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Jan 29th & 30th

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Hello. On behalf of the Board of Directors and the officers of the Nevada Pest Management Association (NVPMA), I would like to offer you a sincere “Thank You” for your interest and involvement in our industry. It is a wonderful time to be a part of Nevada’s thriving pest management industry. As the voice of our industry in Nevada, it is our honor to serve our members. I am grateful to be a part of such a wonderful organization.

Since its inception, the Annual Pest Expo has been a Lecture Series. The NVPMA Expo committee has committed to revitalizing the Expo with a larger conference format, breakout sessions, and hands on training. Please take some time to look at the schedule of events for the upcoming Expo. I’m sure you will be as excited as I am to see the changes to the event and to be a part of it in January. We look forward to seeing you there.

As 2017 winds down, so begins the new legislative season. The NVPMA and the legislative committee are keeping our eyes on the bills and regulation changes that can affect the business climate for the pest management industry. Several of the officers of the NVPMA will be attending the NPMA’s Legislative Day in Washington, DC. In addition, we are working closely with state senators to help guide the direction of legislative action on the local level. I would like to encourage you to expand the role you take in our organization. Please consider supporting our association by becoming a Premium member or by serving on one of our numerous committees. Enclosed in this publication is the contact information for our Committee Chairs. This is a great way to influence the direction of our association and to affect our policy positions when helping the Nevada Department of Agriculture draft and amend regulations that will directly affect your bottom line.

I am honored to be serving as the President of our association.

By Joey Toth
NVPMA President
pres@nevadapma.org

President’s Message
Safety Points
Raising Your Profits
Rodent Prevention
The Zen of Master Termite Technicians
PCO Truck Appearance Matters
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Carpenter Ants
Regulatory Corner
Pest Identification

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SAFETY POINTS WHEN DOING PEST MANAGEMENT SERVICES

By Austin Frishman, Ph.D., B.C.E.,
President AMF Pest Management Services, Inc.

One of my earliest phrases was “I may not be the fastest inspector in town but I aim to be the oldest.” At this stage the phrase is coming true. Here are some tips that have allowed me to reach this goal.

• Always carry two working flashlights. If one gives out in the dark, you have a backup.
• When entering an “empty” apartment because the super gives you a key, knock first. Wait, knock again, and wait. Before you enter, slowly crack the door open and slide your work shoe into the crack and wait. Sometimes a vicious dog attacks it. You pull the shoe back out and lock the door.
• Never walk with your hands in your pockets. This way if you slip quickly you can balance yourself.
• Even if there are only three steps and a hand rail, use it when going up or downstairs.
• Double check that your respirator is properly working before going into an area where you need it.
• Do not lift heavy objects with your feet spread wide apart.
• Do not reach over and try to pick up a heavy object that you cannot easily reach.
• Always wear knee pads when inspecting. It has saved more knees allowing us to bend, walk and crawl without pain.
• When walking around possible contaminated material, wear solid disposable gloves.
• Wear a hard hat when inspecting and/or servicing. Mine is full of scars that are not marks on my head.
• Nails hanging from an above floor in a crawl space appear to grow while you are in the crawl. Keep low when crawling out.
• Speaking of crawl spaces. Sometimes there is a well present or a mean dog. That takes us back to number one. Carry two working flashlights.
• Eat well, including a banana a day. Plenty of potassium helps you avoid leg cramps.
• Learn and practice the basics of ladder safety.
• Before putting your hands into an area where a motor is running, first proceed with an outstretched screwdriver. When the fan pings the screwdriver you still have your fingers.
• Know what type of neighborhood you are entering and act accordingly.
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Some of you out there inadvertently are running a non-profit organization. Some have cash cows and are very profitable. Some are making a fair living and don’t necessarily want to grow more and are content with their earnings. Some have great toys (cars, boats, tricycles). Some take extended vacations and travel the world. Some of you must ask your spouse for money each week. It’s all a matter of choice, strategy, follow-up and tenacity. There is no right or wrong. This article is for those of you who seem to be in a rut and want to grow and raise your profits. Much like a “rising tide lifts all boats,” your employees should grow and profit by your side. If you are making great money and your employees are at minimum wages, you will employ the wrong people and eventually this will cause turnover and lessen your profits.

