Dear Fellow NSPCA Members,

I hope that you have had the chance to benefit from the experiences of the wonderful network of operators, vendors, and researchers in our industry. Likely, over dinner or drinks, your conversations have probably covered a lot of interesting ground. Look around the restaurant next time you’re engaged in lively table talk over the worst roach job you have ever seen, or the new-hires reaction to his first bed bug infested apartment complex, and ask yourself how many other similar conversations are going on in your average restaurant. Many bystanders that are not in our industry don’t seem to understand the excitement and awe that many of us feel when we hear about that one job with the guy who had roaches in his beard, or the town home with bed bugs on the kitchen counter, or the mice who caused rust holes in the heating ductwork with their urine, or...Well, you get the picture. Pest control is a science and we are professional researchers, observing on a daily basis the ever changing adaptations of our target pests, however entertaining, and implementing corresponding adaptations of the practices and products we employ. Professional pest control requires observation of, and manipulation of tangible things. Mouse droppings, bird nests, termite damage, improperly sealed crawlspace access doors, negative drainage, etc. We are good at seeing things that the untrained eye may not see.

But what about the things you can’t see? Like wall voids or inaccessible attics you may ask? No, I’m talking about things being described that “are” right in front of your face, blanketing the carpet, raining from the ceiling, maybe even emerging from your customer’s skin. A typical encounter like this begins with a telephone call to your office where a customer describes a small insect that is causing them some skin irritations. Perhaps some of them sound like common enough parasites, bed bugs, fleas, or foul mites. But just as you are narrowing down a diagnosis, they throw you a curve ball such as “I’ve been fighting them for 8 months and I have coated every surface of my home with Sevin dust”, or “I can see them emerging from the peanut butter, some are small, and some are long like worms”, “they started by boring through the plaster in my ceilings, and now they are boring into my skin to lay eggs.” Sometimes the individual will tell you how other members of their family don’t see the pests and may even call the affected individual “crazy”. I could go on and on about the symptoms and circumstances surrounding these experiences, but we will have to save that for the next time we do dinner and drinks.

What I described above is a condition called Delusory Parasitosis. If you want to delve into a more scientific than anecdotal review of DP, I recommend a book called “The infested mind, Why humans fear, loathe, and love insects” by Jeffrey A. Lockwood. Chapter 6, “The Terrible Trio: Imagining insects into our lives” addresses DP, group hysteria, and Illusory Parasitosis. Illusory parasitosis being a related disorder, where people interpret real sensations, such as itches and skin redness, as pest infestations that indeed do not exist. Delusory Parasitosis is a persistent belief, oftentimes with no evidence whatsoever that an infestation exists, and most likely is located on or in the body of the individual experiencing it. Confused enough?

The chapter addresses an interesting question. If you have a customer suffering from Delusory Parasitosis, who is most qualified to treat this individual? Their family practitioner? Dermatologist? Entomologist? Pest Control operator? Psychiatrist? Good arguments could be made that any or all of these might play a part in this individuals treatment, but the reality is that we all wish that the other one would do it, and
are most likely just interested in distancing ourselves from the individual.

For our part though, let’s cover some rules of engagement.

1. Never make an application without a proper specimen identification. Doing so sends the message that you do have the solution, you just haven’t applied it in a correct manner or volume. You will have a customer for life.

2. Do put out glue monitors. Using detection tools even if you suspect that there are no pests present dignifies the individual on your first visit, and in some cases may find something that you didn’t on your first inspection like springtails, clover mites, fleas, or carpet beetles.

3. If no pests are collected, be adamant about not making an unwarranted application. Pesticide labels have target organisms specified on them, therefore you need to have a target in mind before you apply. The label is the law.

4. Sometimes recommendations about the humidity level of the air or inquiring about any changes in laundry detergents shows that you are concerned for their well-being, and who knows, sometimes may make a difference.

5. At the end of the encounter the demeanor of the individual may dictate how you part ways. Some people will actually be receptive to the notion that what they are “experiencing” is not something that everyone else is experiencing. You might be sure to point out that certain physical health problems or dietary deficiencies might be contributing. That being said, some people get more impatient and belligerent when you don’t give them an answer they want to hear. To those people it is best to simply tell them that you aren’t capable of helping them and part ways.

Delusory Parasitosis is anything but simple, and there are no silver bullets. Accepting that when engaging with a customer who is experiencing it will make you more adaptive and hopefully helpful. Above all, remember that we are professionals whose job it is to help people, even when the problems are more psychological than pest related.

In late June, I had the pleasure to sit in on the Urban Pest Management Conference planning meeting and I can tell you that we had some good exchanges on content and even formatting of certain presentations. I’m already looking forward to it.

