Message from the President
By: Travis Lucas

Dear Fellow NSPCA Members,

If you have had a busy and successful year in pest control, the change in seasons can be a welcome break from our demanding schedules, so a happy autumn and winter to all. That being said, which one of us PCO’s doesn’t always dream of long Falls, short Winters, and early Springs? After all, if you’re making hay while the sun shines, more sunshine equals more hay, right?

The Nebraska State Pest Control Association is largely comprised of small businesses. My unofficial guess is that many of your businesses are made up of five or less employees and that’s the way it has been for years. However, many of us may bulk up with part time employees throughout our busy summers to help with termite work or a seasonally larger route load. I once heard Stuart Aust, the founder of Bug Doctor, a top 100 pest control company, say that the biggest business decision he ever made was hiring his first employee, which underscores just how nerve wracking it can be when deciding to expand and hire. A major factor in making the leap of hiring your first, second, third, or more full-time employees can be the worry that there won’t be enough work throughout the slow and uncertain winters to keep them busy.

Now, let me stop at this juncture to state right up front that this topic and the ideas discussed are for those in this business that would like to experience any, if even moderate, growth. In the aggressive and competitive corporate world we hear platitudes like “if you don’t grow you die.” In a state that is mostly rural, and neither growing nor dying, pretending that small business is a matter of life or death is a fallacy that will lead to pointless anxiety. My point is this, if you don’t want to grow your business that is perfectly fine. If you have developed a comfortable one or two person route that is a good fit for your market and it affords the lifestyle you want for yourself then the idea of growth is irrelevant. Just keep in mind that some of these ideas may keep you busier during the winter and stabilize your cash flow beyond usual expectations. For others that do want to grow their business for the reasons of higher revenue goals, expansion into new markets, building the value of your business for a future sale, or just want to progress yourself into a different position in your own company, these are some ideas that may help.

As small business operators we usually pride ourselves in the things that differentiate our small business from our very large national or multi-national competitors. One complaint that we frequently hear about the large pest control corporations is that if someone calls them and wants a treatment for spiders, the company will only commit to an appointment if the customer is willing to commit to a six to twelve month contract. My response to that is if it takes them six to twelve months to get rid of your spiders, they have no clue what they’re doing. Jokes aside, that is a business model that works for them and helps to sustain the overhead and growth that they need to operate. We, though, are usually happy to serve the customer that calls us once a year for box elder bugs, or the family that had one wasp emergency and we never hear from them again. Many times it is those customers that can be the difference between a good season and a slow season. But sometimes a reluctance to “pressure” our customers into recurring service agreements amounts to us undervaluing the worth of our services to our customers, and missed opportunities for our own prosperity.

While the demand for a commercial route can be an easy

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year `round sell, and may constitute the most stable sector of our business, the residential market is a good place to pursue services that may not otherwise come your way. How often do you get a new customer that can tell you about every ant infestation they have had every year for the last decade? That customer called you because those ants finally crossed the threshold of what they could live with or control by themselves (many times they have crossed the threshold of what their wife will tolerate). You might be surprised to find out how many bites you get if you simply suggested that with a recurring service agreement you could guarantee that they will never have to tolerate ants on any level, and if they do you guarantee that you will persist in your efforts to eradicate them. As a business we instituted this mind-set three years ago and have had remarkable success. We developed the policy that all residential insect or rodent customers that hired us were pitched our ‘All Seasons Pest Defense’ program. All new rodent control customers were recommended that they would be best served by a visit every or every other month. We branded our services, we developed custom sales literature, we mentioned our branded services in all of our television, radio, and internet advertising, we created sales incentives for everyone in our company. We made sure that we had visible pest control devices such as exterior rodent stations and termite monitors with our name on them, which serves not just as an advertisement but also a sense of constant presence and protection to the customer which enhances the value of the service. Essentially, we geared all of our promotional actions not just to getting our name out in the public eye, but towards building a consistent customer base from the first contact with the customer. Does that sound high pressure? It really isn’t. We still have hundreds of customers every year that we just do that one service for, and we never push contract work on pest problems that don’t fit. Your average bed bug, roach, or yellow jacket customer doesn’t need a year `round agreement, they just need a good pest control company to take care of that one time occurrence. On the other hand, by just the organized suggestion by our technicians and even customers outright asking for our recurring services by name, we are selling new service setups for quarterly residential services to the tune of 1-3 per week, and have a retention rate of new rodent customers that is greater than 75%.

