



# Indiana Pest Management Association, Inc.

## FINAL NOTICE - DUES

Your July 2014-June 2015 Dues Notice has been sent (for those who have not paid).

**Please RENEW today.**

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## THANK YOU HOSPITALITY AND GOLF SPONSORS

**SUMMER MEETING:** BASF (Todd Brown) BAYER (Ryan Klein), BELL LABS (Rich Williams), OLDHAM (Scott Underwood), UNIVAR (Tim Kaforke, Carl Wallin), DOW (Bill Blue), FMC (Arnold Ramsey), RESIDEX (Mike Field), P & L SYSTEMS (Don Kaufman), ENSYSTEX (Steve Goscinsky), ZOECON (Loren Cunnington).

**SPECIAL THANKS TO:** UNIVAR (Tim Kaforke, Carl Wallin) for sponsoring the Saturday night Social Hour at the summer meeting. BELL LABS (Rich Williams), BAYER (Ryan Klein) and P & L SYSTEMS (Don Kaufman) for sponsoring the drink and snack cart at the golf outing at the summer meeting

These guys (and their companies) really make a difference with their Special Sponsorships.

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**Indiana Pest Management Association  
Advertising Rates for 2014-2015**

**Newsletter**

**Full Page (7" x 10")**

- One Issue \$350
- Year (four issues) \$1,200

**One-half Page (7" x 5" horizontal)**

**One-half Page (3-1/4" x 9-1/2" vertical)**

- One issue \$200
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**One-fourth Page (3.5" x 5")**

- One issue \$150
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Non-members of the Association should add an additional \$25 to the cost of each ad printed. Camera-ready copy of the size listed must be submitted for publication. If you are subscribing for less than a full-page ad, copy size may be the equivalent of that listed in the rate table above, as long as it fits within the page format. IPMA Newsletter is published in March, June, September, and December. Submit your ad copy at least 2 weeks prior to the 1st of the month in which your ad is to appear. A confirmation of ad space, however, must be received at least 3 weeks prior to the 1st of the month in which the ad is to appear. Sandy Lindsey and G. W. Bennett, Editors

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## INDIANA PEST MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION FACEBOOK

Scott Glaze organized an IPMA facebook last December. He requested that we notify the membership that the Indiana Pest Management Association Facebook privacy has been changed from Closed to Open.

For additional information you can contact him at Arab Termite and Pest Control: HYPERLINK "<http://www.arab-kokomo.com>" <http://www.arab-kokomo.com>; HYPERLINK "<mailto:scott@arabkokomo.com>" [scott@arabkokomo.com](mailto:scott@arabkokomo.com); Phone: 765-452-2929 or 1-800-559.5051; FAX: 765-452-8687. HYPERLINK "<http://www.facebook.com/arabkokomo>" <http://www.facebook.com/arabkokomo>. Twitter: @arabpestcontrol

To see the group, follow the link below:

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## LEADERSHIP AND COMMON SENSE\*

There are many aspects to the topic of leadership. This article will look at several "Random Tenets of Successful Leadership", as I like to call them. Why the term 'random'? That is because there are many more tenets that could be considered but for the sake of space, we will only look at a few.

**Everything We Do Can Be Improved Upon.** This does not imply that everything your organization is doing is inefficient, ineffective, or otherwise defective. Instead, this tenet represents a way of thinking; that is, it should serve as a reminder that every process, technique, standard operating procedure or similar event should periodically be scrutinized. A good practice is to list all pertinent items for review, create a regular rotating schedule for reviews to occur, and appoint appropriate groups to carry out the review process. A word to the wise; include members in each group who do not have ownership or participation in the process being reviewed.

**Fix Problems, Not Blame.** It seems to be a part of human nature that when something goes wrong, we attempt to find someone to blame the failure on rather than focusing on fixing the problem. Fingers get pointed, tempers flare, and soon things are spiraling out of control! Yes, it may be necessary to

provide 'course correction' to the erring party or parties. When examining what went wrong, however, be sure to differentiate between reasons and excuses, as it is the reason that will provide a valid platform for correcting the problem.

### **Correct Mistakes With Timely Action, Then Move Ahead.**

It is relatively easy to praise the efforts of an employee, however, few supervisors are comfortable with having to address mistakes and shortcomings. When this becomes necessary, it is imperative that two things happen; (1) any discipline or corrective action is commensurate with the issue being addressed, and (2) corrective action must be initiated in a timely manner. Call the employee in, discuss what happened, explain your reasoning, give him or her a chance to respond, and then indicate that it is time to move ahead. Remember that after this sequence of events, our employee might be a little down so one good technique is after day or two find something positive to discuss.