How do I get good people?

First thing is to SHOW leadership. Do your homework. Learn how to interview. Yes, that means YOU have to get better at it. Impress them. There are many books, DVD’s and seminars you to improve your interviewing skills. What most employers have not figured out yet is that while you are interviewing them – they are interviewing you. “Do I want to work for this person?” “Does he or she seem to be organized?” “Can I have a career here?” or, “Is this just a job?”

Maintaining your work force and surrounding yourself with good people with potential to grow — is a key factor in raising your profits.

Additionally, maintaining your present customers is extremely important to raising your profits. Unfortunately, we pay much more attention to bringing in new sales than we do to maintaining our present customers. Interesting enough, many companies rarely raise their prices. I’m talking 4-6 YEARS or more. That not only affects your profits, but if you have service reps or sales people who are on commission, you’ve basically frozen their wages. They get unhappy, they leave and your profit goes down.

Often companies decide to hire a Marketing person when they don’t really understand or have a marketing strategy. They expect instant gratification. Image is an important part of Marketing. If your image doesn’t match your marketing — you will lose. Imagine FedEx trucks looking dirty and rusty or going into an investment firm’s office and the delivery guy is dressed like a bum. It doesn’t fit.

Data Mining is a way that you can dig through your current customers and find gold — selling new services, bundling, etc.

Above are just a few ideas to pursue to raise your profits. Knowing what to do is the easy part. IMPLEMENTING these ideas takes planning, timing, preparation, tenacity and getting buy-in from your employees. Taking the time to learn how to RAISE YOUR PROFITS and how to implement all the above will be the best money you have ever spent. We will keep you updated on this in our future ads.

Remember the objective is to help everyone in your...
The basic tenet of rodent control is prevention. This includes removing alternative food, water, and shelter to deny rats and mice their basic needs. Removing these could effectively 'prevent' rodent infestations from establishing. The other side of this concept is denying rats and mice entry indoors; keep them outdoors and encourage them to visit bait stations. Dead rodents outside are preferable to live rodents inside.

How or when rats and mice get indoors is always a mystery, with a dose of myth. The entry points are never obvious; they are small and usually concealed. The long-standing myth is that a rat can enter through an opening the size of a nickel, and a mouse through the size of a dime. Not really. What they can do is expand these size openings into an access hole. It still makes holes this small a threat to any rodent control/prevention program.

While many entry points are not obvious, a few are. Let’s look at a quick checklist of the more common ones:

10 COMMON ACCESS POINTS
1. Under garage doors; where the door does not meet the concrete pad. Replace the seal
2. Crawlspace vents; repair or replace if screens are ripped or vents broken
3. HVAC penetrations; where HVAC refrigeration lines go through the foundation and around the unit itself
4. Hose bibs; where water line goes through foundation or wall
5. Under first course of siding; occasionally you’ll find an opening between the sill plate and footer
6. Door frames; openings between door frame and structure
7. Plumbing vent cover missing or broken; reinstall or replace
8. Under entry way doors; adjust or replace door sweep
9. Wire/cable through wall or foundation; seal around opening
10. Basement and crawlspace doors; seal all openings

So, during a perimeter inspection you have to look for and seal potential and actual entry points. Creating passable openings (2.75 to 4 inches for rats) from ‘from nickels and dimes’ is not difficult. Rodents can and do gnaw almost anything they can get their front teeth around. Rats can cut through any material softer than the enamel on their incisors. Norway rat incisors are rated 5.5 on the Moh’s hardness scale—that puts them roughly between iron and steel! Comparable hardness values are known for the house mouse.