All of these things considered, I think we can agree on a more accurate business platitude, “If you don’t grow, nothing changes” and conversely, “If nothing changes, you don’t grow.” I can speak from personal experience that the changes in approach that we made felt like a gamble at the time. They were major changes in the way we thought about and operated our business. Do you know what else changed? Our bottom line, financial stability, and the level of anxiety associated with hiring new employees.

I hope that this fall and winter brings everyone an opportunity to relax a bit, enjoy time with loved ones, and be thankful that we get to work in an industry that we are truly passionate about.
Dr. Bobby Corrigan  
Dr. Corrigan is president of RMC Pest Management Consulting. He received his B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Purdue University where for 15 years he conducted programs in urban pest management, emphasizing rodent control. His industry experience includes 3 years as a PMP and a year as a technical specialist for Terminix International. Bobby is author of Rodent Control: A Practical Guide for Pest Management Professionals, and is contributing editor to the Handbook of Pest Control, 10th ed.

Ms. Gail Getty  
Ms. Getty received her B.S. in entomology and M.S. in wood science and technology from the University of California-Berkeley. She has over 20 years of experience in conducting scientific research on urban insect biology, ecology, chemical ecology and behavior. She has published over 21 scientific papers. Her projects have involved major manufacturing companies. She has been an expert witness in bed bug, termite, beetle, and construction defect lawsuits. Recently, Ms. Getty formed the Getty Entomological Research and Consulting Company.

Ms. Sylvia Kenmuir  
Ms. Kenmuir received her B.S. degree in biology from California State Polytechnic, Pomona. She is a board certified entomologist and director of Technical Training at Target Specialty Products. She is responsible for technical content for all continuing education courses, hands on training programs for pest management professionals and their clients with focus on structural pest control and fumigation. Sylvia is a professional speaker and educator on a variety of courses including urban pests, integrated pest management and regulatory issues.

Dr. Robert W. Davis  
Dr. Davis received his Ph.D. in entomology from the University of Nebraska and has acquired field experience in the structural pest control industry while working as a technical director for ABC Pest Control in Austin, Texas. Keeping focus on termites and other structural pests, Bob has worked for Aventis and Bayer and is currently working for BASF, Inc. He has regularly contributed to our UPM Conference and made numerous presentations on termites, ants, pesticide safety, and technician training at various pest management conferences in other states.

Mr. Jerry Heath  
Mr. Heath received a B.S. in entomology from Washington State University. As a product manager and entomologist at the Industrial Fumigant Company, he is involved with product marketing and technical services for the food processing and commodity industries. He also worked on IGRs and pheromone mating disruption products for stored grain pests.

Dr. Linda Mason  
Dr. Mason received her Ph.D. in entomology from Louisiana State University. She is a professor of entomology at Purdue University. She is internationally known for her expertise in the food processing industry. She assists food manufacturers/retailers with food protection, food processing facility design, and pest management technology development. Dr. Mason is a member of an interdisciplinary grain storage team to control insect pests and reduce residual pesticides in food. She conducts research on pest management strategies such as grain chilling and ozonation. She has made many presentations on stored grain pest biology and fumigation.

Mr. Gene White  
Mr. White received his M.S. in urban entomology from Purdue University. He is a board certified entomologist. He was recently named a technical director of Rentokil North America where he leads a team of 25 entomologists and biologists developing technical strategies. Prior to Rentokil, he served as director of training and education for Rose Pest Solutions. He has over 34 years of industry experience as a technician, sales, supervisor, manager and technical director.

Dr. Dini Miller  
Dr. Miller is a professor of entomology and an Urban Pest Management Extension Specialist at Virginia Tech. She received her M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Florida where her research focused on behavior and management of German cockroaches. Dr. Miller conducts research on insecticide efficacy and outreach programs on German cockroaches, bed bugs and other urban pests. She has won numerous awards for her work in urban entomology.