**Respect And Follow The Chain Of Command.** Put another way, try to resolve issues and problems at the lowest level. This is almost always the best policy. If you have a problem with a co-worker, try to address it directly. If this does not work, then take it to your next-level supervisor. Skipping over 2 or 3



## LETTER FROM PRESIDENT SWIHART

Hello Fellow IPMAers,

My name is Mark Swihart and I am the Vice President/Partner at Ace Pest Control in North Webster. I am honored to serve as your new President of the Indiana Pest Management Association for the 2014-2015 term. As a fellow IPMA member, I have served on the Board of Directors and I've been the Membership Committee Chairman for several years. I'm looking forward to working with all of you this year!

I would like to thank Scott Robbins, our past President, for his leadership on the board, the Board Members and Committee Members for their support of the Association.

I encourage you to get involved with the Association this year. The 2014 Summer Meeting in Indianapolis is one of the best

examples of what the Association offers...excellent training programs, unique and fun events, and member involvement.

I'm looking forward to working with the Board of Directors and Committee Members this year. I'm also looking forward to working with each of you, our members, on issues that are important to you. We are always open to your suggestions and help.

Best Regards.

Mark



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## THE MENTAL HEALTH THREAT FROM BED BUGS

Due to their biology, bed bugs are defined as a **public health nuisance**. They are *enaophilic* (favoring indoors), and have *host intimate and hematophagous* (feeding on blood) behavior. Bed bug infestations are morally repugnant, and when present, both knowingly and unknowingly to the structural inhabitant pose a significant threat to health and wellbeing.

The diagnosis of *cimicosis* (someone who has been repetitively fed upon by bed bugs) involves clinical features of *pruritus* (itching), linear lesions, and a history of the presence of bed bug infestations(s). The infected person may need prescriptive treatment of antipruritic agents, topical corticosteroids, or systemic antihistamines. Bed bug bites must now be considered in differential diagnosis of rapid onset *bullous eruptions* (fluid filled sacks).

Bed bug behavioral *phoresy* (one organism transports another organism of a different species) and *biological radiation* (population increase) must be halted. A pest control operator (PCO) and pest management professionals (PMPs) must be engaged for successful *interventions* resulting in bed bug *elimination*.

An infestation of bed bugs can also cause a parasite *phobia*, which may be a persistent fear that is excessive or unreasonable (cued by the presence or anticipation of a specific object or situation). Exposure to the *phobic stimulus* almost invariably provides an immediate *anxiety* response (effect situationally bound).

The person does recognize that the fear is excessive or unreasonable. The phobic situations are avoided or else endured

with intense anxiety or distress. The avoidance, anxious anticipation, or distress in the feared situations interferes with the person's normal routine, occupational functioning, social activities, and even relationships.

A *parasite delusion* may be non-bizarre delusions of at least 1 month's duration. The criteria of the characteristic symptoms of *Schizophrenia* are never met apart from the impact of the delusions or its ramifications. This does not markedly impair functioning, and behavior is not obviously odd or bizarre.

If mood episodes have occurred concurrently with delusions, their total duration has been brief relative to the duration of the delusional periods. The disturbance is not due to physiological effects of a substance.

*Chronic attacks* from established bed bug infestations can cause anxiety, stress, and insomnia. The development of *refractory (resistant) delusional parasitosis* is possible, as a person can develop an *obsession* pursuant to bed bugs.

*Ekbom's Syndrome, or delusions of parasitosis*, manifests in the patient a firm believe that he or she has pruritus due to an infestation of insects. Patients may present with clothing lint, pieces of skin, or other debris contained in plastic wrap, on adhesive tape, or in matchboxes. Patients typically state that samples contain the parasites, but these collections have no insects or parasites.

\*By Dr. Stuart Mitchell, from PMP Presents.



## WHEN TO SAY NO\*

Self-help gurus and motivational speakers worldwide will tell you that “yes” is an empowering word, and indeed it is. “Yes” opens doors and breaks down barriers. “Yes” gets people to step outside of their comfort zone and try new things that help open their minds to new philosophies and perspectives.

But “no” is also a powerful word, and one that we all need to employ more in both our personal and professional lives. “No” doesn’t even have to be such a door-closing, brick wall of a word. It can simply mean, “No – for now.” Here are a few reasons should you get to know it better.

### Time is our most valuable asset

Time can’t be bought, sold or replaced. Therefore, we need to make sure that we’re always choosing the right opportunities that drive us and our organizations toward our ultimate objectives. We must keep in mind the strategic methods that further our progress in getting there.

Every choice we make should bring us closer to our end goals. If we’re too close to problems to see the forest for the trees – from a long-term perspective – we risk spinning our wheels.

### Weigh choices carefully before saying “yes”

Before taking on an opportunity, you should ask yourself, “Does this project further my organization’s or personal objectives? What will we learn or gain from the venture? Will it be time well spent?”

Ask yourself hard questions --- the answers may help you reveal hidden opportunity costs or see potential ventures and projects from new viewpoints that make the decision to accept or reject it clearer.