Typically, rats attack material with a hardness of 3.5 or less, and that gives them a wide range of possibilities: aluminum, lead, copper, asphalt, wood, sheetrock, plastic, and soft mortar. Their jaw can bite with about 1 pound pressure and they take 1.5 bites per second when they are intent on getting in. With this amount of pressure and diligence, they can quickly turn nickels and dimes into an entry way and cost your customers much more than nickels and dimes.
On their Zen paths to direct understanding or becoming Master Termite Technicians, beginning termite technicians are considered “entry-level.” The regulations in many States specify those pursuing certification and/or licensure can work under the direct supervision of licensed technicians or their “termitolgy” Zen teachers.

Even for certified and licensed Masters, instructions and application regulations are carefully laid out within each State’s certification manual as well as professional termicide labels. To un-initiated observers, the perception may be that termite technicians are merely following written instructions for labor-intensive service programs. If so, why do some technicians have a high callback rate, while others, sometimes within the same company, using the same materials and equipment, have very low callbacks? Enlightenment suggests the answer is due to dedication, experience, and a deep understanding of termite biology, termicides, and building construction. A real love of the work! These are the Zen teachers or Master Termite Technicians.

A Master Termite Technician can look at a building and just understand, “The termites are here!” or “The termites are there!” The Master can adjust the spacing of drill holes to make sure the soil accepts the termicide and a continuous barrier are established. The Master never drills through a utility line!

A Master Termite Technician can look at a building and just understand the grade, surrounding trees, fences, pavement, and even the type of soil. With a complete understanding of building practices, the Master sees foundations; crawlspaces, ventilation, airflow, moisture, wall voids, hidden places, and sometimes finding hidden rooms or chambers that the building owner did not know existed.

A Master Termite Technician understands the true artistry of cement, and both mixes and constructs drill-hole patches that match surfaces. The Master understands the regional termite species biology and behavior. The master understands the potential for termite damage.

On their Zen paths to direct understanding, beginning termite technicians frequently ask, “What are the signs of a termite infestation?” The challenge of answering this important question is in understanding the 8 signs involved.

1. Termites alive
2. Termite swarmer wings
3. Termite scats
4. Termite shelter tubes
5. Termite swarm castles or slits
6. Termite carton nests
7. Termite exit or kick holes
8. Termite damage

On their Zen paths to direct understanding, beginning termite technicians frequently ask, “How fast do subterranean termites (Reticulitermes spp.) consume wood? The challenge of answering this important question is in understanding that many variables are involved.

- The species of wood
- The type and dimensions of wood
- The moisture level, temperature, and presence of fungus within wood
- The condition of the soil
- The size of the termite colony (southern colonies 60,000 to 80,000 termites and northern colonies 100,000s to millions of termites)

An often-quoted approximation of wood consumption rate by termites is one to two feet of standard 2x4 per year. The Master understands that presence of rot fungus can accelerate the process of wood consumption.

As Zen teachers, Master Termite Technicians can look at termite infestation and all of the variables, and with direct understanding, state the approximate age of termite damage. When the Master Termite Technician hands his or her paperwork to their customer, company owner, or manager, the question may be casually asked, “Did you get the termites?” With direct understanding, the Zen Master will reply, “I sure did!”

By Doug Seemann, BCE
Contributor Dr. Ted Granovsky, BCE
Edited by Dr. Stuart Mitchell

THE ZEN OF MASTER TERMITE TECHNICIANS

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What THE BUZZ? • You’ve got Questions, we’ve got Answers!
Q: What percent of people have encountered bed bug problems?
A: In a recent survey by the National Pest Management Association, an amazing 70% of urban residents indicated they have encountered bed bugs in their home, office, or other location.

BUZZ Word! • Buzzworthy facts, terms and definitions!
Cockroaches are believed to have been on earth for 280 million years. They’re among the fastest land animals and are capable of moving 50 body lengths per second. If we could do this, we could complete a 100 yard dash in one second reaching speeds of 200 miles per hour.

All THE BUZZ! • Tips, tricks & shortcuts you should know!
Issues with diluted products separating between services? Drop a golf ball or two into your can sprayer or backpack applicator and let them handle the agitation for you!