Go out there and make a great summer in pest control!
Knockout Mosquitoes and Beat the Bite this Summer  
*The National Pest Management Association*

With the arrival of summer comes the resurgence of one of America’s most annoying and most dangerous pests—the mosquito. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), there were 2,205 U.S. cases of West Nile virus in 2014, 97 of which were fatal. In honor of National Mosquito Control Awareness Week, taking place this June 21 - 27, 2015, the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) urges Americans to be vigilant against threats posed by mosquitoes.

“Though summer has yet to officially arrive, many states are seeing high levels of mosquito activity, and West Nile virus is already showing up in some tested birds and mosquitoes,” said Missy Henriksen, vice president of public affairs for the NPMA. “While state agencies are already beginning to implement local mosquito abatement techniques, we strongly advise the public to make their own efforts to curb mosquito activity.”

In the U.S., West Nile virus is the illness most frequently contracted through mosquito bites. However, another mosquito-vectored disease, the Chikungunya virus, has made its way in to the U.S. from the tropics via travelers to affected areas, with the first locally-acquired cases having emerged last year in Florida.

To reduce contact with mosquitoes and prevent the spread of mosquito-borne illnesses, NPMA recommends the following prevention tips:

- Eliminate areas of standing water around the home such as flowerpots, birdbaths, baby pools, grill covers and other objects where water collects. Mosquitoes need only about 1/2 inch of water to breed.
- Screen all windows and doors. Repair even the smallest tear or hole.
- Minimize outside activity between dusk and dawn, when the majority of mosquitoes are most active.
- If you must spend time outdoors during peak mosquito times, or when you will be outdoors for extended periods, wear long pants and sleeves and use an insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon-eucalyptus.
- If you are concerned about mosquito activity on your property, contact a pest management company or your local mosquito abatement district.
- For more information on mosquitoes, visit PestWorld.org.

Weather and Pests: What’s the Relationship?  
*PestGazette - Summer Edition*

The weather can determine more than whether or not today would be a good day to have a picnic in the park. When it comes to pest insects, the weather (temperature and humidity) is closely tied to their abundance and activity levels. If you pay attention to weather conditions, you might be able to predict when certain pests will be problematic. Typically, the ebbs and flows of weather conditions make it so there are periods of good pest weather and bad pest weather but prolonged bouts of moisture and drought can send some pests searching an environmental reprieve ... inside your house!

This summer, keep an eye out for two sets of conditions that have reliably led to an increase of pests indoors: extended periods of heavy rain (especially when combined with unseasonably cool temperatures) and stretches of hot, dry weather. In both cases, either an abundance or lack of water is driving this behavior. Ants are especially prone to seeking refuge in a place with more favorable conditions and can show up in unexpected places. If you notice an ant in your home, let us know so we can take care of it and determine if it is just a stray worker or part of a newly relocated colony.

Mosquitoes are much more prevalent when there is plentiful rain, but their eggs are hardy enough to withstand an extended length of time without. Once rain comes, eggs hatch and their fast life cycle is underway. Some species require the tiniest amount of water for their development.

For this reason, you can help reduce mosquitoes around your home by preventing standing water from accumulating in your yard or in any artificial container. Unfortunately, you can't control what your neighbors leave lying around so give us a call if you are being bitten or otherwise noticing mosquitoes around your home.
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Roland Rhodes, longtime pest control professional and a leader in the industry, has passed away.

Roland Lee Rhodes was born June 8, 1927. He passed away July 24, 2015 with his wife at his side. His childhood home was in Kansas City where he lived with his two brothers and two sisters. As a young man he worked as a paperboy and at the Kansas City Stockyard.

He attended Central Jr. & Sr. High School Kansas City, MO. Roland went to junior college and then at the age of 17 was inducted into the US Navy during WW II. When discharged he went to KU on a GI Bill and received an A.B. Chemistry in 1949.

Roland married his high school sweetheart Winona Carpenter on April 4, 1947. They celebrated their 68th anniversary in April with a small gathering of family. They had four children Christine, David, Alan and Deborah. They lived in Lawrence, Overland Park and Gardner Kansas.

Roland worked as a Chemist at Stokley-Van Camp, FMC Chemical Division and Cook Chemical. During his employment at Cook Chemical he attended the National Pest Control Association convention in 1956 and the Purdue Pest Control conference in 1957. Roland became aware of the need for and established a distribution company in the Midwest. In February 1962, Rhodes Chemical Company was started in the home of Roland and Winona. In 1966 the Company was moved into a building in Kansas City with two employees. The business moved to its current location in Kansas City, KS in 1969. Roland was a charter member, 1969, United Producers, Formulators and Distributors Association. He served on the boards of several State Pest Control Associations and attended the Purdue Conference for over 35 years. Roland sponsored CEO Round-tables at the Kansas Small Business Development Center at Johnson County Community College. He served on the Kansas Department of Agriculture Board for over 17 years.