### Think in terms of long-term investments

Say “no” to short-term opportunities that may not help propel you down the path to reaching your ultimate goals.

Organizations and people tend to focus on instantly gratifying or rewarding activities (e.g., doing what it takes to make finances add up this quarter) vs. those that are most productive over longer-term horizons (e.g. changing business strategy or processes to ensure their financial house will be in order for many months to come).

Focus on curing problems, not symptoms. Here are a few sample questions to ask yourself when weighing opportunities going forward.

-Does the opportunity further my ultimate objectives(s)? How so? Are there alternate or better vehicles for doing so – and is there a simpler or more direct route?

-Do we accelerate our speed of progress with regard to accomplishing preferred tasks, goals, products or projects by

taking this opportunity on – and to what extent?

-Can we learn from this venture or leverage existing talents and capabilities in new ways? Does pursuing it convey new skills opportunities or resources?

-Will participating in the opportunity grow my contacts, connections or personal network?

-Does the amount paid do more than simply cover the cost for our/my time? Beyond pure financial incentives, what value will be gained from the exchange?

-Will it provide an opportunity to showcase our/my talents? To whom and to what extent?

-Is promotional visibility provided, and if so, how much? How well does the proposed audience for the project match the one I’m ultimately trying to reach?

-Will others underwrite the expenses? To what degree? Is this an opportunity we or I could achieve on our own? How difficult would it be to do so, what would it cost, and how much time would it take? Are we getting any discounts or bargains with regard to pursuing it in this instance?

-What benefits are achieved by taking part in the exchange? How does participation help me further our goals and/or build leverage?

-At what expense of time, effort and energy – not just financial rewards – will the opportunity come?

\*By Scott Steinberg, [www.AKeynoteSpeaker.com](http://www.AKeynoteSpeaker.com)



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SEE PAGE 3 FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



# PROVING OUR CASE AGAINST BED BUGS

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## STOCK DIVERSIFICATION

*If you've decided to own individual stocks, diversification is crucial to combating price swings and helping reduce your risk over time. Use these guidelines to help deeply diversify your stocks.*

**Decide how many companies to own** – if individual stocks make up the majority of your equity portfolio, then you should plan to own a least 25 to 30 stocks to reduce the degree of ups and downs of your portfolio's performance over time.

**Dial back any overconcentration** - Even good companies can fall on tough times and may require several years to recover. Of course, in some cases, they never do. So we suggest this rule of thumb. Don't allow a single stock to make up more than 5% of your portfolio.

**Define suitability** – Stocks can have different objectives, such as "aggressive," "growth" and "growth and income." Most people should own a mix of these types of stock to align with their risk tolerance and meet needs for income and growth. Align the mix of stocks with the suitability guidelines of your portfolio's overall objective.

**Divide by sector** – We recommend you divide stocks by sector in a similar alignment with the U.S. economy. Balance stocks that are more sensitive to the economy with those less sensitive. The chart illustrates our recommended equity sector allocations.

**Delve into subsectors** – Sectors are divided into subsectors, which are similar groups of industries or companies. Stocks in the same subsector can have many factors in common, such as consumer demand, input costs or the economy's effect on their performance. As a result, stocks in the same subsector often perform very similarly, so we recommend owning stocks from a variety of subsectors.

**Dedicate time to review** – While we recommend a long-term strategy, it's important to revisit your portfolio. Over time, even with deep diversification, some investments will perform better than others and can shift your balance.

Contact your local **THOR** representative today!

**Steve Goscinsky**

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## MICE AND MONEY

As is true with most aspects of pest management, rodent control is a science involving live animals and their behavior around our houses, apartment buildings, grocery stores, hotels, schools, hospitals, food plants and warehouses. The better you understand a particular animal pest, the better able you are to get quick and efficient control for the pest and the more satisfied our customer is with our services. In turn this means few callbacks for you and greater profits associated with each and every rodent service you offer. In other words, the more you understand mouse behavior, the more money you can make in rodent control.

So, for this article let's take a look at four key mouse behaviors. If you appreciate and understand them, you can put this knowledge to work in achieving excellence in our mouse IPM services, whether it is a large Las Vegas gambling casino or a single family residence in Winnemucca.

**Nesting:** The house mouse prefers to nest in areas that are warm, or in spots in which they are highly insulated. So when attempting to find the sources of mice so you can eliminate them quickly with your traps and baits, instead of asking yourself, "Where are the mice?" ask, "Where are the warm areas of the room or building in which the mice are being seen?" Then, look closer for droppings and other evidence of mice. Typical areas might include ignored cardboard boxes above kitchen equipment, utility walls behind kitchen appliances, cabinet base voids, or warm concrete hollow block partition walls (access them from the top to inspect for signs).