**Urban Pest Management Conference**

**Featured Speakers**

**Pre-Registration FORM**

Registration form is also online at: [http://entomology.unl.edu/upm.shtml](http://entomology.unl.edu/upm.shtml)

(Do not Print)

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Company: __________________________

Address: __________________________

City: __________________ State: ______ Zip: ______

Phone: __________________ Email: __________________

Name Badge Information: (Do not Print)

Name: __________________________

Company: __________________________

City: __________________ State: ______

- **Pre-Registration** — $150  
  (postmarked by Tuesday, January 26, 2016)
- **General Registration** — $170  
  (after January 26, 2016)
- **Vendor’s Registration** by NSPCA — $400  
  (Free booth table and electrical outlet)

For Conference Registration, please make your check payable to:  
University of Nebraska–Lincoln  
UPM Conference

Registration covers the cost of a lunch on February 9-10. Lunch on February 10 is on your own.

No registration refund after January 26, 2016.
## Program Highlights
### Speakers and Major Topics

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### Laboratory Sessions
1. Structural Pests/Occasional Invaders
2. Wood Destroying Pests
3. Pests Affecting Public Health
4. Stored Food and Pantry Pests

### Nebraska Department of Agriculture Recertification
- 08 Structural/Health Related Pest Control
- 08W Wood Destroying Organisms
- 09 Public Health Pest Control
- 11 Fumigation

--- Testing will be available ---

### Vendors/Industry Exhibits
Manufacturers/Suppliers, Current & New Products

---more Speakers and Topics------

### Hotel Information
**Make Your Own Room Reservation**

**The Cornhusker Hotel**
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FAX: (402) 474-6006
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**Ask for UNL-UPM Conference Rate**
Room Cost: $89 plus tax, single/double

Fee-based Parking Garage attached to The Cornhusker Hotel

--- More Speakers and Topics ---

--- More Topics ---

--- More Laboratory Sessions ---

--- More Nebraska Department of Agriculture Recertification ---

--- More Vendors/Industry Exhibits ---

--- More Hotel Information ---

--- More Hotel Information ---
When it comes to the most searched pests in 2015, it’s a bloodsucker that takes the cake according to the National Pest Management Association (NPMA). The NPMA announced its list of the Top 10 Pests of the Year, and bed bugs ranked #1. Spiders and stinging insects were also at the top of the list.

“Bed bugs continue to cause significant problems across the country due to their uncanny hitchhiking abilities and elusive habits,” said Cindy Mannes, vice president of public affairs for NPMA. “So, it makes sense that people are looking for information about them. No one wants to encounter bed bugs and they certainly want to find out how to protect themselves from an infestation and how to get rid of them, fast.”

The NPMA analyzed the top 100 pages per session on its consumer website, PestWorld.org, from January 1 through December 14, 2015 to determine which pests generated the strongest content interest within the United States. The following pests were identified as the most searched in 2015:

1. Bed bugs
2. Spiders
3. Stinging insects
4. Cockroaches
5. Ants
6. Stink bugs
7. Mosquitoes
8. Ticks
9. Termites
10. Rodents

A deeper analysis of PestWorld’s geo-data found that visitors to bed bug-related pages on the website were specifically interested in general biological information, unique bed bug facts and photos of bed bugs.

NPMA Working with Overtime Coalition on the Hill

NPMA Public Policy staff met with the Partnership to Protect Workplace Opportunity (PPWO) to discuss coordinating lobbying efforts on the Hill. PPWO is actively pushing offices to sign onto a dear colleague letter to Department of Labor Secretary Perez, spearheaded by Representative Hardy (R-NV) and Representative Knight (R-CA). NPMA is working closely with PPWO on the overtime issue and will be sending a grassroots alert to it’s members requesting assistance. If you are an NPMA member, please be on the lookout and participate by sending notes to your Congressional representatives.
NSPCA President sends letter to Director of EPA’s Pesticide Programs

The Nebraska State Pest Control Association’s President, Travis Lucas, recently sent a letter concerning the EPA’s proposed rule “Pesticides: Certification of Pesticide Applicators.” Please read the full letter below:

RE: Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OPP-2011-0183; RIN: 2070-AJ20
Pesticides: Certification of Pesticide Applicators

Dear Mr. Housenger,

The Nebraska State Pest Control Association, the representative for professional structural pest management companies in Nebraska appreciates the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency proposed rule Pesticides: Certification of Pesticide Applicators.