Roland attended many NPMA Legislative Days and testified to the Senate committee on legislation affecting the industry. He was a member of the Entomological Society of America and Pi Chi Omega.

Roland Rhodes has been a strong supporter of the Nebraska State Pest Control Association. He has been a fixture at almost all of the Associations Annual Conventions over the years. Roland’s history rich with accomplishments not only in his profession but his significant contributions made at the state and federal levels of government to promote the pest management industry.

2016
Nebraska Urban Pest Management Conference
February 9 & 10, 2016
The Cornhusker Marriott, Lincoln, NE

The Annual NSPCA Membership Meeting will be held February 10, 2015.

Bed bugs 'bite' the wallet of hotel owners
By: University of Kentucky-Michael F. Potter

While finding a bed bug at home can be unnerving, discovering one in a hotel room can be nightmarish for guests and hotel managers alike. Now, new research from the University of Kentucky’s College of Agriculture, Food and Environment has revealed findings about the financial impact bed bugs can have on the travel and hospitality industry. UK entomologist Michael Potter, a Provost’s Distinguished Service Professor, teamed with Agricultural Economics Professor Wuyang Hu, and doctoral student Jerrod Penn, in the Department of Agricultural Economics, to conduct this research. Very little was known about the economic impact of bed bugs prior to the study.

Potter has been working on the front lines of the bed bug resurgence for several years. "While bed bugs are not known to transmit diseases, the bites are often unsightly and itchy," Potter said. "It’s hard to understand how upsetting an infestation can be unless you’ve experienced one yourself. Unlike ticks and mosquitoes, bed bugs live indoors and breed in our beds."

"The goal of the research was to understand consumer preferences when choosing a hotel for business or leisure travel, and how the risk of bed bugs influences their decision,” said Penn, the lead author of the study which was funded through a grant from Protect-A-Bed®, a global producer of protective bedding products.

The survey was conducted in May via Online market research firm Qualtrics. Respondents included almost 2,100 people representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia ? 1,298 who travel mainly for leisure and 790 who do so largely for business.

The researchers put some hard numbers to the economic impact of online reports of bed bugs in hotels, as well as the value of protective services. Results show that on average, a single report of bed bugs in recent traveler reviews lowers the value of a hotel room by $38 and $23 per room per night for business and leisure travelers respectively. "The higher loss of hotel room values for business travelers is not surprising given that they tend to stay in pricier rooms,” Hu said.

In absolute terms, compared to other hotel aspects, the monetary value for travelers’ concern about bed bugs makes it one of the more important considerations when selecting or grading a hotel. A second mention of bed bugs in recent traveler reviews further decreases the value of a hotel room, but proportionately to a lesser extent than the first alleged report of the pests.

When presented with various problematic issues encountered in hotel rooms, finding signs of bed bugs had the largest proportion of respondents choosing to switch hotels. Reactions to other concerns (smoke odor, unclean bathroom, dirty sheets, etc.) mostly involved reporting the concern to the front desk and requesting another room.

On the bright side, information about some protective services with regard to bed bugs received positive reaction from travelers. Both business and leisure travelers placed the greatest economic value on protective mattress encasements

Continued on Next Page.
as a form of protection, followed by periodic (e.g., semianual) room inspections by professional pest control firms. "But travelers placed a relatively small dollar value on regular inspections by housekeeping staff," Penn said.

"We also asked people about likely reactions specific to bed bugs," Penn said. "Survey respondents were asked how they would respond to reading an on-line review that reported bed bugs while looking to book a room for an upcoming trip. A majority of business and leisure travelers said they would not select that particular hotel."

In a second scenario where travelers were asked how they would react to finding a live bed bug while staying in their hotel room, "The three most likely responses among business and leisure travelers were to switch rooms with added compensation, leave the particular hotel, and to report finding bed bugs on social media," said Hu, who serves as Penn's major professor in ag economics. "Considering how popular social media has become, it's important that hotels recognize the potential spread of negative information, regardless of whether the online report of bed bugs is accurate."

Travelers reading about or finding bed bugs in a hotel were more inclined to hold the particular establishment responsible than blame the entire brand name or hospitality industry as a whole. Four out of five travelers felt hotels should be required to inform guests if their assigned room had a previous bed bug problem. Half of all leisure travelers indicated they would want to know of any problems occurring in the past year, and one-third wanted to know if there had been bed bugs ever. Business travelers were somewhat more lenient, with half wanting to know of incidents extending back six months.

"If hotels are required to disclose previous problems with bed bugs? as landlords in some cities must do for prospective tenants? the implications could be far reaching," Potter said. "Such disclosure could necessitate taking rooms out of service for prolonged periods even after the risk of bed bugs has diminished."