**Travel Ways:** Mice use lines within our buildings to travel between areas, buildings and floors. Often it is the travel ways that allow mice to disperse to other areas containing more or better resources; or for young mice seeking to establish new territories to disperse to areas not yet occupied in order to establish their own lives. In this way, new infestations spread in our hotels, schools, stores, apartment complexes and so on. Typical mouse travel ways include plumbing lines, electrical conduits and wires, elevator shafts, utility chase voids, computer cable bundling PVC pipes and the like. When thinking about the mouse travel ways of buildings, concentrate on trying to "see the lines" of the building.

**Kinesthetics and Runways:** Runways are not the same as travel ways. Runways are the pathways mice use on a nightly basis that connect their nests to their foraging and feeding zones. During the course of a week, a mouse runway belonging to a

single family of mice may be traversed hundreds of times by each of the mice. Over time, these runways become "memorized" by the mice via muscle movement. This is called "kinesthetics". The mice can run almost "blindly" and predict with some accuracy how many muscle movements it takes to get from one spot to another. In addition to kinesthetic, mice also use their eyesight, olfactory sense (smell) and their powerful whiskers to move along the runways quickly and accurately.

Why is this important? Because consider using a glue trap. This trap is designed to trap mice as they "blindly" run along their runways and they "stumble" into the trap. So the key to using glue traps for mice to their maximum potential is to first do a brief inspection and identify the mouse runways in the room in which you are considering placing a trap. (See my previous Nevada PCA News article on glue traps.) If mice are active within a room or building, there are mouse runways present. It is your job as the hired PMP to locate them!

**Food Selection and Feeding:** Ecologically speaking mice are "opportunistic foragers." This means that while they move about at night inside our buildings, they count on "bumping into" our various food scraps, spills and supplies in small amounts in several different areas. In most cases, the mice tend to opportunistically sample the foods (or our pet's food) they encounter. Still, mice are similar to us in their food selection. They need grains, proteins and sweets for a balanced diet to achieve growth, strength and to reproduce.

There are two key tips for using this behavior to your advantage and making money. First, when you bait and trap for mice, the secret is to place your several baits or traps in a small area (every 8-12 ft.) instead of only installing one bait station or trap and hoping all the mice in the family or colony will travel to this spot and find your control device. Some will, and some won't. Those that don't, survive to cause call backs and cost you profits.

Second, when you set mouse snap traps for mice cleanouts, in addition to placing out many traps in close spacings, be sure to use a variety of baits among all the traps. Instead of baiting all the traps with peanut butter, for example, use several bait lures in addition to peanut butter (e.g. chocolate, oatmeal flakes, bacon or chicken grease, buttered-bagel pieces, etc.).

By Dr. Bobby Corrigan, from Nevada Pest Control Association News.



## SUMMER MEETING SCHOLARSHIP AUCTION

Everyone had a great time at the Dinner Auction. Thanks to the following for their contributions and purchases in support of this worthy cause: Sandy Lindsey, JohnWalton, Scott Wright, Ray Siegel, Kathy Rodery, Scott Robbins, Kevin Puetz, Joe Popham, Larry Logsdon, Greg Long, Mark Swihart, Tim Kaforker, Bob and Rob Jackson, Marion Hall, Doug Foster, Mike Field, J. R. Campbell, Carrie Campbell, Todd Brown, Jeremy Word, Laura Hickman, Sarah and Jeff Florey, Mike Corbitt, Tim Kaforker, Joe Long and Gary Bennett. Many thanks to those people who helped organize and run the auction: Judy Logsdon, Mark Swihart, Milta Bennett, Ray Siegel, Kevin Puetz, Jen Jackson, and Auctioneer, Marion Hall. THANKS to all for another successful scholarship auction.

## MINUTES - INDY HILTON MEETING JULY 12, 2014

Meeting was called to order by President Robbins. Secretary Gary Bennett gave the treasurer's report which was accepted as read.

### **Committee Reports:**

*Summer Meeting:* Carrie Campbell indicated she was still working on the details for our July 17-19, 2015 Summer Meeting in New Buffalo.

*Regulatory:* Ray Siegel reported that there is still a lot of sorting to be done on the pollinator issue.

*Membership:* Mark Swihart reported 10 new members this year.

*Public Relations:* Kevin Puetz indicated there would be a pizza party at the Purdue Conference.

*Training:* Scott Robbins indicated a fall meeting was being considered.

*Awards:* Tim Kaforker announced the golf awards: Last Place: Corbitt, Wallin, Rob Jackson, Robert Powell. Winner: Rich Williams, Ryan Klein, Bill Welsh, Mike Field; Longest Drive: Joe Long; Longest Putt: Kathy Rodery; Closest to Pin: Don Kaufman

*Nominations: President:* Mark Swihart; *Vice President:* Sarah Florey; *Secretary:* Gary Bennett; *North Director (3 Years):* Joe Long; *Central Director (3 Years):* Doug Foster

*Allied Director (3 Years):* Tim Kaforker.