Get A BUZZ! • These jokes are the bee’s knees!
Q: Did you hear about the two bed bugs who fell in love in the mattress?
A: They got married in the spring!

Have an industry related question, tip, joke? Buzz over & drop us a line at membership@nevadapma.org & be on the lookout for new answers, facts, tips & laughs in each issue of NVPMA Magazine right here on THE BUZZ!

When submitting questions to THE BUZZ please give as much detail as possible. Questions that are not chosen to print in the magazine may be answered via e-mail. Please provide your first name and city when making any submission, only your first name & city will be displayed. Visit us on the web at www.nevadapma.org.

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We are known worldwide for our product innovations targeting the end user’s needs. Given our High-Quality products, an extensive R&D department, and superior designs, Airofog is able to compete with the Top brands in the industry. Our dedication to new product innovations and creating new and exciting equipment is what sets us apart from our competitor’s. Airofog’s rise and growth has been driven by our sincere aim to provide High quality products to the industry and aid industry professionals in cost savings, all while saving the technicians time and increasing productivity.

Airofog’s core principles are built around developing equipment catered to the needs of operators on the ground. Airofog uses an entirely different system for our design. This unique system is based on the need to reduce parts required in the makeup of the product. This was designed purely from the standpoint of the end-user, fewer parts mean less wear and tear, less maintenance, and enhance ease of operations.

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DINI MILLER, PH.D
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ADDITIONAL PRESENTERS TO INCLUDE:
FREDDIE MEDINA PH.D, PAT COPPS BCE, MIKE DOGHERTY, SYLVIA KENNUIR BCE, BERT LOPEZ, DONNIE SHELTON, KA TSU, JEFF WEIER, BCE & MORE!

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PCO TRUCK APPEARANCE MATTERS!
YOUR CLIENTS CARE, YOUR EMPLOYEES CARE, SO SHOULD YOU!

PCO Business Fleet: Are you managing your team and making the right choices? Aside from your PCO workforce, the most important resource you possess is your fleet of trucks. It is important that your trucks are not only operating well, but also look clean and kept. Since many of your clients will never see your office, your trucks become the physical embodiment of your business in their eyes. Keep it Clean!

In addition to your company’s image, keeping your trucks well maintained will ensure that your technicians stay on the road and productive. But, make sure you not only keep your trucks maintained and operating well. Also be sure they are clean and presentable. This will increase the perceived quality of the service. Now, don’t mistake a clean truck for quality service. Your technicians still have to deliver great service and great value. Yet, appearances are significant and should not be overlooked.

Now it’s great to say that you want your trucks clean, but someone has to KEEP them clean. Leave that responsibility to the technicians that drive around in the trucks on a daily basis. Inspect their vehicles periodically. Perform regular inspections and tie the results to their performance evaluation. Reward those that get the highest marks consistently.

Grow Your PCO Business Fleet in Minutes!
In many ways, your trucks and their collective appearance enable you to paint your own picture and shape the perception that you want your customers to have of you. For example, if you want to seem like a larger company to your customers (or to your competition), then number your trucks out of sequence.

For instance, let’s say you have three trucks, but want those three trucks to seem like a fleet of a hundred trucks. Well, print a number on the side each truck. Number your trucks #154, #214, or whatever your favorite number may be. You could also put a different number on each side of the truck. Who’s really going to do a walk-around to see if the numbers match? People will see a different number every time their pest control service is performed and you have instantly grown the perception of your company to a fleet of hundreds!

PCO Business Fleet: Outsource Your Trucks
I’ve told you a lot about the importance of your trucks. One way to afford a fleet of trucks (or even just one) is to lease them. A leasing company will also help you manage the costs of maintenance and repairs. Most leasing companies have programs where they track the miles and let you know when you need an oil change or a brake job.

Prior to anchoring yourself into a multi-year financial obligation, you need to understand how they work. Let’s explore this topic.

