

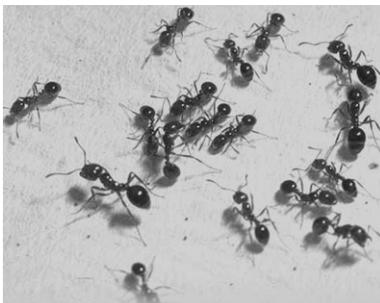
Taking The Sting Out Of Fire Ants

(NAPSA)—If you live in the southern United States, just hearing the words “fire ant” is enough to make you cringe. These dangerous insects sting millions of people each year, and their venom is considered the most potent allergen. While most bites are easily treated, about one percent of the population will have a severe—even potentially fatal—allergic reaction.

“No insect has caused as much property damage and personal injury in the U.S. over the past twenty years as the red imported fire ant,” says Marc McNulty, Business Manager Insecticides with Bayer Environmental Science. “They sting more children each year than all other insects combined, and are found in our favorite places to relax and play, including yards, parks, athletic fields and playgrounds.”

Fire ants infest over 300 million acres and are in potential conflict with approximately 40 million people daily. Found primarily in the southern U.S., fire ants are responsible for an estimated \$2 billion in property damage annually.

According to McNulty, “More than \$1 billion is spent on fire ant control each year. However, fire



Fast Facts About Fire Ants

- Introduced to the U.S. in the 1930s through Port of Mobile, Alabama
- Primarily in 15 states, including California and Puerto Rico
- Cause as much damage in Florida and Texas as other states combined
- Average colony contains 100,000 to 500,000 workers and up to 100 queens 

ants are resilient, which makes them a particular challenge for homeowners. It’s best to leave treatment to the pros.”

So how can you protect your family and your property?

Contact your local lawn care operator to combat fire ants with a long-term control treatment of Chipco® TopChoice™, a non-bait granular product that takes

advantage of the natural behavior of fire ants. Chipco® TopChoice™ is the only product that promises long-term fire ant control with one application. It controls fire ants within four to six weeks and provides up to 95 percent control for up to one year. When foraging fire ants come into contact with Chipco® TopChoice, they return to the mound to contaminate the colony. The active ingredient, fipronil, is also used for controlling fleas and ticks on pets.

McNulty warns that fire ant mounds can be easy to miss. If you come across a fire ant mound, do not disturb it. “Fire ants are territorial and aggressive, and sometimes hundreds of ants will rush out and attack an intruder.”

Symptoms of a sting include burning and itching and the formation of a pustule within 24 hours. The best way to treat a sting is with cool compresses and, possibly, antihistamines and topical ointments. If you experience symptoms of an allergic reaction—including hives, swelling, nausea, vomiting and shock—seek emergency treatment immediately.

Don’t be a victim of fire ants. Call your local lawn care operator today.