



## Questions & Answers About

# Household Pest Control

### **What are general household pests?**

Household pests live in or invade households and structures. Common household pests are rodents, ants, bees, fleas, cockroaches, spiders, weevils and moths. Some damage food, clothing, rugs, or furniture; others carry disease.

Many household pests are easily controlled. To get rid of others, you need considerable persistence and effort. Good housekeeping and thorough sanitation are important as aids to control or prevent infestations of many pests. For least-toxic ways to prevent and manage pest problems, visit the University of California's Integrated Pest Management Web site, [www.ipm.ucdavis.edu](http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu).

Some pests—such as termites or powderpost beetles—typically require professional help. To deal with them and other severe pest infestations, you may need to engage the services of a professional pest control operator.

### **Does a company need a license to perform household pest control? Do the employees have to be licensed?**

A company performing **live capture and removal** of vertebrate pests, bees or wasps from a building without the use of pesticides does not need to be registered with the Structural Pest Control Board (SPCB). Vertebrate pests include bats, raccoons, skunks, and squirrels but not mice, rats or pigeons.

Any company that controls mice, rats, pigeons, spiders, ants, roaches and other household pests must be registered with

SPCB. The person who negotiates the contract with you and inspects the property to identify the pest to be controlled must be licensed. After this has been done, the company can authorize an unlicensed person to present bids or sign the contract.

An individual who applies the pesticide must be licensed. Ask to see proof of licensure. A licensee should carry an identification card issued by SPCB which states that they are licensed as a registered applicator, field representative, or operator. This card shows the expiration date of the license and the type of license. If you want further confirmation of the company's registration or any employee's license, you may contact SPCB or visit our Web site, [www.pestboard.ca.gov](http://www.pestboard.ca.gov).

### **How can I find out what pesticides are to be used on my property?**

Before a structural pest control company applies a pesticide for the first time, it must inform the owner (or owner's agent) and any tenants in writing of the pesticide products proposed to be used and their active ingredients. This notice must be delivered before the pesticide is applied. It may be a door hanger, invoice, billing statement or any written document that contains the company's name, address and telephone number.

### **Can anyone find out what pesticide was applied at a particular structure?**

Yes. If a structural pest control company applies a pesticide at a structure, it must provide the common, generic or chemical name of each pesticide used to anyone who asks. This information must be given within 24 hours of the request.

### **Enforcement/Complaints**

916-561-8708

1-800-737-8188

#### **Fax**

916-263-2469

#### **E-mail**

[pestboard@dca.ca.gov](mailto:pestboard@dca.ca.gov)

#### **Web Site**

[www.pestboard.ca.gov](http://www.pestboard.ca.gov)

### **Mission Statement**



*The Structural Pest*

*Control Board protects consumers by regulating the structural pest control industry to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the public.*



### ***What should I do if I become ill after a pesticide application?***

Like other chemicals, pesticides can make you sick. Your symptoms may be delayed a day. Depending on the pesticide and the amount you were exposed to, you may experience:

- Flu like symptoms including tiredness, headache, or dizziness
- Stuffy nose, sore throat or coughing
- Eye, nose or skin irritation, including stinging or burning eyes and nose
- Vomiting, diarrhea or stomach cramps
- Difficulty breathing

If you feel sick after your home is treated with pesticides, you should contact your doctor or a Poison Control Center. **Your regional Poison Control Center can give you information and advice on whether your symptoms may be related to pesticide exposure. Call 1 800 222 1222.** (Interpreters are available in more than 100 languages.) At no charge, the Poison Control Center will give you first aid information and advise you on what to do next. Have as much information as possible and, if you know, the name of the pesticide involved. Your pest control company can provide you with that information and also the application procedure they used.

To report a pesticide-related illness or possible pesticide misuse, call the office of your county agricultural commissioner, which oversees local pesticide enforcement. You can get the number and be connected by calling toll-free, **1-87PestLine (1-877-378-5463)**. It is important to call as soon as possible if there is still physical evidence such as an odor in the structure.

### ***Who should I call for a question or complaint about a structural pest control company?***

If you have questions about the application procedure or other problems, you can call your structural pest control company and discuss your concerns. If the company does not resolve the problem, you can contact SPCB for more information or help:

**916-561-8708**— in Sacramento  
**1-800-737-8188**— outside Sacramento

You can e-mail the SPCB at [pestboard@dca.ca.gov](mailto:pestboard@dca.ca.gov), or write to:  
**Structural Pest Control Board**  
2005 Evergreen Street, Suite 1500  
Sacramento, CA 95815

You can also download a complaint form from the SPCB Web site [www.pestboard.ca.gov](http://www.pestboard.ca.gov).

### ***What can SPCB do to help?***

SPCB will first try to mediate your complaint. If this does not result in a satisfactory solution, further investigation may be warranted. SPCB will make a determination on the responsibility of the company. SPCB can compel a registered company and licensee to correct violations but SPCB does not have jurisdiction over monetary matters and cannot guarantee you will receive compensation. If you seek a financial settlement, you may want to consider taking legal action.

SPCB regulates anyone who performs structural pest control work by issuing licenses and bringing disciplinary action against licensees who fail to comply with the Structural Pest Control Act. All structural pest control licensees in California must successfully meet state licensing requirements in at least one

of the three branches of pest control work: Branch 1, Fumigation; Branch 2, General Household Pest; Branch 3, Termites and Other Wood-Destroying Pests and Organisms; and Wood-Roof Cleaning and Treatment. Although each category requires a different examination, a licensee may hold a license in more than one category. For more information, visit our Web site at [www.pestboard.ca.gov](http://www.pestboard.ca.gov)