PCO Business Fleet: Open-Ended Lease Example
Open-ended leases are great for this purpose. Let’s say a truck costs $25,000 and you wish to lease it over a span of 3 years. The company will assign a value of what they think the truck will cost at the end of the lease. Let’s say the value in 3 years is $10,000.

Next the leasing company will take the difference between the cost and the 3-year expected value. In this case, it’s $15,000. Then they will write a note payable that you pay every month and they tack on some interest. So, depending on the interest charged, your monthly payment might be around $400 or $500. And that’s your cost for leasing the truck every month.

So what happens after the three years is up? You have to give the vehicle back and the leasing company sells the truck. If it sells for more than $10,000, they write you a check for the difference. If they sell it for less than $10,000, then you have to write them a check for the difference going the other way.

There are also two other options here. You can purchase the truck for $10,000 or if you don’t want to turn the vehicle in, you can continue to lease it. You can even take the value all the way down to $0. Then, your monthly payment becomes about $5 per month, which is the administrative cost.

So, the reason you do open-ended leases is so you don’t have to guess at anything but the ending value. It’s easy and it’s predictable. And predictability when running your business is a good thing, since it reduces the amount of risk you take on.

Daniel Gordon
Certified Public Accountant
Owner - PCO Bookkeepers

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New iSTRIKE™ Insecticide Foam is your go-to product for wood destroying organisms (WDO). The easy-to-use can comes with a straw applicator to deliver the foam to the infested surface, hitting as many of the listed flying and crawling pests, including houseflies, mosquitoes, crickets, scorpions, bed bugs and millipedes.

Fireback’s double-strike applicator delivers the flexibility you need to target the pests you can see and destroy the pests’ hiding in cracks and crevices. The new permanently attached hinged flip-up straw reaches listed pests hiding in cracks and crevices. Flip the straw back down to expose the opening for a normal spray.

Fireback’s active ingredients are perfect for cockroaches, ants and spiders. Fireback kills on contact and provides a 3-month residual. It can be used against 26 additional listed flying and crawling pests, including houseflies, mosquitoes, crickets, scorpions, bed bugs and millipedes.

**Spray and Straw Applicator**

**Contact Kill for Ants & Roaches**

**Spray & Straw Applicator**

**Fireback** has a new can with dual spray and straw applicator.

- **FIREBACK** bed bug & insect spray & jet
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New iSTRIKE™ Insecticide Foam is your go-to product for wood destroying organisms (WDO). The easy-to-use can comes with an applicator hose and two tips: one for narrow cracks and crevices, the flexibility you need to target the pests you can see and destroy the pests hiding in cracks and crevices.

**Spray & Straw Applicator**

- New iSTRIKE™ Insecticide Foam is your go-to product for wood destroying organisms (WDO). The easy-to-use can comes with an applicator hose and two tips: one for narrow cracks and crevices, the flexibility you need to target the pests you can see and destroy the pests hiding in cracks and crevices.
- **SPRAY & STRAW APPLICATOR**
- **Contact Kill for Ants & Roaches**
- Fireback’s double-strike applicator delivers the flexibility you need to target the pests you can see and destroy the pests’ hiding in cracks and crevices.
- Fireback’s active ingredients are perfect for cockroaches, ants and spiders. Fireback kills on contact and provides a 3-month residual. It can be used against 26 additional listed flying and crawling pests, including houseflies, mosquitoes, crickets, scorpions, bed bugs and millipedes.
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To learn more, visit: SyngentaPMP.com/CockroachSolutions

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EVENTS:

January 29 & 30, 2017 • See centerfold for details
Las Vegas Pest Expo 2018 • Orleans Hotel

Further schedule details pending space availability and will be available soon.

Upcoming events are listed online at our website, nevadapma.org

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Nevada Pest Management Association | December 2017
CARPENTER ANTS – MUNCH, MUNCH, MUNCH

By Travis R. Aggson, A.C.E.
Vice President, Associate Certified Entomologist
American Pest Management, Inc.

