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McCloud is the Copesan Partner Serving Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Iowa, Kentucky, Tennessee, Kansas and Alabama. Copesan is an alliance of regional pest management companies that are united as a single entity for the sole purpose of providing quality pest solutions to businesses with locations throughout North America.

Dogs: Friend or Foe?

Dogs are man’s best friend, right? Well, even in the pest management industry, it depends on who you ask. In some situations, dogs can provide a vital role in managing pests. In others, they can contribute to disease transmission and fueling pest problems.

Good dog! You found a pest!

“Pest detection dogs are useful in pest management when pest infestations are hidden,” said Jim Sargent, Director of Technical Support and Regulatory Compliance for Copesan. “The best known pest detection dogs are the termite detection dogs used in the South where termites are prevalent, but dogs also have been trained to sniff out stored product pest infestations and other hard to detect pest problems all over the world, including bed bug infestations.”

Although dogs can eventually be trained to smell or detect almost any pest or any material, there are limitations. “A well-trained handler needs to be especially critical in identifying slight differences in the dog’s behavior to understand what the dog is saying. Sometimes, even a dog has a bad day and doesn’t feel like working,” Sargent said.

Also, a termite detection dog can’t indicate a pest infestation in areas



where it is not allowed to search. “For example, termite infestations in roofs or attics will go undetected because dogs can’t climb ladders and dog handlers don’t want to risk injury to their valuable dogs,” explained Sargent.

Good dog! You’re on the team!

Trained dogs also can be helpful in managing wildlife pests around places like universities, elementary schools, daycares and corporations. For example, dogs for hire can keep Canada geese from feeding, fouling and nesting in certain areas.

“Canada geese cause problems because they breed in numbers and leave a lot of droppings, which is not aesthetically pleasing and can

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cause property damage, as well as slippery walkways,” explained Jan Schmidli, Quality and Operations Field Support Specialist, for Copesan.

One effective method is to use a trained dog, such as a Labrador or Border Collie, to steer the geese out of areas where their presence causes a nuisance. “These dogs don’t hurt or touch the birds,” said Schmidli. “They guide, coerce and push them to other areas where they can breed, nest and find food. They make great employees because they don’t accept failure as an option.”

While these dogs are very effective at managing these types of wildlife pests, the drawback is the expense to train and maintain these dogs. But considering the good that they do, the few hundred dollars it would cost to train them is often captured tenfold. Therefore, it is not really a cost factor but a decision of whether to live with the nuisance or not.

Bad dog! Flies are everywhere!

“Dog feces are a major attractant of various types of flies and provide breeding material for them,” said Doug Smith of Waltham Services in Waltham, Massachusetts.

While these flies are a nuisance when they buzz around and land on you or your food, the bigger problem is that they can mechanically transmit diseases.

“By traveling from dog feces to food, they can contaminate food and other items with bacteria and organisms that could cause health problems, such as E. coli bacteria,” he continued. “This is why dog droppings need to be removed as quickly as possible from a property.”

According to Smith, the best procedure is to place the droppings in a plastic bag, seal the bag and place it in a dumpster or garbage can with a tight-fitting lid that is far away from entry doors. The dumpster or garbage can should then be emptied more frequently.

Bad dog! Fleas are following me!

“Anywhere that a dog regularly spends time has a high risk of fleas,” explained David Sexton, Technical Director, Gregory Pest Prevention in Greenville, South Carolina. “The risk has become higher in recent years since some of the products once used are no longer accepted or available, and the long-term effect of treatments has been reduced to some extent.”

Adding to the problem is that fleas can exist even in places where animals don’t. “For example, since fleas don’t complete their whole lifecycle on the pet or other animal, fleas’ eggs typically drop off of the host animal.” Sexton said. “So if a dog rides in a vehicle, any flea eggs dropped there can catch a ride into work with the driver. While fleas typically prefer an animal’s fur for hiding, if an animal isn’t present, the fleas will choose to bite people, causing a major problem.”

To reduce flea problems, vacuum thoroughly and frequently and dispose of vacuum cleaner bags; remove fleas from your pet using a fine-toothed comb designed for flea removal; wash pet bedding in hot, soapy water weekly; prune foliage and keep grass trimmed short; bathe pets weekly, and if you use veterinarian-recommended treatments, maintain the treatments and follow the directions.

Best friends again

So if you’re in need of a “good” dog or are having problems with a “bad” dog, contact Copesan or your local Copesan service center for help.



The Time to Prepare for a Disaster is Now

By Bart Foster, Technical and Training Director, Bill Clark Pest Control

Since natural disasters occur suddenly, advanced preparation is essential. Bart Foster, Technical and Training Director for Bill Clark Pest Control, shares some lessons about preparing for a disaster from his experience with Hurricane Rita, which traveled through Beaumont, Texas, last year.

