Izod, Managing Director of pest prevention and pest management specialists Dyno-Pest has worked with many hotels in London and throughout the UK in the last 25 years. He explains why many of the pest problems experienced by hotels originate from the world outside your doors. "The location of the hotel can make it a pest risk hotspot. For example if building and renovation works are close by, you can bet your bottom dollar that many nearby properties will experience infestations from mice or rats simply because these pests have been displaced from their previous safe havens."

The pest problem may be the fault of a supplier. "Hotels receive deliveries on a daily basis, often throughout the day and night, from a diverse group of suppliers. We know from experience that pests as varied as moths, fruit flies, bed bugs, cockroaches and mice for example can be unwelcome guests in some of these deliveries. That's why it's so important for designated members of the hotel's team to thoroughly inspect all deliveries for evidence of pest infestations, ideally doing so before they're brought into the hotel. We always advise our hotel clients to check with each one of their suppliers that they have in place a robust pest control policy including regular technician visits, ideally delivered by a BPCA member. Sloppy suppliers that do not invest in pest control can be responsible for pest outbreaks. Unfortunately, we also know from experience that many suppliers are going about their merry way not giving so much as a passing thought to pest control until they themselves experience a pest problem at their premises."

But what about the ubiquitous bed bug - a growing problem for all hotels, with unwitting hotel guests, not suppliers being culpable? "A study from the Institute of Biology has revealed a massive increase in the number of bed bugs infesting London hotels," says Ralph. "In recent months bed bug horror stories have made it into the media with accompanying unpleasant images. Of

course you can't screen your guests for bed bugs so it comes down to household staff being on 'bed bug alert' when cleaning rooms. Early detection of bed bugs followed by swift treatment can halt the problem and contain it to just the one room. Our technicians always advise housekeeping staff to look out for signs of bed bug activity small clusters of dark spots on bed linen, curtains and carpets for example and in the last 12 months the demand for bed bug early warning systems has rocketed. Any infested bed linen and soft furnishings should be safely transported from the room in secure bed bug proof bags., small but important steps."

How can a hotel be effectively protected from pest infestations beyond training its staff to be vigilant and committing to regular technician inspections? "Pests can be kept at bay with simple but effective integrated pest management and proofing measures," explains Ralph. "Our technicians will work with the maintenance team in a hotel to find and then proof holes and cracks around pipes, air vents and weak joints for example and will implement additional preventative measures where needed. For example we now control rodents by using specialist bait stations within walls and ceiling voids. Sometimes, a few repairs and staff training is all that's needed to protect an area of the building from pests whereas in other areas, a combination of staff awareness training, proofing and preventative treatments is vital. I would advise any hotel manager to work in partnership with their provider of professional pest control and pest prevention services, to act on their advice promptly, have scheduled technician inspections and ensure their suppliers and team are pest aware. A good provider of pest control services should be looked upon as adding value by protecting a hotel's reputation and enhancing each guest's experience."

If you are a hotel manager, the good news is that most BPCA members will offer you a thorough site survey at no charge.

Further information

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



We all know that pests and food pose a serious health risk. We also know that strict food hygiene laws carry heavy fines for pest infestations. But how many of us know just how dangerous pests can really be and whether we are doing everything possible to keep them out of our food premises? BPCA Membership Manager Kevin Higgins investigates.

When it comes to pests and food there is little margin for error. A pest infestation on your premises will be considered unacceptable and causes intolerable risks. Pest infestations can not only cause serious illness, but also costly food wastage, potential loss of reputation, low staff morale and ultimately closure. Which begs the questions – why is a provision of pest control often overlooked and in some instances seen as a grudging or unnecessary purchase?

Setting the standard

The regulatory framework (principally, the Food Safety Act 1990 and the Food Hygiene Regulations 2005 made under it) deems food unsafe if it is considered to be injurious to health or unfit for human consumption. It lays down general hygiene requirements for all food business operators. Pest management in restaurants, commercial kitchens, retail outlets and even hotels should not only be trying to prevent the introduction of pests, but also reduce the conditions that may encourage pest presence or facilitate their survival once they establish, to maintain the required legal hygiene standards and therefore avoid the spread of potentially life threatening diseases, and breaking the law.

From farms and food processing sites to large supermarkets there are commercially published and certified standards in which they are required to follow. These standards usually require firms to be externally audited for compliance to ensure their produce is safe and fit for consumption throughout the supply chain. However there are no such standards for smaller businesses (restaurants, food outlets or hotels) to follow – potentially putting customers and business at risk. The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health has published guidance on pests aimed specifically at the food sector. They have worked with stakeholders (like the BPCA) to formulate standard practices to ensure effective control strategies.