New president, Mark Swihart, asked members for input on items to be addressed in 2014-2015. Meeting was adjourned.

## TIPS FOR ONLINE AND IN STORE BUYING

Don't click on pop-up ads or links in unsolicited emails.

Look for indicators that a website is secure. Although no site is foolproof, a lock icon on the status bar or a web address beginning with HYPERLINK "https://"  
<https://> indicates a secure site.

Remember, while Wi-Fi hot spots can be convenient, if you're on an unsecured network or log in to an unencrypted site, other users on the network can see what you see – and what you send.

Keep your computer security and anti-virus software up to date. Maintain confidential documents in a secure location in our home.

Shred financial and other personal documents before disposing of them.

Don't carry your Social Security card or write your number on a check. Provide it only if absolutely necessary, or ask to use another identifier.

Never provide personal information on the phone, through the U.S. mail or email, or over the internet unless you know the request is legitimate.

**PASSWORD DON'TS** – Avoid creating obvious passwords such as (1) Your birth date; (2) Your mother's maiden name; (3) The last four digits of your Social Security number.

### **INSPECT YOUR CREDIT REPORT PERIODICALLY** –

The law requires the major nationwide consumer reporting companies – Equifax, Experian and TransUnion – to give you a free copy of your credit report each year if you request it. Visit HYPERLINK "http://www.AnnualCreditReport.com"  
[www.AnnualCreditReport.com](http://www.AnnualCreditReport.com) or call 877-322-8228 to order your free credit report each year.



## FREEZING INFESTED MATERIALS\*

After discovering that insects are eating away at your personal goods or museum objects, you are faced with the dilemma of how to get rid of the live bugs. Options include a wide range of treatments such as anoxia (low oxygen), inert gas, carbon dioxide, detailed vacuuming and exposure to heat. One of the most popular and easiest methods of treatment though is to simply freeze the items in question. This method is non-toxic, time efficient and does not entail extensive staff training. The museum community's use of freezing to kill a multitude of common museum pests has been quite successful. Some museums in the United States have treated thousands of objects with low temperatures and have reported no damage on the types of objects that had warnings previously associated with exposure to cold temperatures. Freezing insects to death can be one of the best treatment options.

The general principle to follow is to expose the objects to temperatures as low as possible, as quickly as possible for as long as possible. The guidelines below will kill the majority of museum pests.

The formation of ice crystals within the bodies of the insects is what causes the killing effect. The reason why many insect species survive through icy winters is because they have time to acclimate their bodies to the cold. The insects increase the concentration of glycerol and sugars in their tissues as the temperatures slowly drop. This has the effect of an anti-freeze within their bodies and it prevents

the formation of ice crystals. For this reason, it is best to hold the object that you are going to freeze at room temperature for at least one week prior to the exposure to cold. The thermal shock of the quick temperature drop catches the insects unaware and allows the temperatures to have a lethal effect.

### GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR A LOW TEMPERATURE TREATMENT

- \*Use a freezer that can maintain a temperature of -20oF (-29oC).
- \*Objects should be placed in sealed bags to reduce ice or condensation damage.
- \*Sensitive items can be wrapped in tissue paper before being placed in the bags.
- \*Hold the items at the low temperature for a period of one week or longer.
- \*Large wooden items or dense materials should be left frozen for longer periods.
- \*After removal from the freezer, the items should remain in the sealed bags to prevent condensation.
- \*Once the items reach room temperature for +24 hour period, they can be removed from the bags.
- \*Items become temporarily brittle at low temperatures, so handling should be kept to a minimum until the items return to room temperature.

