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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.

## What to do when your recycling program attracts pests

By Yori Sasaerila, Technical Support Specialist and Entomologist, Abell Pest Control, Ontario, Canada

**W**ith consumers becoming more environmentally conscious, many companies are also embracing “green” practices and striving to put environmentally responsible practices into place.

One obvious way for companies to help conserve resources and protect the environment is to implement a recycling program.

Doing this seems easy enough. Collect recyclables like cans, bottles, and boxes and have a recycling truck periodically take them away.

But there may be hidden problems with this plan. The facility, which is probably already tight for space, needs to store its recyclables somewhere until there is enough recyclable material to fill a transporting truck. Unfortunately, most facilities don’t have a separate place to store these recyclables.

From a pest management point of view, this could create a major pest problem.

For example, let’s say your facility receives a box filled with canned pet food. During transport, one of the cans accidentally opens and spills onto the cardboard box. Once the box is unloaded, a worker unknowingly puts

it aside for recycling with the spilled product still on the box. Since there’s no separate space allotted for recyclables, it’s stored in the same warehouse space as good products that are slated to be delivered to customers.

This practice may seem harmless, but it actually poses the potential for attracting stored product pests, flies, and other serious pests. This could lead to a pest infestation, which



could also contaminate new food product, multiplying the problem.

What about storing recyclables outside? This practice also should be avoided. For example, storing recyclables like boxes outside will invite rodents and other pests to nest in them, and if it rains or snows, the cardboard will be damaged.

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### What to do

While recycling is absolutely necessary, companies need to think through their recycling process so their good intentions don't cause a pest problem.

First, warehouses need to designate a separate room for their recyclables. The area doesn't need to be a brick-walled storeroom. A dry-walled area within the warehouse would be sufficient. The main goal for the area is removing it from where new product is stored and preventing pests from being drawn inside by the material.

If you have a smaller facility, such as a restaurant or convenience

store that doesn't have a lot of square feet available, using a plastic wind curtain could be sufficient in preventing insects from entering the storeroom.

Another stored product pest deterrent would be to install a large industrial size fan in the storage room. Since pests like flies don't like strong, moving air, it will deter them from entering and it will also help dry up any spills in the area.

Also, have your recyclables picked up on a regular basis, preferably weekly, to reduce the chance of them attracting pests.

By implementing these simple

pest prevention and exclusion measures, your company also will be incorporating "green" pest management principles. That's because "green" practices focus on using non-chemical solutions, like exclusion, for pest problems as the first line of attack.

### Contact Copesan

For help with eliminating pests in your facility, contact Copesan or your local Copesan Service Center to determine the approach that is best for your facility and your situation. When you call, also ask for a copy of Copesan's Guide to Stored Product Pests.



## Rectifying refractory recyclables

By Mark D. Sheperdigian, Vice President Technical Services, Rose Pest Solutions, Troy, Michigan

**Y**ou wouldn't collect garbage in the break room and let it sit around for weeks, would you? Many companies who answer that question with a resounding "No!" are doing just that when they store the empty recyclable and returnable beverage cans in the break room until the vendor or someone takes them away.

**Flies.** Small flies, such as the small fruit fly, are common across

the country during the warmer months, and once inside, they search out fermenting sugars. If the recyclable containers are not clean and are allowed to sit for more than a week, you may begin breeding your own small flies – by the hundreds. It's not hard to tell when small flies have become a problem in your recyclables as they frequently hover over the container when new cans are deposited.



**Ants.** Soil-nesting ants are constantly seeking out sources of sugar and other food. If you have

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spilled soda and juice near your recyclables, ants will not be far behind. If you spill it, they will come. Normally you will overlook the single foraging ant, but when they designate your recyclables as an enterprise zone, they will build a superhighway from your door to theirs.

**Cockroaches.** Cockroaches can thrive in recyclables. The high-energy food supply, abundant moisture, and plenty of places to hide makes a recyclable container an ideal hang out for cockroaches. Once a recyclable container becomes infested with cockroaches, it can transport them to other places as well.

### Pest prevention tips

Solving pest problems related to collected recyclables can be done several different ways.