David Oldbury, pest control consultant and Secretary of the Chartered Institute's National Pest Advisory Panel explains how the system works in practice. "Large companies generally have effective pest control systems in place, although there is always scope for improvement. Among the smaller businesses, however, there is often much to be done to ensure compliance with the regulations and an appropriate level of protection against pests at food premises. Setting the standards for these goals is one thing – working to those standards in practice can be quite another."

Adrian Gough is Managing Director of AG Pest Management. He says "I have used extracts from the document in providing pest control awareness training to key personnel within many of the food sites that our company provides a service to, and also for in-house training. We have implemented many parts of the document within our pest prevention folder resulting in great feedback from food industry auditors, and we always say 'happy auditor' results in a 'happy client'."

Protecting your business

To protect your business from pests the British Pest Control Association would recommend using the following steps:

1. Prevention

Of course, preventing pests getting into your premises in the first place is the most effective form of pest management. All pests have one thing in common; they are looking for food, warmth and shelter. The problem for us is that it does not take much food (in the case of a mouse just a few grammes a day) to sustain an infestation. Overnight exposed food, unwashed food containers, food debris and used packaging all attract pests.

The proper disposal of food waste is also important; as pests quickly collect where waste food is left hanging around. If food waste is stored correctly, and disposed of regularly by waste disposal contractors, pests can't get at it. "What you're doing is reducing the attraction in a particular area for a variety of pests such as mice, rats, insects including flies, or birds such as pigeons or gulls. It is in this area of appropriate food waste control where environmental health professionals continue to see problems," explains David. We find it tends to be one of the most neglected areas – but at the proprietor's peril. Disposal areas is where most of the pests are attracted. Once they get there, they can then get into the restaurant, hotel or the supermarket quite easily if the building structure is inadequately proofed.

Cleaning programmes are also the answer to preventing a pest infestation. Storage areas must be kept clean using close-fitting containers that are regularly emptied. Access like gaps under doors or holes must be blocked. Remember to check your stockroom before and during a new delivery. Common ways for pests to find their way into food premises are in stock deliveries, on second hand machinery, or via wooden pallets. Pests arriving in raw materials from overseas can pose unique problems. You can get exotic species coming in, and if the conditions are right they will thrive.

2. Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Effective pest control relies heavily on an integrated pest management approach to controls. This systematic approach to pest control relies on good housekeeping practices, inspections and monitoring along with physical control methods, chemical controls and habitat and environment management. In short, it relies on the active involvement and knowledge of the pest control professional and those working in the food industry.

Early detection

Key to this approach is knowing your enemy, and early detection. For example rodent droppings are often the first sign of a mouse or rat infestation. Size and texture will tell you what type of infestation you have and how recent. Rats and mice are creatures of habit and always follow the same route by keeping their body close to a wall. Anywhere they go over a surface you will get grease off their fur. Rodents also gnaw things to keep their continuously-growing incisors worn down and sharp. So freshly gnawed wood, along with damaged food goods is another tell-tale sign of an



“Common ways for pests to find their way into food premises are in stock deliveries, on second hand machinery, or via wooden pallets.”

infestation. Once you have discovered a problem, the quicker you respond the more painless the solution.

Keep records

The more information available to the pest controller, the more effective the intervention, which is why reporting and record keeping are key to integrated pest management. A log of sightings needs to be kept, documenting the name of person making the report, date, time, location and pest sighted. Any pest treatments must also be fully documented along with a site plan showing the position of baits or traps used. Context is everything for the pest controller. Not only is the history of pest control important, but also where your business is situated. Do the premises layout and types of business around you attract pests?

Is there a local water source, railway line or landfill site, or does the surrounding area provide good nesting for pests?

Trust your expert!

A common opinion held by owners and managers in the food industry is to place a plethora of permanent toxic baits across their premises. This causes your technician to have to make more frequent and unnecessary site visits in turn having a significant cost implication on your business. Costs will go up because companies charge on time and preparation. Richard Moseley, BPCA Technical Manager adds "the use of toxic baits without an actual live infestation may be a cause of concern for external auditors and authorities. This approach will springboard a host of other issues in the future such as pesticide resistance or failed treatments." So make sure you trust and follow the advice of your pest controller. A trained professional (such as a BPCA member) will know the right procedure and treatments in which to administer, to keep your premises pest free.

