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Copesan is an alliance of premier pest management companies that are united as a single entity for the sole purpose of providing quality pest solutions to businesses with locations throughout North America.

NEWS FLASH:

EPA Rodenticide Restrictions Coming

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recently proposed some new risk mitigation measures to reduce the possible exposure of children and non-target wildlife to rodenticides.

The EPA is proposing the elimination of certain formulations (pellets, for example) from retail sale and allowing rodenticides to be available to consumers only if they are contained in tamper-resistant, pre-loaded bait stations. Three second-generation rodenticides, which are faster-acting than older active ingredients, will be categorized as Restricted Use Pesticides (RUPs), and purchase and use of products made with these active ingredients will require certification in an appropriate state category.

What does this mean for Copesan clients?

Probably nothing since Copesan’s IPM specialists are already state certified to use RUPs.

What does it mean for farmers, ranchers, city employees, or anyone who is not certified to apply RUPs?

It means that they would have to be trained, tested, and certified to

purchase or use those rodenticides that become RUPs.

When will these proposed risk mitigation measures take effect?

The EPA is requesting and accepting comments on the proposed measures until March 19. Then EPA will make a final decision, which could be slightly different than what’s proposed.



The rodenticide manufacturers will then be required to make label changes. The new rodenticide labels (with the changes and new restrictions) might not actually be seen for a couple more years.

How can you get more information?

If you wish to read more about EPA’s decision, it can be found in

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the Federal Register (Vol. 72, No. 10, pages 1992 – 1993) or can be requested from Copesan. Directions for making comments to the EPA are also included in the notice.

What's Copesan's reaction?

Copesan is considering what to say

to the EPA. It can be argued that the “data” leading to the EPA's decision is flawed or anecdotal. However, it seems that the proposed measures are workable in most pest situations and would allow the continued use of these important tools.

Are there other concerns?

On a related subject, the EPA did not prohibit fenceline use of rodenticide to prevent rodents from entering facilities. If the EPA had banned outdoor use or fenceline use of rodenticides, rodent problems may have been exacerbated.



Develop a plan to quell “six-legged terrorists”

By Jim Sargent, Copesan's Director of Technical Support and Regulatory Compliance

The most important issue in pest management today is the introduction of foreign pests into our country. The reassignment of USDA-APHIS-PPQ agents to Homeland Security and their increased security responsibilities has reduced the ability of the United States to detect and intercept foreign pests.

So, there is an increased risk of major damaging or disease-carrying pests entering the country undetected. There is also an increased chance that you might be the first person to notice a foreign insect or other small animal inside an international shipment.

What will you do if a “six-legged terrorist” invades your facility? Some options to consider are to:

1. Capture it.
Try to capture or kill the pest without damaging it. The pest needs to be identified by an expert taxonomist to assess its risk to the country and what actions are appropriate.
2. Keep quiet or call Homeland Security or Copesan.
You are not required under the law to call the government, but you could be a national hero by preventing the establishment of a new pest that could cost companies and consumers millions of dollars.

It's best to call Copesan immediately for help in obtaining the specimen and having it identified. Copesan can also help you minimize the risk of many undesirable outcomes that could occur when a live foreign pest is found.

Make a plan

You should also develop a plan for your facility that includes guidelines on receiving and opening shipments that originate in another country. In addition to the normal security procedure for opening suspicious packages, your facility should have a policy statement about what to do if an employee finds something unexpected or suspicious in a delivery (e.g., termites, wood-boring beetles, cockroaches, ants, wasps, larvae or other kinds of pests).

The policy should also indicate who should be immediately contacted at the facility. You never want any live pests (domestic or foreign) introduced into your facility. Time is critical,

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especially if insects are exposed to warmth. These insects could quickly become very active and will start dispersing and reproducing. Responding quickly to the discovery of a live “bug” must be

an employee requirement.

While we’ll probably never completely prevent new “six-legged terrorists” from entering our country, we’ll have a better chance at success if we take the time to make prepa-

rations now before an invasion hits our facility. Contact Copesan or your local Copesan Service Center if you need assistance in preventing or preparing for pest invaders.



Controlling uncommon pests requires out-of-the-box thinking

By Chris Arne, Technical Trainer for Ehrlich/Rentokil in Allentown, Pennsylvania

Most pest management professionals are fully prepared to deal with a wide range of insects, rodents and birds, but what happens when a tree frog, an earthworm or a slug becomes a pest? Or what if insects like grasshoppers or caterpillar hunters, which aren’t normally considered pests, have a population explosion and invade a facility?

While these aren’t everyday encounters, an unusual pest problem still requires a solution. In these situations, the solutions require the pest manager to go outside his or her normal realm of thinking to discover new and different ways to attack the odd pest.