My mom would tell you that these pests are probably the reason that I chose to work in the pest control industry. At a very young, ripe old age of five, she would find me in the back yard with a magnifying glass burning these large black ants that would trail from a large tree towards a cinder block retaining wall. One day, the ants decided to plan a revenge on their “Ant Bully”. Once particular brave ant crawled up my pant leg and used his pinchers to make a young boy scream and cry. She would say that in that moment I chose my career as a Pest Management Professional.

Carpenter Ants do not normally attack us, however, they can attack our homes and can cause structural damage. As a matter of fact, they can cause almost as much damage as termites. There is a difference though, termites need the wood from our homes for food, carpenter ants use the wood as shelter. They do not obtain any nutritional value from the wood they shave out of our homes. The carpenter ants carve very smooth galleries into the wood to create a place where they can call home.

Most carpenter ant colonies are not found in our homes. During our inspections for carpenter ants, we find most colonies are actually out away from the home in damaged trees. They prefer wood that is slightly damaged from moisture, so an old crook in a tree is a perfect place to inspect for a nesting site. Finding ants inside your home may not mean that a nest is inside, it could just mean that it is within foraging distance from their colony. They may be able to forage up to 100 feet from their colony. However, if your home has been damaged by moisture at some point, it becomes a very inviting site for them to attack.

To prevent carpenter ant infestations:
• Trim all trees and bushes so branches do not touch the house
• Repair moisture problems such as leaky roofs, windows or door frames, and plumbing problems
• Paint and/or seal exposed wood construction before it becomes wet
• Replace previously ant- or termite-infested wood and rotted or water-damaged wooden parts of the structure
• Eliminate wood/soil contacts
• Remove old, dead tree stumps
• Store firewood in a way that is off the ground, possibly on a concrete pad or on metal firewood racks. Only store firewood that can be used in one heating season

The first signs of carpenter ants usually found by homeowners are either a swarm of ants (ants with wings flying out of a wall, crack, or crevice) or piles of sawdust under a window or door frame. If these signs are found, control is essential, and finding the nest is crucial for elimination.

Continued from page 3

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THE REGULATORY CORNER

PREVENTING PESTICIDE DRIFT

By Bret Allen
Environmental Scientist

During my time with the Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA), I have investigated numerous pesticide drift complaints. In every single situation where drift occurs, it could have been prevented! Pesticide drift (which is the airborne movement of pesticide spray droplets, vapor or dusts from the application site) can contaminate drinking water, affect wildlife, damage neighboring crops and make people sick. Though there are a variety of factors that can affect the risk of pesticide drift, it is the responsibility of the operator to prevent it.

Operator responsibility

During a field inspection, a pesticide operator once asked me, “is it too windy to spray?” I admire him for pausing and allowing sound judgment to overcome his focus on the job at hand. Obviously, humans cannot control the weather, but there are several things the operator can keep in mind to mitigate risk.

Most labels address drift potential and/or wind speed. If it does not, the appropriate safety practice would be to postpone spray operations if winds exceed 10 mph. Some pesticide labels require the operator to create buffer zones. Buffer zones are recommended even if not specified on the label and are usually adjacent to sensitive or protected areas. For example, the U.S. EPA reinstated streamside pesticide exclusion zones to help protect endangered or threatened salmon in the Pacific Northwest.

Factors such as droplet size and nozzle height can help to reduce the chance of drift, even if there’s a breeze. The operator should routinely inspect his or her application equipment, especially nozzles. A partially plugged nozzle might create fine droplets, which increases the possibility of drift. Nozzle height is also important. The higher the nozzle is above the target pest, the greater chance of drift.

When the weather doesn’t cooperate

The potential for pesticide drift obviously increases with escalating wind speed. Wind direction is another factor that should always be considered. Nevada is known for its wind, and it can be helpful for operators to know the location of sensitive areas nearby, such as schools, wildlife habitat, neighborhoods, hospitals, etc. An operator should avoid spraying when winds are blowing toward a sensitive area, especially if unprotected people or animals are present.