Integrated Pest Management is a delicate balance between using effective proofing and preventative measures, introducing stringent hygiene procedures, and applying the correct treatment delivered by a trained professional.

3. Choose a BPCA member

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 reputable pest control contractors should:

- 1 Be able to give appropriate assurances that they comply fully with all aspects of the Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986 and other relevant legislation such as the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999.
- 2 Be a member of a trade association with staff who hold the BPCA/RSPH Award in Pest Management and are recognised member of a CPD scheme.
- 3 Be able to provide evidence of financial stability, length of experience in pest control, and be prepared to supply a list of at least six clients from whom references may be sought.
- 4 Be able to detail the extent of their own technical resources or access to independent research and development, identification services and quality assessment.

Further information

Pest control procedures in the food industry produced by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health is available for free at www.cieh.org/policy/publications

The British Pest Control Association has also produced some short and informative factsheets on pests in association with the British Hospitality Association which can be found at www.bpca.org.uk/downloads



SIX STEPS TO CHOOSING THE RIGHT PEST CONTROL CONTRACTOR

When selecting a pest control contractor, consider the following:

- 1 The ability of the contractor to carry out a full survey of the premises and present a clear report, with action points, recommendations and a firm quotation of costs.
- 2 Evidence of adequate technical resources and of correctly trained and qualified service staff, supervisors and management. If individual technicians belong to the PROMPT (Professional Register of Managers and Pest Technicians) scheme, this provides the necessary evidence. The register is a list of pest control managers and technicians with a recognised industry qualification, who agree to abide by a written Code of Professional Ethics, and can prove that their technical knowledge is up-to-date. To stay on the register, members must obtain a prescribed number of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points.
- 3 Proof of adequate public liability, product liability and employers' liability insurance cover.
- 4 The capacity to provide proofing and other preventative measures such as advice on housekeeping, storage, waste disposal, cleaning and the detection and monitoring of pest populations.
- 5 Reporting procedures giving clear accountability on both sides.
- 6 Clear contract terms to specify the pests to be covered, frequency of visits, responsibility for preventative measures, arrangements for extra treatments or emergency call-outs.



Summer season for pests

With the summer holidays on the horizon, and the looming threat of summer pests on your business, it's now time to consider what pests you may face and how best to police and prevent an infestation.

As I am sure you may have noticed recently, we are yet to have a sustained period of fine weather this year. Fingers crossed, we will get good weather to help improve our moods and spirits. However, it is not just humans that enjoy the warmth and the sun. Insects are temperature dependant, and the better the weather, the faster they breed, and when insects are breeding rapidly, they can become a real issue in no time at all.

Some of the pest species that we may come in to contact with in the summer periods will be more of a hindrance than a health risk. The common Black Ant for example, can cause many concerns for customers and business owners alike, who can be confronted by vast numbers of the insects foraging for foodstuffs. Garden ants are not inherently 'dirty', and are not known to transmit disease, but they may cross unsavoury and unclean areas when foraging, making them unacceptable in retail and hospitality environments.

As with many pest species, good hygiene practices will help discourage ant activity and prevent the contamination of sweet foodstuffs. However, due to the foraging nature of ants, nesting sites will often be many meters from the affected area, and thorough inspection and treatment by a professional pest control company is required to ensure complete eradication. If the nest is not located, treatments will simply discourage the ants for a short period of time and then the problem can return.

Not all pest species are as apparently harmless as the garden ant. Wasps have a reputation as a nuisance, but the presence of nests in close proximity to or within buildings, can have serious consequences. Wasp stings can be painful and even lethal for people who are allergic to the sting. Wasps' habit of seeking out sweet products can also encourage them into open drinks cartons and cans. The result of a child being stung in the mouth can be catastrophic, and so every effort should be taken to minimise wasp activity around your premises. Again, the key to eradication is treatment of the nest, and only a professional should tackle this pest as they will persistently defend a nesting site.

When it comes to pests, remember it is always better to be safe than sorry. If you think you have a pest problem, or want to prevent problems before they occur, consult a specialist. By consulting a

“key to eradication is treatment of the nest, and only a professional should tackle this pest as they will persistently defend a nesting site.”

reputable company such as a BPCA member, you will avoid the risk of injury to yourself, your staff and your customers, and ensure that your business reputation remains intact. You will also avoid prosecution by ensuring pest species are dealt with legally and humanely, and that non pest species such as Honey Bees and Bats are not harmed by reckless treatments. For further information on pest species or to find a local BPCA member, call 01332 294288 or visit bpc.org.uk.

