

May 22, 2013



Orkin's Top Five Summer Pests and Prevention Tips

ATLANTA, May 22, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- In a recent 2012 survey conducted by pest control leader Orkin, two-thirds (67 percent) of respondents across the U.S. began seeing bugs between April and June. With the climbing temperatures across the country, people are spending more time outdoors, and Memorial Day, the unofficial start to summer, is right around the corner. The experts at Orkin, a wholly-owned subsidiary of [Rollins Inc.](#) (NYSE: ROL), have listed the top five summer pests – ants, fire ants, mosquitoes, bees/wasps and bed bugs – along with prevention tips to help protect you and your family all summer long.

(Photo: <https://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20130522/CL18036>)

Throughout the U.S., [ants](#) are a major concern for Americans. Ants can enter homes through the tiniest cracks and look for sweet, greasy or protein-based foods. They leave an invisible pheromone trail for other ants to follow once they find a food source. Ants are not only a nuisance: carpenter ants can be a threat to homes and structures, pharaoh ants can transmit diseases and **fire ants** can be harmful if a person is allergic to their painful stings.

"Fire ants are very active and aggressive and can sting animals and humans repeatedly when threatened or searching for prey," said Orkin entomologist and technical services director Ron Harrison. "They attach themselves to their victim with their mandibles and inject venom through their stingers. People in the Southeast are most likely to encounter fire ants, although they have been seen as far north as Maryland and as far west as California."

To help protect yourself from fire ants, which prefer hot, sunny locations, survey large open areas like athletic fields and try to stay in the shade and cooler areas. You can prevent other ants from coming into your home by remembering the following tips:

- Clean up spilled food and drinks immediately, and keep food stored tightly, especially during outdoor picnics.
- Rinse out cans before putting them into recycling bins.
- Seal cracks around doors and windows.
- Keep gutters and downspouts clean and keep plants away from the home's foundation.

According to Orkin's survey, the biggest concerns with [mosquitoes](#) are that they could bite, sting or attack (58 percent) and could give you a disease (52 percent). The majority (82 percent) of respondents are aware that mosquitoes can cause West Nile Virus and more than half (60 percent) are aware that they can cause malaria. People are most afraid of getting West Nile Virus (54 percent). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, last year had the highest number of West Nile Virus disease cases reported

since 2003. The CDC also said 80 percent of the 5,387 total cases last year were reported from 13 states, and one-third of all cases were reported from Texas.

"A variety of environmental conditions can impact mosquito species and the diseases associated with them," said Harrison. "So scientists are not exactly sure why Texas saw the highest number of cases. It just goes to show mosquito 'hot spots' can pop up, so be vigilant and cautious."

To prevent you and your family from being a meal for mosquitoes, Harrison suggests the following:

- Make sure to take the time before heading outside to apply an EPA-approved insect repellent.
- Prime mosquito-biting time is at dawn and dusk, so, if possible, wear long sleeves and pants if you're outside during those times.
- Empty any standing water from bird baths and thin vegetation from around the home.
- Make sure screens on windows and doors fit tightly and have no holes to prevent mosquitoes from coming indoors.

Two additional potentially dangerous summer pests are [bees and wasps](#). Wasps can sting multiple times, while bees can only sting once before dying. Bees and wasps share two of the same characteristics: they can exist where humans live and can be dangerous if disturbed.

"Because 5 percent of the population has severe reactions to stings and 1 to 2 percent is highly allergic, it is not advised you try to get rid of bees or wasps on your own," warns Harrison. "These are pests you do not want to mess with because it takes a trained professional to determine what type of bee or wasp nest it is. For instance, Africanized honey bees, also known as killer bees, can swarm and repeatedly sting the person or animal that threatened their nest."

The following steps can help prevent bees and wasps from pestering you while enjoying time outdoors:

- Frequently monitor around your home for nests.
- If bees or wasps are flying around you, act calmly.
- Keep food containers tightly wrapped or secured while outdoors, and don't leave food out in the open.
- Empty garbage cans often.
- If you find a bee hive around your home, contact a local apiary for more information on removing it. Because bees are important pollinators, Orkin encourages consumers to have hives relocated when possible.

Bed bugs have become such a problem in the U.S. that, according to Orkin's survey, nearly 40 percent of people say they inspect their room for [bed bugs](#). Although not necessarily a "summer pest," bed bugs are still a concern during this season, since that is when Americans tend to vacation and are more likely to unknowingly bring them home in luggage.

"Education and prevention are key," said Harrison. "Inspect your bedroom regularly, and be cautious when traveling—whether it is business or pleasure, or to visit family, friends or

vacation. We need to be vigilant wherever we are and take the proper precautions so that one bed bug does not turn into a major infestation."

Russell Research conducted Orkin's survey from Nov. 16-19, 2012 among 1,027 adults (ages 18 and over) living in private households across the continental U.S. The margin of error was plus or minus 3.1 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level.

About Orkin, LLC

Founded in 1901, Atlanta-based Orkin is an industry leader in essential pest control services and protection against termite damage, rodents and insects. The company operates more than 400 locations with almost 8,000 employees. Using a proprietary, three-step approach, Orkin provides customized services to approximately 1.7 million homeowners and businesses in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Europe, Central America, the Middle East, the Caribbean, Asia, the Mediterranean and Africa. Orkin is committed to studying pest biology and applying scientifically proven methods. The company collaborates with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and eight major universities to conduct research and help educate consumers and businesses on pest-related health threats. Learn more about Orkin at <http://orkin.com>. Orkin is a wholly-owned subsidiary of [Rollins Inc.](#) (NYSE: ROL).

Media Contact:

Erica Smith
Jackson Spalding
404.419.9343

SOURCE Rollins Inc.