Drift potential is lowest when wind speeds are between three and eight miles per hour. Be especially careful near sunset and the hour after sunrise when winds can be erratic and unpredictable. When in doubt, always check wind speed and direction prior to the job, and take advantage of today’s technology. Wind meters and temperature gauges can help accurately determine if conditions are favorable for applying pesticides. Dead calm conditions are never recommended, as they may indicate the presence of a temperature inversion.

Though the weather is unpredictable, operators are responsible for taking proper precaution to avoid pesticide drift.

Be aware vapor drift may also be a concern, especially if temperatures exceed 85 degrees Fahrenheit. Vapor drift occurs when pesticide spray droplets, once introduced into the environment, evaporate and become suspended in air samples, only to be re-deposited later on a non-target site when temperatures cool down. The potential for harm is as great as if pesticides are moved off site by wind.

It is important that pesticide applicators eliminate “tunnel vision,” and recognize there is almost never a need to spray “right now.” The uncomfortable “if only” thought can be avoided by considering factors such as wind, temperature, buffer zones and routine equipment maintenance. By using common sense and practical knowledge, an operator has the power to use pesticides safely and protect human health and the environment from drift.

Bret Allen has worked in the NDA’s Environmental Services program for more than four years. Environmental Services staff conducts ground and surface water monitoring for pesticides, manages the NDA’s pesticide waste disposal program and oversees pesticide certification. He has a bachelor of science degree in forest and rangeland management from the University of Nevada, Reno.

Though the weather is unpredictable, operators are responsible for taking proper precaution to avoid pesticide drift.
If the nests present a hazard, controlling these wasps is best achieved by regularly monitoring areas for new nests and removing them when they are small. Larger nests should be treated with a registered wasp and hornet spray. All wasp nests should be treated in the early morning when the temperatures are the lowest and the wasps the least active. Since paper wasps only take living prey, traps for yellowjackets do not work to control wasps.

European paper wasps can reuse old nests so it is important to remove the nest once it has been treated. In addition, individual European paper wasps that get displaced during treatment may start new colonies. To be sure what species of wasp you have, it is important to get an accurate identification. Members of the public and industry can send photos of insects or hand-deliver specimens to any of the Nevada Department of Agriculture’s (NDA) offices for identification. For more information, visit agri.nv.gov/entomology.

How to identify types of paper wasp species in Nevada

Paper wasps and yellowjackets are the two most often encountered types of problem wasps around homes and structures. Both are social wasps with one or more “queens” per colony. As social insects, they will actively and sometimes aggressively protect their colonies. They are both in the order Hymenoptera and the family Vespidae, which can be recognized by their four wings folded tightly together.

Though paper wasps and yellowjackets look similar, paper wasps construct open umbrella-like nests and often fly with their long hind legs hanging down. This flying characteristic, along with a more distinct “waist” separates them from similarly-colored yellowjackets. Three species of paper wasps are commonly found in Nevada. Polistes aurifer is a native species typically found in southern Nevada. Polistes fuscatus (also known as northern paper wasp) is a native species typically found in northern Nevada. Polistes dominula, also known as the European paper wasp, is a recent introduction and is seen throughout the state. It was first discovered in the eastern United States around 1981 and spread quickly throughout the entire country. This wasp has nearly replaced the two native species in many areas, including Nevada.

Native paper wasp species usually have fewer than 30 individuals in a colony, but European paper wasps have larger colonies and their nests are generally constructed in more protected areas. It’s also important to note that the European paper wasp is known to be more aggressive than Nevada’s native species.

Paper wasps can be aggressive towards people, but they provide an excellent biological control service to the state’s crops and gardens by preying on other insects and larvae. If the nests are in areas that don’t present a hazard to people and pets, they should be left untreated.

Jeff Knight has served as the Nevada State Entomologist since 1993. The Nevada Department of Agriculture’s entomology program identifies, surveys for and controls native and exotic invertebrate pests, applicable quarantines and regulations.
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