SIX PESTS TO POLICE THIS SUMMER



- 1** Wasps - can be very aggressive and will attack in numbers, especially in late summer.
- 2** Bees - bee treatments should be avoided where possible, but if required use a professional to avoid prosecution.
- 3** Garden Ants - often forage indoors from external nesting sites, ensure any treatment involves an internal and external inspection.
- 4** House Fly - fly species transmit numerous pathogens and can grow from egg to adult in 5 days in the summer months. Combine good hygiene practice with rapid, professional pest control service and advice.
- 5** Mosquitoes - breed rapidly in standing water in summer months. Keep gutters and drains clear of debris that trap water and do not let water features stagnate to prevent biting insect activity.
- 6** Bed bugs - evidence suggests bed bugs are far more likely to be active in the summer months leading to infestations spreading and resulting in treatments becoming more costly and time.

Dealing with pests in hospitality

The pest contractor must have a clear understanding of the client's requirements, and the client needs to know what is technically possible and economically viable. The hospitality industry has common concerns regarding pest control. Therefore the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) has formed an alliance with the British Hospitality Association (BHA) to produce a series of fact sheets to alert BHA members and the wider hospitality sector to

the key issues that affect them.



Simon Forrester, BPCA Chief Executive said "Pest controllers see the same issues arising time after time, and in the fact sheets we share their tips on how to maintain a pest-free environment. Case studies will be used where appropriate to put the guidance in perspective, and show what a difference the advice has made in real-life situations."

Effective public health pest control in hospitality requires a partnership between client and contractor – mutual understanding is all.



Ufi Ibrahim, chief executive, BHA welcomed the alliance. "Pests are unwelcome in any hospitality

premises and these fact sheets show operators how best they can be avoided – and eliminated. We are delighted to join with BPCA in producing this material so that the critical importance of good pest control can be highlighted."

The fact sheets will be released over the next few months, and will be placed on the BHA and BPCA websites. If you would like to receive copies by email, simply download the new factsheets every month at www.bpca.org.uk/downloads

If there are other topics you would like to see added to the suite of fact sheets, please get in touch via editor@alexo.org.uk

The first four fact sheets, on 'Seven steps to prevent pests' (shown left), Pest infestations, Bed bug infestations, and Flying insect control (shown on page 11) can be found at www.bpca.org.uk/downloads



Pest fact sheet

1

Seven steps to prevent pests

1 Don't attract pests to your premises

If you want to maintain a pest free environment there are a number of steps you can take. Without a doubt, the first and most important is to try to maintain a clean environment around your property to stop the attraction of pests. Pest such as rodents and cockroaches are great opportunists, and will take advantage of the smallest food spillages. Consider your external bin and waste areas – if your bins are overflowing or encrusted food spillages are building up around waste stores, act now before it is too late. Ensure bins are emptied on a regular basis and implement a regular cleaning programme for susceptible areas. Always ensure that plants and foliage are cut back and are kept in good order, as overgrowth will encourage pests to come close to your premises, meaning infestation is just inches away.

2 Make your premises pest proof

Pests such as house mice can enter a property through the smallest of gaps (if you can place the end of a pen in a gap, then it is large enough for a mouse to gain access). It can be difficult to completely prevent pest entry, but by maintaining a good standard of repair to any property, it will automatically make it less favourable to pests. Where gaps and opportunities do exist, there are some reasonably cost effective measures that can be considered (such as bristle strips and fly screens) to help control the intrusion of pests.

3 Time is essential

When dealing with pests such as bed bugs, early detection is essential if you want to control and eradicate an infestation. Make sure you have a way of staff reporting and recording any activity such as a log book or a diary. Many

Richard Moseley, Technical Manager from the British Pest Control Association takes you through his top tips to keep out pests.

infestations get out of control because of poor communication regarding the location and type of infestation. The more information you have for the pest controller, the better his chances of success.

4 Training

If you want staff to help with the control of pests by reporting any suspicious signs of activity, they may need some basic pest awareness training, especially when identifying and controlling pests such as the bed bug. Give your staff the knowledge to spot issues - early eradication could save you £1,000s in lost revenues.

5 Know your limitations

It is easy to find information on most topics via the internet, and there are a number of pest control products that can be bought across the counter for the non-professional user. However, if you do encounter pest activity that you feel you can tackle yourself, know your limitations. Professional pest controllers have access to specialist products and have undertaken vast amounts of training. If you attempt to treat a pest infestation internally, you may find you are using the wrong product and may leave yourself open to prosecution. Even if you are treating the right pest, poor technique can cause resistance and bait avoidance, ultimately lengthening treatment times and raising costs.