By Patrick Kelley, Fumigants and Pheromones

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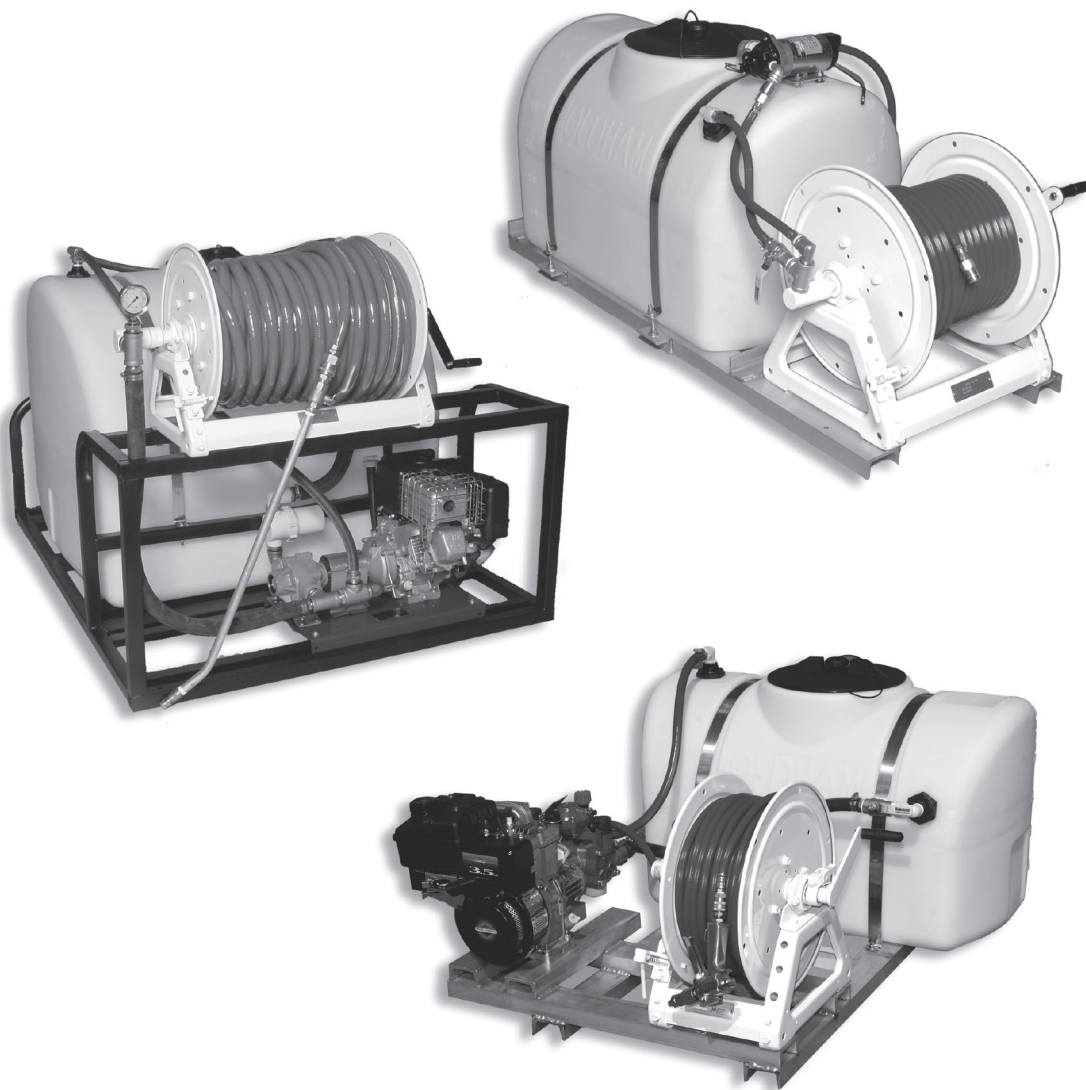
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## HOW OFTEN DO SPIDER BITES REALLY OCCUR\*

Over all of my years in the industry, I have heard thousands of people talk about being bitten by a spider. My question is, "How often does this actually occur?" My feeling is spiders do not bite people often, but is there any documented evidence of this? After doing a quick literature search I found documentation regarding bite rates of spiders and people.

Before looking at the documentation let's look at spiders and why they bite. All spiders, with the exception of a couple of minor groups, produce venom. In addition to venom, some spiders will expel digestive juices into the prey.

Spiders use their venom to subdue prey and in some cases begin digestion of the prey. Producing venom takes a large amount of the spider's resources and time. The spider *Cupiennius Salei* takes from 8 to 16 days to refill its' venom glands after using venom. Venom is a valuable resource to a spider and needs to be used prudently. Random unprovoked biting of non-prey animals, such as people, is not a prudent use of a valuable resource.

The venom glands of spiders are surrounded by muscle, which means spiders can control the amount of venom injected. One published study demonstrated that individuals inject more venom when dealing with larger, more active and difficult to subdue prey while injecting less into small, less active prey.

The question is, "Why would a spider bite a person?" Humans are not a food source for spiders. Spiders only bite people when they are threatened. One published study reports for huntsman spiders, 75% of verified bites occurred when the spiders were handled. Because of this, 82% of the bites were found on extremities, hands and feet. Even though huntsman spiders are large, with large fangs, there were few symptoms due to venom. Most spiders only bite people as a last ditch defense response.

In another study, 2,055 Brown Recluse spiders were captured over a 6-month period in a Kansas home, of which over 400 were of the size capable of inflicting an envenomation bite in humans. Despite the large number of venomous spiders, no one was bitten.

For a spider bite with a reaction to occur, several conditions must be present. The spider must have a reason to bite and most spiders are not aggressive and only bite in self-defense. If a spider bites a person it must have fangs of sufficient length to penetrate skin.