For different perspectives, I’ve searched the Internet for new ideas, contacted colleagues and experts throughout the country who have dealt with these pests

in a different environment, and called universities for information.

For instance, when I was dealing with a tree frog problem, I discovered there is a frog in Hawaii that is considered a pest there. I was able to use that information as a resource.



When tackling an earthworm invasion, I talked with people who deal with turf because I know they do trials on different kinds of soil. I used their expertise to gain insight into how to control earthworms in the facility.

Use pesticide alternatives

To complicate matters, there are no pesticides specifically labeled for uncommon pests, which limits what actions can be taken.

In these cases, the technician usually needs to look almost exclusively for a nonchemical means of control. A lot of times, the solution is exclusion, and depending on the pest, it might be coming in from an unusual place.

For example, with the tree frogs, we didn’t know where they were coming into the facility. After investigation, we found that they were climbing up the outside walls and coming into the building where the roof and the walls meet. Then they were spending their time under the machinery in the plant.

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Find the food source

It isn't always immediately apparent how these unusual pests are getting their food.

For instance, we've had a problem with plaster beetles, which are small beetles that typically feed on fungus spores, in a number of facilities. At first glance, it didn't look likely that fungus spores were present in the buildings that we were servicing.

But after we investigated, we found two instances where the plaster beetles were living in the roof of these structures. Both buildings had rubber roofs that leaked, and water was getting down to the wood underneath. Mold was growing on the wet wood, and the plaster beetles were living in and around that rotting wood. So we had to repair sections of the roofs to eliminate the problem.

Defend against unusual invaders

You might discover unusual pests in your facility because the conditions are just right for the populations to build, your building is just in the way, or your facility has been built in an environment where these animals have always existed. Whatever the reason they become pests, call Copesan or your local Copesan Service Center for relief from these odd invaders.



“Spider-bites” might actually be MRSA

By Fred Rozo, A.C.E., Technical and Training Specialist for Western Exterminator Company in Anaheim, California

It might be because fear of spiders (or arachnophobia) is number one among the top 10 phobias* or because spiders rank as one of the top five reasons that people start a residential pest management program with our company. Whatever the reason, people are blaming brown recluse spiders for skin infections that actually are caused by methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA).

MRSA is a bacterium that causes infections in different parts of the body. It's tougher to treat than most strains of *Staphylococ-*

cus aureus – or staph – because it is immune to commonly used antibiotics, such as methicillin, oxacillin, penicillin and amoxicillin.

Most often, MRSA causes mild infections on the skin like pimples or boils, but it can also cause more serious diseases and skin infections, such as necrotizing fasciitis, popularly known as “flesh-eating disease.”

Spider gets a bad rap

Since both brown recluse spider bites and MRSA can cause a reaction to the skin that causes skin

deterioration, some staph infections are misdiagnosed as spider bites.

This misdiagnosis is so widespread that brown recluse spiders are blamed for staph infections in areas where they don't even live. The spiders are indigenous to areas that range from southeastern Nebraska through Texas and east to Georgia and southernmost Ohio, but people have complained about their bites as far north as Canada and Alaska.

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As indicated by its name, brown recluse spiders are known for their reclusive nature. They are not aggressive and usually only bite when pressed against human skin, such as when tangled up in clothes, bath towels or bedding. Even then, most of these bites are minor with no necrosis, or flesh-eating wounds.

If a spider is implicated for a necrotic bite, verification of the genus and species should be performed by a qualified entomologist. It’s important to correctly diagnose the cause of the skin infection because if the cause is MRSA, the person needs to be correctly treated to limit the spread of infection. Also, while most MRSA infections aren’t serious, some can be life-threatening.

Are you at risk?

Approximately 30 percent of healthy adults carry staph bacteria on their skin or in their noses. MRSA infections are usually asymptomatic in healthy individuals and may last from a few weeks to many years. Patients with compromised immune systems are at significantly greater risk of developing an infection with symptoms.



Therefore, infections are most common among people who have weakened immune systems and are living in hospitals, nursing homes and other healthcare centers. But outbreaks have also been found in places like gymnasiums, prisons and other places with close living quarters.

Practicing scrupulous hand washing is the best defense against MRSA, especially for those who work with the public.

Take another look

Next time you have a wound that isn’t healing, don’t just assume that it is a brown recluse spider bite because it could

be something more serious like MRSA.

*According to phobia-fear-release.com, arachnophobia ranks as the number one phobia.



Information in this publication was researched and prepared by highly regarded experts within the pest management industry that are part of the Copesan Partnership. Copesan has more technical expertise located throughout North America than any other pest management firm. The IPM Update is a small sampling of that knowledge and expertise we provide to our clients.

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