I represent the aforementioned Nebraska State Pest Control Association as the President and a longtime past district director. Our organization represents forty different parties that are involved in all levels of the structural pest management industry and therefore has a vested interest in the matter at hand.

The NSPCA has several concerns with the proposed rule detailed herein. We fear that if these concerns are not addressed in any final version of the certification and training rule, it would result in devastating and unnecessary burdens and costs on our industry and our state regulatory partner.

Regulating Restricted Use Pesticides and General Use Pesticides. Our state generally does not distinguish between the use of restricted use pesticides (RUPs) and general use pesticides (GUPs). We understand that the proposed rule is only concerned with RUPs, but the reality is that since 40 CFR 171 was promulgated our state does not distinguish between RUP and GUP with regard to commercial applicators. If this rule is implemented as written, this could have a very significant impact on our applicators applying GUPs. Specifically, the 18 year age requirement is very concerning. We request specific clarification by EPA that the 18 year age requirement is only intended to apply to RUPs.

Definition of Use. Probably the most onerous part of this proposed rule is the unprecedented definition of “use” as to “use a pesticide.” In Nebraska, “use” has always been interpreted as meaning the application or direct handling (i.e. mixing, loading, dispersing and disposing) of pesticides. In the proposed rule EPA suggests that the “arranging for the application of the pesticide” is now considered “use.” This would require anyone working within a pest control firm to become certified or partake in some form of pesticide training. This could not be the intended consequence of this definition, and we strongly urge for this language to be stripped out of the definition.

Site Specific Instructions. The proposed rule would require “site-specific” instructions for each individual application. Unlike other industries that use pesticides, the structural pest management industry is not static. Our applicators are in the field routinely servicing 10 or more different sites daily. Requiring “site specific” instructions for each individual location, would be unworkable for our industry and is unnecessary. Our applicators are trained and should be allowed to use their best judgement based on actual site conditions, and if a question were to arise, they would be available for direct communication with a certified applicator.

Amount of Continuing Education Units. The proposed rule would require six continuing education units (CEUs) for core, category and potentially subcategory. We opposed this quantifiable requirements. In Nebraska, we have developed a continuing education system that has worked for the past 40 years, and if this new requirement is implemented it would strain resources and add costs. We propose eliminating any quantifiable CEU requirement, and allow our state to continue to certify and train our industry without this proposed federal overreach.

Non-Certified Applicator Training. The proposed rule will require annual non-certified applicator training. In order to assist compliance with this new standard a national “train the trainer” program should be implemented similar to that afforded to agriculture pesticide use. As proposed, trainers would have to be certified applicators or certified by the state, which provides a barrier to receiving this training at national and regional trade shows.

Reciprocity. The NSPCA supports reciprocity. In Nebraska, reciprocity is accomplished by submitting a letter to the reciprocating state that the applicator is licensed and in good standing with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. We believe that EPA has an opportunity to bolster reciprocal agreements between states across the nation. Requiring states to communicate with one another and reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens on businesses is good for both the structural pest management industry and state regulators. We also believe that CEU credits should always be transferable, and if implemented effectively, there may be an easier path for applicators to receive innovative training and education at meetings throughout the country. We respectfully request EPA to go further than what has been proposed and to provide a clearer path for states to enter into reciprocal agreements.

Conclusion. Nebraska appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on Pesticides: Certification of Applicators. Docket ID: EPA-HQ-OPP-2011-0183. We believe our concerns expressed within these comments are important, thoughtful and representative of the structural pest management industry in Nebraska. We hope that any final rule is reflective of our concerns.

Sincerely, Travis Lucas, ACE
Nebraska State Pest Control Assn.
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3 Maintain

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