

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Ants: America's Year-Round Nuisance

(NAPSA)—The sight of a rodent may cause you to shriek. The thought of a cockroach may make your hair rise. But ants cause a bigger headache than any other pest today. Trailing toward your lunch during outdoor gatherings or finding comfort in your homes after a recent rainfall, ants are truly America's year-round nuisance.

Ants generate a major amount of the requests received by pest management professionals. Because ants are so adaptive, they can be very difficult to control. A colony of ants can locate food quickly and communicate their discovery to nest mates, which then follow the odor trail back to the food.

During colder months, ants are found around water sources, such as bathrooms and kitchens. As the weather warms and their metabolisms increase, ants become foragers of food (particularly sweets) and are more likely found in your kitchen, near the pantry.

It is imperative to identify the species of ant when treating any ant problem.

"Because not all ant infestations are equal in intensity, damage or conditions, they cannot all be treated equally," says Frank Meek, technical director for Orkin, Inc. "Pest professionals should customize each treatment strategy, identifying the source of the infestation and ensuring the best approach to the problem."

Ants are considered a nuisance, but some can contaminate food, bite or sting, or cause damage to wood and fabrics. Detrimental aspects of ants include:

- Red imported fire ants sting repeatedly, causing blistering, painful pustules and, in some cases, death.



Trailing toward your picnic lunch or finding comfort in your home, ants are a major nuisance.

- Carpenter ants can cause serious structural damage when they excavate wood for their nests.

- Pharaoh ants can transmit disease organisms in hospitals, health care facilities, food processing and packaging plants, or anywhere food is prepared.

Orkin suggests the following ant prevention tips:

- Clean up spilled food and drinks.

- Rinse drink cans before recycling them.

- Store food in tightly sealed containers.

- Pick up your pet's food at night and don't feed pets outdoors.

- Seal cracks around doors and windows.

- Clean your home's gutters and downspouts.

- Trim plant limbs away from the home's foundation and exterior walls.

In addition to taking precautions, it is important when experiencing an infestation to contact a pest professional who will take the appropriate steps to get rid of pesky ants.

For more information on ants, visit www.orkin.com or call 1-800-800-ORKIN.