Even if adult spider fangs penetrate, fangs of a juvenile spiderling of the same species may not be able to penetrate. One report states brown recluse spiders must be 5 mm or larger to envenomate humans. Finally, even though almost all spiders produce venom, not all venoms elicit a response in humans. Many responses to bites will be localized reactions of the immune system to the foreign proteins injected by the spider. This is the classic

swelling, redness and itching that occurs with many biting insects such as mosquitoes, fleas and bedbugs.

The clinical definition of a spider bite is specific and it is suspected many lesions of skin conditions are misidentified as bites. A clinical definition is spelled out in the scientific literature for a spider bite and consists of three components:

- 1) Evidence includes discomfort and pain at the bite site immediately after the bite. These conditions are almost universal in spider bites.
- 2) Collection of the spider after the bite.
- 3) Identification of the spider by an expert to verify it is capable of producing the symptoms.

When these conditions do not occur the bite diagnosis is suspect and other medical explanation should be investigated. Based on available information, it's reasonable to conclude that random, unprovoked spider bites are rare. The black widow spider can cause severe, systemic reactions in people that are bitten. In areas where black widow spiders are common, there are few verified bites. I do not believe bites from black widow spiders are being overlooked.

One current phenomena surrounding spider bites is the reported occurrence of necrotic ulcers or lesions caused by spider bites, particularly brown recluse, yellow sac spiders and others, including the Hobo spider and wolf spiders. This phenomenon is called necrotic arachnidism. The ability of Hobo spiders to cause ulcerations was first reported in the Northwest United States in the late 1980's, but has been shown through venom analysis and other tests to be not a result of bites from these spiders.

Brown Recluse spider bites are diagnosed throughout the country while the range of these spiders is limited to localized areas. Vetter reports, in the *Journal of Medical Entomology*, that the Florida State poison control center reported medical diagnosis of 124 Brown Recluse have been collected in Florida over a 100 year period. Clearly other conditions are being misdiagnosed as spider bites.

While there are a handful of spiders whose bites cause serious reactions in people, spider bites are not common. Even dangerous spiders are not aggressive and prefer to retreat rather than bite. Random, unprovoked bites are rare or non-existent. Pest management professionals should be wary of bite reports and should not exaggerate bite frequency with customers. Exaggerating the occurrence of bites could lead to legal and ethical issues. Being a generalist predator, spiders are a beneficial organism, however many people have a fear of spiders and their webbing causes aesthetic concerns which means there will be a need to provide control services for these customers.

\*By Jeff Weier, from Kansas Pest Control Association News



## LEADERSHIP AND COMMON SENSE\* (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

levels of supervision to try and get resolution that is favorable will almost always come back to bite you in the end. Also, if you are in a leadership position, continually remind your folks about this concept.

**Value And Embrace Diversity In People, Ideas and Methods.** The word 'diversity' is thrown around quite a bit these days. People bring different backgrounds, experiences, expectations, ideas, and other valuable assets to your organization. It is important that as a leader, you cultivate and value this, and work hard to ensure that your organizational culture is infested with all that diversity has to offer. Some people are less likely to express their opinions than are others, especially in front of a group. One technique that I found helpful at my staff meetings was to call on each and every person and ask for their thoughts and ideas. Every time. This resulted in two positive

outcomes; (1) it generated more discussion and suggestions to build on, and (2) people came to the meetings better prepared because they knew they would be asked to contribute. Try it, and see what happens!

**Strive To Do The Right Thing, Even When No One Is Looking.** Some will refer to this tenet (or a similar version) as a definition for 'character' or 'integrity'. I suppose that it could be. If you are in a leadership position, be advised that your people will observe you closely, and will follow your examples. You will set the tone, every day, for the culture and work ethic. If you regularly leave early (which some bosses do!), your staff will feel that they can, too. If you take liberties with the company credit card, guess what! Here is where it is important for the organization to have a strong set of values that are adhered to by the leader and recognized by all employees.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

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## IMPROVING CASH FLOW

Now that 2014 is well underway, it's a great time to get your receivables back on track. To get your cash flow back where it should be, implement policies or procedures to resolve these issues before you lose customers. Here are a few important tips to build an effective accounts receivable program for any size pest management business.

### Establish a Policy for Payments

A strong way to begin a new season is to inform new and existing clients of your company's billing process and follow-up procedures. This method manages client expectations and lets them know in advance how and when they will be billed and the time frame in which they are expected to pay. By communicating your company's payment policies, you eliminate uncertainty and surprise when a bill is received and reduce the number of unpaid accounts. A reputable collection agency can help, but it's up to you to establish solid billing procedures first.

### Collect Debt and Retain Customers

This step sounds counterintuitive, but it is possible. When faced with the challenge of having to collect overdue funds, many pest management businesses will simply stop serving the customer and write off the debt to avoid alienating customers or damaging their reputations. A more effective way to deal with debit collection is to act quickly when an account is overdue. Send a payment reminder to the customer as soon as possible to gently demonstrate that you are serious about collecting on their overdue account. Quick reminders are typically perceived as non-threatening and thus tend to yield successful results.