1. Understand your

community's emergency plans, warning signals, evacuation routes and location of emergency shelters. Whether the threat is a hurricane, tornado, earthquake, flooding or any other disaster, you should be familiar with your community's plans for each.

2. Establish a written two-part communication plan for your company.

- a. Set up a system for contacting employees and communicating information to them. Also, make a list of employee phone numbers (and keep it current) so you can contact them and don't have to rely only on memory or speed dial.
- b. Set up a way for employees to contact the company to obtain updated information or to report their situation. A business needs and wants to know

if employees are alright or if they have emergency needs. Designate a person whom employees should call to report their location and condition.

3. Determine what items are essential to evacuate in case something bad happens to your building. You should make a list ahead of time so important items are not forgotten during the rush to leave. For example, you could have multiple computer backups of important business records and send the records with a couple different key people.

4. Plan on being gone for at least four or five days after the storm. You probably will not have access to your company immediately after the storm has passed. Many times, cities will remain closed for safety reasons, to take care of those left behind, and to restore utilities.

5. Designate someone to be the first person to check on the building after the disaster to determine what clean-up steps need to be taken. This will help you to get essential business operations back in order quickly so the company can

reopen as soon as possible after the disaster.

After the disaster

"You can never plan for everything, but having a plan will allow you to have a solid idea of what you should do in the midst of the crisis, as well as after it is over," Foster said.

Bill Clark Pest Control, a Copesan Partner company, was able to reopen about a week after the storm because of the efforts of its employees and a little bit of luck in having electrical power restored early during the recovery. Customers welcomed the company's quick return because pest management services were badly needed.

The worst initial problem was the huge number of hungry mosquitoes. The mosquitoes pestered residents, as well as those trying to help, such as the people restoring utilities. Another pest problem the area faced was a huge abundance of roaches and flies due to the large amount of spoiling food from restaurants and homes without power.

There were so many pest problems that customers had to be prioritized according to

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urgency of need. Foster said that the company's first order of business was attending to customers who had immediate, critical needs, such as hospitals, healthcare facilities and food service facilities.

"We contacted all our customers and asked how they were doing, what they needed and what we could do to help," he said. "We really wanted to help people because we all had gone through the same experience. Some of that

goodwill in the community has carried over – and that part has been a positive outcome of the disaster."



"Green" is Not New to the IPM Industry

By Jay Bruesch, Technical Director, Plunkett's Pest Control, Fridley, Minnesota

With consumers becoming more environmentally conscious, large retailers like Wal-Mart and Target are now embracing "green" practices, following the lead of some food processors that have decided to conduct business under the National Organic Program standards.

By implementing "green" practices, these industries are striving to put environmentally responsible practices into place that don't over-rely on chemicals.

Those in the pest management industry are applauding this trend toward more responsible chemical use. In fact, the industry trend over the last 20 to 25 years has moved toward practicing integrated pest management (IPM), which is at the heart of "green" practices.

IPM incorporates "green" practices by using non-chemical solutions to pest problems as the first line of attack and only bringing in pesticides as a last resort. Therefore, pest management professionals prefer "green" customers because effective pest management using IPM isn't obtainable unless the customer practices responsible sanitation, exclusion and physical and cultural controls on a routine basis.

What's "green"?

In the IPM arena, "green" means an environmentally responsible pest management approach that helps conserve resources, safeguard health and protect the environment.

This approach identifies pests to determine the correct control strategies, employs non-chemical prevention and control measures

wherever possible, uses the least toxic pest management materials when application is necessary and provides good communication between the client and pest management professional.

In IPM, pesticides should not be used first, applied on a routine basis or used before a need is demonstrated through inspection and monitoring. Pests should only be controlled when:

- Their presence is unacceptable for health, safety and aesthetics reasons.
- They are present in intolerable numbers.

Examples of non-chemical strategies that should be used first include:

- Sanitation. Remove clutter and keep areas clean to remove harborage and food sources.
- Exclusion. Use tight-fitting

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door sweeps, keep window and door screens in good condition, screen vents and seal holes.

- Physical controls. Use traps and put susceptible food products in cool rooms that won't promote pest infestations.
- Cultural controls. Use proper storage and stock rotation.
- Change employee practices. Have employees keep doors closed.

Then if inspection and monitoring demonstrates the need for pesticides, the least toxic material available should be used.

The “green” commitment

Since many clients are implementing “green” into their corporate policies, “green” pest management companies are also following suit. Their written program or policy should spell out their:

- Commitment to responsible environmental stewardship and IPM.
- Intention to rely on non-chemical strategies over chemical controls.
- Plan to apply pesticides only

when inspection and monitoring show that they are necessary and only after non-chemical control measures have been used and found inadequate to do the job alone.

