

## Roach Management: A Homeowners Guide

Roaches are a nuisance and can carry many diseases. They are difficult to control because they are easily moved in grocery sacks, boxes, furniture, and appliances. Roaches eat a variety of foods including meat, grease, starch, sweets, wood, paper, and dead insects.

To effectively control roaches, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) must be used. IPM employs both non-chemical and chemical methods together as tools. The following are suggestions for optimum roach management.

### Step I. Sanitation is important.

- ◆ Do not leave dirty dishes or pet food out overnight. Store pet food in a closed, airtight container.
- ◆ Clean stove tops, cabinets, and floors often. (Don't forget baseboards, cracks, and crevices!)
- ◆ Remove trash daily.
- ◆ Do not let laundry pile up.

### Step II. Remove hiding places and possible sites of entry.

- ◆ Keep trash and wood piles away from buildings.
- ◆ Seal openings around pipes, windows, and doors.
- ◆ Fix leaky pipes.

### Step III. Insecticides and similar products may help break the life cycle of roaches.

Insecticides should be used for several problems only after following **Steps I and II**.

***Insecticide dusts***\* are long lasting, but become ineffective when wet. Apply in small amounts between wall voids, under appliances and furniture, and around pipes.

***Inorganic powders***\* labeled as insecticides (boric acid or silica gel powders) are slow acting, inexpensive, low in toxicity, and effective long after application. Apply a light film to cracks and crevices.

***Baits*** are another form of insecticides and are most effective when used as a supplement to dusts or sprays when no other food source is present.

**\*Dusts and aerogels are respiratory irritants. Follow instructions on their labels.**

***Insect Growth Regulators (IGRs)*** disrupt the life cycle of roaches. They affect immature roaches and are slow acting. Use with sprays that kill adults.

**Foggers** may contain either active ingredients that kill adults or a combination of adult insecticides and IGRs. Insecticides are released continuously for a period of time. Follow directions!

**Sprays** are available in ready-to-use forms. They do not last as long as dusts. Apply sprays to cracks and crevices. Do not allow puddling or running to occur.

**Traps** reduce populations and can help monitor roach activity. Traps may contain sticky glue, food attractants, biological agents, or inorganic powders. The type you use depends on the results you want. Roach traps are used mainly indoors to monitor roach populations.

IPM is effective on roach management when **Steps I, II, and III** are used together. A variety of methods should be used in Step III, because no single insecticide application will control a severe problem. Steps I and II help discourage roaches from moving into your house and Step III will help eliminate immature and adult roaches.

### **Keys to Roach Management**

- ◆ Keep trash and other debris away from buildings.
- ◆ Clean Kitchen, bathroom, laundry, and garage areas often.
- ◆ Use traps to detect hiding places and monitor populations after insecticide application.
- ◆ If Insecticides are applied, use products that kill adults and also contain IGRs.
- ◆ Apply dusts, boric acid, and silica gel powders for residual roach activity.
- ◆ Always follow the directions.
- ◆ Contact a pest control operator to treat your home.
- ◆ Questions? Call your county OSU Extension office.

**Never pour pesticides down any drain, sink, toilet, or storm drain.**