### Hire Quality Employees

Employees are the key to your success, whether they are on the front lines investigating and spraying or behind the scenes making appointments and following up on billing. Employees represent you and help maintain your reputation. Staff members also play a critical role in recovering monies owed by conveying business policies while still treating customers diplomatically and respectfully. Take time to hire quality people to be part of your team and train everyone properly to ensure they are familiar with billing policies as well as good customer service methods. A little time spent shaping up your front line can drastically improve your bottom line.

### Old-Fashioned Customer Service

Even with great employees and strong policies, sometimes bills may remain unpaid. In these instances, there are a few customer service-based approaches that may help you recover monies owed to your business. When bills remain unpaid for 30 days, a customer service call is an effective way to reach out to a client and to get feedback on your business in the process. A call is an open opportunity to discuss the services you provided and then bridge into why the client is delaying payment. This soft approach is sincere and can expedite recovering monies owed to your business.

### Plan for Accounts That Remain Unpaid

There will be times when regardless of the approach, a customer will not respond to requests for payment. After 90 days, it is wise to seek outside help from a collection agency on accounts that are long overdue. Look for a reputable team that is a good match for your business and who has your values and mission in mind.

A few factors to consider when hiring a third-party collection agency are: diplomatic and tactful communications with your customers, freeing up staff time, affordability through a flat-fee system (you can pay as little as \$10-15 per account), access to your accounts online and industry experience that will assure higher recovery rates. And while working with a local agency used to be viewed as a plus, with today's technology having a collection agency that knows your industry is far more important.

A few tweaks to your internal collection methods, coupled with help from a reputable collection agency, can produce strong results for your bottom line and get your 2015 off to a profitable start.

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## LEADERSHIP AND COMMON SENSE\* (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14)

### **Never Stop Learning – Promote Personal and Professional Growth**

This one applies not only to you but to your work force as well. In this day of shrinking budgets, the first things to get cut are often training (excluding required training such as safety), conference attendance and self-improvement courses. Outside of credits required for certification or licensure, look for other opportunities for you and your staff to stay the leading edge of your field. There is now a wealth of opportunities out there through internet training, correspondence courses, webinars, and other venues. Consider appointing someone to serve as the Training Officer and have this person identify such opportunities, assist others with scheduling them and tracking progress.

**Expectations Go Both Ways.** Ever had a boss call you in for a mid-term progress report or end-of-cycle evaluation and say 'you're doing a good job – sign here'? This can be very frustrating, as well as non-productive, and is not fair to either party. Whenever you meet with one of your employees, especially when careers and job performance are involved, be fully prepared and ready to take the time to have a full discussion. No phone calls, no blackberries, no texts – no interruptions. Also, keep your employee informed of job performance and expectations throughout the year – there should be no major surprises when evaluations (and perhaps bonuses) are handed out. And remember that expectations go both ways. Ask your employee what you can do to assist them in their job, and what they expect of you as a leader or boss. You might be surprised by the answers you get!

### **Indicate What Needs To Be Done But Not Always**

**How To Do It.** This is a fairly common occurrence in certain professions. Let's use pest control as an example, where someone may start out as route technician and eventually end up as a region manager or higher. When you have held a job that one of your employees now has, it can be very tempting to assign a task and then immediately after give detailed instruction as to how that task should be accomplished. It is best to refrain from

this in most situations, as it may negatively affect innovation and personal pride in your employees. Give each person a chance to surprise you, and they will!

**Take Responsibility and Give Credit.** If a group or organization you are leading suffers a failure, it is up to you to step forward and take responsibility. Don't try and duck the spotlight by blaming the result on a committee process, someone else's decision, or an outside influence. You are responsible to your chain of command for what happens in your organization, period. Conversely, when things go right, be sure to give credit where credit is due. We have probably all had bosses who were scarce during the lean times but always front and center, taking all the credit, when things went well. If this is your style, your people will quickly come to resent you and morale will tumble.

**Don't Mistake That Rut You Are In For The Edge Of The Horizon.** Here are seven words that will quickly put your organization on the road to irrelevancy – "That's the way we've always done it." This is what I like to call 'same old, same old'. You may think that your group is perched on the cutting edge of your business but in fact, you are only seeing the edge of the rut that you have fallen into over the years. Encourage innovation, promote continuing education, and periodically conduct internal reviews of all significant processes, flow charts, standard operating procedures and company policies.

**Summing Up.** Finally, be decisive and don't be afraid to implement necessary change, even though it may be unpopular. With leadership comes responsibility, and you cannot be fearful of that or you risk failure. My parting shot? People willingly follow leaders because they WANT to, not because they HAVE to. Now go motivate and inspire!

\*By Dr. Stan Cope, Manager Technical Services, Terminix International