- Intention to rely on the least toxic materials available.
- Action plans for various insect, rodent and avian pests and situations.
- Plan for continuous evaluation and provision for continuing education with the customer.

If your corporate policy has turned “green,” contact Copesan or your local Copesan Service Center to implement an IPM strategy in accordance with this philosophy. ✨

Tips to Help Keep Insect Swarms, a Force of Nature, Out in Nature

By Richard Berman, Technical Director, Waltham Services, Waltham, Massachusetts

If you've ever found yourself in a sudden swarm of insects, you might have been alarmed and wondered what was happening. This phenomenon called “swarming” is a natural and normal occurrence in the insect world.

From time to time swarming happens when large numbers of social insects leave their nest and move to other locations. The insects most commonly associated

with this swarming behavior are termites, ants and honeybees.

Other insects may appear to swarm, but that occurrence is most likely a large number of adults emerging from the pupal stage to the adult stage all at once, or a large number of adults simply taking flight at the same time. Common examples of a mass adult emergence would be midges and black flies.

True swarms are usually associated with a portion of an insect colony leaving to start its own smaller group, or adults taking flight all at once for mating purposes. Swarms are triggered by environmental factors (i.e., temperature, humidity or sunlight), pheromone production,* population pressure and the innate, natural urge that all living creatures have to reproduce so their species survives.

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Can swarming be stopped?

Physically excluding insects can stop a swarm from appearing indoors. Using sealants like a joint or caulking compound in cracks where ants enter may stop the swarm from appearing inside. Chemical sprays applied in these cracks and on surfaces where ants could land after swarming will kill these individual insects, but will not stop the swarming activity from taking place. Sealing these swarming avenues will stop the swarm from appearing or will force the swarm to appear elsewhere – hopefully outside.

By practicing population elimination or reduction, swarms may be delayed or eliminated, but the most effective method of social insect population reduction involves using insect baits. By using baits that typically work slowly,

the foraging workers are allowed to bring the toxicant back into the nest and reduce or knock out the colony.

What can be done after swarming insects fly inside?

When adults fly inside after a swarm, flying insect aerosols can be used to knock swarming insects down. Care needs to be used and the area should be evacuated before spraying anything into the air.** A vacuum can be used to pick insects out of the air. Illuminated light traps can sometimes be helpful in removing large numbers of swarms of some species.

How do insect swarms occur?

You may wonder why you're experiencing insect swarming now when you have never experienced this problem in the past. This is

because populations sometimes have to build up to a critical mass in order to initiate the swarming behavior. This can take years to occur in some species and is difficult to predict.

Environmental conditions also change from time to time and conditions may not have been optimal to trigger swarming in previous years. In addition, structures age over time, and cracks and gaps may develop and allow a swarm to invade an area that previously was excluded.

While swarming is an act of nature, you can keep it outside of your facility by calling Copesan or your local Copesan Service Center for solutions to your swarming concerns or for more information about specific insects that swarm.



Eric Smith Named Inaugural Crown Technical Excellence Award Winner

In late March, PCT magazine and Syngenta Professional Products awarded Dr. Eric Smith, Director of Technical Services with Dodson Bros. Pest Control in Lynchburg, Virginia, the first-ever Crown Technical Excellence Award.

Over the past 25-plus years, Dr. Smith has become one of the pest management industry's leading educators, not only for his work at Dodson Bros. Pest Control, but as a member of Copesan's and NPMA's technical committees. He is best known as the principal author of the 800-page reference

book, the National Pest Management Association's Field Guide to Structural Pests, found in offices and service vehicles throughout the country.

Nominated by his peers, Dr. Smith was chosen as the inaugural recipient after a thorough

* Pheromones are chemical secretions insects produce to communicate between each other.

** Follow label instructions at all times to make sure pesticides are used properly.

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review of his personal and professional accomplishments.

During the award presentation, Dan Moreland, PCT magazine publisher, said, "Last summer, we solicited nominations from the industry for the first annual Crown Technical Excellence Award, surveying hundreds of our readers and receiving scores of written nominations. Upon evaluating the nominations, there was one person who stood head



and shoulders above the rest as the consensus pick for the award as a result of his vast market knowledge and selfless commitment to the industry. That person was Dr. Eric Smith."

The Copesan organization is also very proud of Eric and all of his contributions to the industry, fellow associates and to Copesan itself.



Information in this publication was researched and prepared by highly regarded experts within the pest management industry that are part of the Copesan Partnership. Copesan has more technical expertise located throughout North America than any other pest management firm. The IPM Update is a small sampling of that knowledge and expertise we provide to our clients.

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