Other noteworthy findings from the study: More than two-thirds of travelers were unable to distinguish a bed bug from other household insects. More than half said they never worry about bed bugs while traveling? although about one in three business travelers and one in five leisure travelers either know someone who has gotten bed bugs or had them themselves. Business travelers are better at correctly identifying bed bugs, have more personal experience with the pests, and have reported them in online reviews much more often than leisure travelers.

When it comes to bed bugs, the hospitality industry is often caught between a "rock and a hard place," Potter said. "With high turnover of guests, occasional bed bug incidents in hotels are understandable, as in similar types of locations. Many hotel chains already take bed bugs seriously in terms of prevention and early detection. The current study further underscores the importance of being hyper-vigilant."
as a necessary step in providing fair pay for work performed. NPMA signed onto a letter submitted to the committee which was entered into the official record. The letter details many of the problems the overtime changes would have on both employers and employees. The letter was submitted by the Partnership to Protect Workplace Opportunity, a large and diverse coalition, which NPMA is participating with.

3.) EPA Extends Comment Period for Its Proposal to Protect Bees from Acutely Toxic Pesticides

This week, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced an extension on the comment period for its proposal to protect bees from acutely toxic pesticides. The comment period now ends on August 28th. NPMA submitted comments to EPA earlier this month, which can be viewed here. To learn more about EPA’s proposal click here. The EPA plan proposed to prohibit the use of certain pesticides on sites where crops are in bloom and managed bees are under contract for pollination services. These proposed label changes will have little impact on structural pest management uses. In addition to label changes, the EPA is encouraging states to develop managed pollination protection programs to help promote bee health and increase communication between beekeepers and other stakeholders. NPMA members are encouraged to get involved in the development of state plans through your state association. For more information and resources regarding state plans visit www.pollinatorfacts.org.

4.) Working in Coalitions

One of the legacies of the food quality protection act in 1996 was the formation of the implementation working group, a broad-based coalition of organizations representing farm and commodity groups, nonagricultural applicators like PMP’s, manufacturers and others that work together to coordinate and advocate on federal legislative and regulatory issues relating to pesticides. The group has since been named the pesticide policy coalition but continues to be an active player in the Washington policy scene. NPMA’s Andrew Bray was recently appointed to the coalitions steering committee.

5.) NPMA Legislative Day Issue Update: Tax Incentive Bill Passes Senate Committee

On Tuesday July 21st, the Senate Finance Committee passed a tax extenders bill with bipartisan support (23-3). Included in the tax extenders package is a provision to extend the $500,000 allowance for the expensing of depreciable business property (section 179 property). The provision would extend the $500,000 level through the 2016 year. The provision is very similar to H.R. 636 which passed the House in February. The bi-partisan support for passing the proposed tax extenders is a result of the popularity and effectiveness of the tax benefits for small businesses and the economy.

While tax extender legislation has not been finalized, this was an important step and we anticipate final action for this bipartisan measure when Congress reconvenes in September.

Senate action on the section 179 business property tax incentive was an NPMA issue at legislative day this past March and it is clear that NPMA voices walking the halls of Capitol Hill were heard. The NPMA Policy Team would like to personally thank all of those NPMA members that spoke to legislators about this important issue.

Bonus: NPMA Public Policy Committee Meeting Recap

Last week members of the NPMA Public Policy Committee got together in Lake Las Vegas, NV for their first meeting of the 2015 – 2016 membership year to layout initiatives and projects to pursue over the next 12 months. Important pest related issues included continued engagement on pollinators with specific focus on local bans and state management plans as well as fumigation efforts encompassing registration review, stewardship and APHIS fees. Additionally, the committee spent significant time talking about non-directly linked pest issues that have the potential to impact NPMA members including, confined space requirements, OSHA guidance and training on fall protection and ladder safety and hourly wage and overtime regulations. The committee also discussed re-imagining and launching a new version of the NPMA State Public Affairs Representative (SPAR) program to enhance our effectiveness in quickly coordinating and responding to state and local issues. More information to come on this in the next several weeks.

Bonus: EPA Solicits Proposals for a Project to Analyze Economics of School IPM

EPA’s Office of Pesticide Programs is soliciting proposals for an assistance agreement (“The Economics of School Integrated Pest Management (IPM)” to research and analyze the economics of integrated pest management in K-12 public and tribal schools in the United States. Currently, the only materials available on the economics of school IPM are anecdotal. This project aims to remove this uncertainty by providing an unbiased assessment, supported by robust data, on the economics of IPM programs in several different school settings.

OPP intends that the recipient of the award will develop and present a robust and unbiased short- and long-term economic assessment of implementing an IPM program in several school settings (urban/rural/large/small) through research, data collection, and analysis. The agency expects to fund this two-year cooperative agreement for up to $300,000.

EPA must receive proposals through Grants.gov no later than midnight Eastern Time on September 9, 2015. Additional information on this solicitation is available on Grants.gov under Funding Opportunity announcement EPA-OPP-2015-007.
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