

Controlling Cockroaches Safely- Using Pesticides

Pesticides come in many forms such as bug sprays, bug “bombs” or foggers, liquid concentrates, dusts, and baits. Pesticides are poisons and they should be carefully and sparingly used. Avoid using foggers and sprays as you cannot control where they go, and the risk of exposure is high. An NC State University study showed that bug-bomb foggers fail to reach places that cockroaches congregate the most, yet leave behind a toxic residue in areas used by humans and pets.

Pesticides that best reduce risks of human exposure include:

- Tamper-resistant bait stations with the pesticide contained inside
- Gel baits distributed in small dabs along cupboard and wall edges
- Boric acid in wall voids, behind switches, and along wall edges and cracks



If using pesticides, always:

- Read the entire label and all warnings before use!
- Follow all label directions exactly.
- Keep pesticides stored up high, locked in a cabinet, and out of reach of children and pets.

Find a professional pest management company in your area:

- ncpestmanagement.org/find-professional

Other cockroach resources:

- <http://www.ncagr.gov/SPCAP/structural/pubs/cockroaches.htm>
- nchealthyhomes.com/pests-and-pesticides/
- <https://entomology.ces.ncsu.edu/german-cockroach/>



For more information, contact Union County Environmental Health:

- **Website:** unioncountync.gov/departments/environmental-health
- **Email:** unioncountyh@unioncountync.gov
- **Phone numbers:** 704-283-3553 or 704-283-3767

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Cockroaches

Types of Roaches, Identifying Them, and Prevention & Treatment Options



Cockroaches may become pests in homes, schools, restaurants, and virtually in any structure that has food preparation or storage areas. Cockroaches are known to cause asthma in young children and can even cause allergic reactions in some individuals.

Identifying Types of Cockroaches



American Cockroach: American roaches often come up floor drains and sewer pipes. They are found in hot, damp areas of the home. The American cockroach is the largest of the house-infesting roaches and a major pest in the United States. It's also commonly known as the water bug or the palmetto bug.



Oriental Cockroach: Oriental roaches like cool, damp conditions and commonly inhabit wet basements and garages. Oriental cockroaches do not fly and are unable to climb smooth vertical surfaces; consequently they are commonly found trapped in porcelain sinks or tubs.



German Cockroach: German roaches are the most common indoor species. They may come into homes in cardboard boxes or from adjacent units. They like warm and humid conditions where food and water are readily available. German cockroaches are most commonly found in kitchens and bathrooms.

Integrated Pest Management

Integrated pest management (IPM) uses information about the pest in order to choose methods of control that are safest and most effective. IPM methods include pest prevention, exclusion, and non-chemical tools . If chemical pesticides are needed, products are chosen that pose the least risk to human health. With IPM, you start by asking, "Why is this pest here?" and try to remove the conditions allowing the pest to enter and live. This approach solves pest problems rather than just treating the symptoms. It also reduces the need to use pesticides repeatedly.

Prevention Methods

The first step in preventing problems with roaches is eliminating what they need to survive: food, water, and shelter. By eliminating these necessities you can get long-term control and avoid the need to repeatedly apply pesticides, which generally provide only short-term results. Here are some suggestions:

- **Eliminate sources of food:** Clean up spills and crumbs, and don't leave out snacks or pet food. Wash dishes and take out garbage promptly.
- **Eliminate sources of water:** Pick up pets' water at night and repair water leaks.
- **Eliminate potential hiding spots:** Clear up clutter such as stacks of magazines, bags, boxes, and piles of clothing.
- **Eliminate possible points of entry to your home:** Seal off cracks and crevices around windows, doors, pipes, wires, and crawl spaces with silicone caulking, screening, and/or copper mesh.

Controlling Cockroaches Safely

It is best to try a combination of non-chemical methods to control roaches before using pesticides.

1. Place sticky traps along walls and near potential sources of food and water (kitchen and bathrooms). These traps will show you where the most cockroach activity is taking place.
2. Use a hair dryer near high-activity areas to flush roaches out of hiding and vacuum them up with a hose attachment.
3. Place the vacuum bag inside a sealed plastic bag and discard. If anyone in your home has asthma, be sure to use a vacuum with a HEPA filter.

