

# PROTECTING YOUR HOME

## How Homeowners Can Defeat Ant Invaders

(NAPSA)—They're creepy and they're crawly—and they may soon invade your home.

Although they are small enough to slip in under the radar of your home defense system, ants can still create major headaches. Ants like to swarm in warmer weather and as far as they're concerned you've put out the welcome mat for an indefinite stay.

Ranging from merely annoying to downright deadly, some of the most common ant varieties include:

- **Odorous House Ants.** They get their name from the unpleasant odor they give off when crushed. You'll most likely find these in your home during rainy weather when they'll nest in wall voids and crevices. They prefer sweet foods.

- **Pharaoh Ants.** Pharaoh ants also prefer sweet foods and live in extremely large colonies. When indoors, they keep warm near artificial heating sources.

- **Argentine Ants.** Argentine ants have the least discriminating of ant palates. They eat nearly anything. They generally nest in moist soil.

- **Theft Ants.** These ants are so small that they're hard to see. During warm weather is when you'll most often find them in your house. Unlike many other household ants, they prefer to eat proteins.

- **Carpenter Ants.** So called because they hollow out their nests from wood, carpenter ants usually come into buildings through cracks around doors, windows or through exterior holes for plumbing, electric wires, TV cables or phone lines.

- **Fire Ants.** These unrelenting predators deliver a painful burning sting. At least 32 deaths in the U.S. can be attributed to severe allergic reactions to fire ant stings each year. Fire ants can chew through the insulation around electrical wiring and have also been



**Knowing exactly what kind of ant is infesting your home is vital, say pest control professionals.**

known to kill small animals. They currently infest 14 states throughout the Southeastern U.S. and have been spreading since the 1950s.

“There are as many ways to treat ants as there are species,” says Cindy Mannes, director of public affairs for the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) near Washington, D.C. “Because some ants eat grease, others prefer seeds, other insects or leftovers from dinner, proper identification is a critical part of treatment.”

That's where the help of a professional comes in. A pest control professional can identify your particular pests, treat to remove them and recommend steps that homeowners can take to prevent reinfestation. Professional pest control is important because the untrained eye cannot always recognize the damage pests cause. For further information, NPMA provides a national hotline referral service for homeowners to find a pest control professional on its Web site at [www.pestworld.org](http://www.pestworld.org).