6 Make the best use of your pest controller

Pest controllers are not just employed to kill pests if they happen to crop up on your property. They should be visiting you on a regular basis to inspect your properties and alert you to early signs of pest infestation. Your pest control operator should also be drawing your attention to any deficiencies on your site

that may attract pests (see above). Pest control professionals are a much under-used resource that should be ignored at your peril. If you are given recommendations by your contractor, try to act upon them. If you don't, legal representatives such as environmental health officers may take a hard line if they find a pest infestation that might have been prevented, had some simple recommendations from your contractor been followed.

7 Always use a professional!

How do you know which pest control company to use? A quick internet search will give you access to hundreds, if not thousands of pest controllers. But how do you know that they have the required level of knowledge and training – vital to ensuring control of potentially damaging pests with potentially dangerous products.

We would always advise that you use a company that is registered with an internationally recognised trade body such as the British Pest Control Association. If you use one of our 400+ servicing members you can be assured that your contractor is suitably trained, qualified and insured, and that they have been inspected on a regular basis by a trained representative of BPCA.

When the pest technician arrives on site, ask to see their PROMPT card, which shows they have the right training and are keeping up to date on developments in pest control.

Always remember that there is a cost involved with maintaining membership of an organisation such as BPCA. A cheap pest control quote may be attractive, but it may not necessarily be the safest and most cost effective way of protecting your reputation, your customers and your livelihood.

The fact sheets

Seven steps to prevent pests

Help! I have an infestation – is it my fault? What should I do?

How to select a pest controller

How to work with your pest controller: reaching understanding through a contract specification

"Waiter, there's a fly in my soup!": how to deal with pest-related complaints

A code of practice for pest control

Bed bugs: public health enemy number one

Flying insect control: A practical guide

Rodent Infestations: simple steps to getting control

Dealing with cockroaches

www.bpca.org.uk

www.bha.org.uk

Flying insect control

Flying insects can cause a number of issues for people involved in the hospitality industry. They can be unsightly and may cause a potential physical contamination risk if they enter a food producing area. A number of flying insects can also transmit disease and spoil food, so it is essential that they are controlled in food preparation environments. Consider the following points to help keep your particular situation free of flying insect disturbances.

1. Good hygiene standards should always be the first line of attack against pest species such as houseflies. By removing flying insect access to organic matter it will greatly reduce the breeding and emergence of pest fly species. External waste bins should be kept securely closed to prevent fly access, and internal drains and gullies should be cleaned regularly to remove debris that will encourage fly breeding activity.

2. Doors and windows to external areas in food preparation areas should be screened to prevent the intrusion of flying insects. The mesh on window screens should be approximately 1.5mm in size to ensure all flying insect pests are deterred. Various types of screens and curtains are available for doors to help discourage pest intrusions.

3. Electronic fly killers attract insects to an electronic grid or a sticky pad to kill them. They rely on ultra violet light to attract the insects, but be aware that some flying insects are not automatically attracted to the light, so fly killing units may not prove 100% effective against flying insects. They should be located with guidance from pest control specialists, as factors such as competitive light sources

and drafts will have an effect how many insects are attracted to the units.

4. Chemical treatments against flying insects will help to control numbers in and around hospitality areas. Knock down insecticides can be used to control flying adults and resting sites can be treated with a residual insecticide to kill the flies when they land on them. However, insecticidal treatments are likely to have limited effect on fly numbers if the breeding areas are not cleaned and removed.

5. Remember that breeding areas for some flying insects such as midges and mosquitoes will be stagnating water in locations such as guttering and drains, and such sources should be removed. Mosquitoes can cause hospitality customers irritation through biting, and disease transmission in the UK is possible, but less likely than in areas such as the tropics. Importantly for the hospitality industry, it can take several hours for a person to react to a mosquito bite. This can cause confusion as to the source of the bite, possibly leading to bedrooms and bed bugs being wrongly blamed as the source of the activity.

6. Some species of fly such as Cluster fly will attempt to hibernate in buildings over the winter months. This can cause issues through winter as such insects will wrongly awaken in heated buildings, causing issues with slow moving flies within the building. Such species can be treated in areas such as lofts in autumn to ensure they do not become an issue in winter. It is always advisable to contact a professional if you feel you have a problem with species such as Cluster fly as they may be harbouring in similar areas to Bats, and careful inspection will be required prior to treatment.

If you have any concerns with flying insects, contact BPCA at :
www.bpca.org.uk/contact

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