**Rinse recyclables.** Perhaps the best solution would be to enlist the cooperation of the beverage drinkers. If the containers were simply rinsed out with water before they were deposited in the container, the recyclables would not be a significant pest issue.

By having a sink and a faucet nearby, you can make this minor adjustment. The greatest drawback, however, is that it relies on the behavior of many people to change simultaneously. Historically, this has required more effort than one might think.



**Out with the old.** In many situations, changing the collection container can prevent the problem. A plastic container that does not leak, is lined with a sturdy can liner, and is emptied, washed, and dried on a regular basis will greatly reduce both the attractive nature and pest-producing potential of a recyclables container.

The schedule on which the container is emptied will vary from facility to facility because it depends on how much action it gets. In any case, recyclables that accumulate longer than one week may be exploited by pests.

**Move it.** It may be beneficial to change the storage location of the recyclables container. Moving the recyclables collection site to a less susceptible environment may

provide just the protection that is needed. Placing the container away from food areas to a place where pests are not such a problem may be the low-tech answer. But be aware, if the recyclables are not rinsed and the container is sticky, it may attract pests wherever you put it. (See previous article for more details.)

**Overview and summary.** If you are experiencing pest activity in association with your recyclables, you may benefit from reviewing all the factors surrounding your collection method. The best solution is to rinse the containers before discarding them. It is also helpful to have a non-leaking, lined, and washable container in which to collect the recyclables. If nothing else, move the container away from critical areas.



## Check your fly program: A look at insect light traps

By Sam Makhani, Corporate Quality Assurance Manager, Western Exterminator Company, Anaheim, California

**S**ince there's a wide variety of flying insect species and their behavior is subject to many different influences, flying insect control is not simple.

That's why insect light traps (ILTs) have gained wide acceptance for the control of flying insects inside food processing plants, food service establishments, hospitals, health care facilities, pharmaceutical plants, hotels, and other related facilities.

ILTs are commonly used in these facilities because food hygiene regulations, as well as consumers, require that food is wholesome, safe, and not contaminated by insect pests. As a result, businesses are required to demonstrate that they have taken every precaution to prevent contamination by flying insect pests, and ILTs help in this effort.

While the integrated pest management (IPM) approach emphasizes exclusion and sanitation first, if a few flying insects sneak into a facility, then carefully positioned ILTs are vital. Just hanging a few professional fly traps up at random won't automatically solve a pest problem.

Properly used ILTs, however, are extremely effective tools for

flying insect control and surveillance. Here's an overview of how to effectively use ILTs in your fly program.

### Strategic placement

ILTs that use ultraviolet light as an attractant are most useful for attracting flying insects. ILTs should be placed in areas where they will draw flies away from sensitive areas and not toward them. They shouldn't be put in areas where they could attract outside insects into a facility.

### Maintenance equals optimum performance

ILTs require routine maintenance for optimum performance. They should be inspected and cleaned weekly during peak fly season and at least monthly during the rest of the year. The unit's level of performance should also be checked. And remember, ILTs won't work if they aren't plugged in.

### Time to replace your bulbs

ILTs tubes (bulbs) should be replaced at least once a year for the best performance. Generally, phosphorus degradation in the tube reduces ultraviolet light

emissions at approximately 4 to 5% each month. Therefore, it is best to replace tubes in the spring before the fly season begins to ensure peak performance.

### Factors for success

The overall success of an IPM fly program depends on pest



exclusion, careful sanitation, thorough inspections, good communication, appropriate pest management tools, and a strong partnership between the client and Copesan.

Contact Copesan if you have a question about ILTs, or go to [www.Copesan.com](http://www.Copesan.com) for more information on updating your fly program.



## Toxicity in perspective

By Dr. Bart Foster, Technical and Training Manager, Bill Clark Pest Control, Beaumont, Texas

**B**y definition a pesticide is a substance that has an adverse effect on living organisms, with the measure of this effect referred to as its toxicity. But often there is a huge difference between the perceived risk or likelihood of harm from pesticides and their actual toxicity. The bias is especially true when comparing perceptions about pesticides with other chemicals and health hazards.

When surveyed, many groups in our society rank the risk from pesticides much higher than reported by experts in risk analysis. For example, college students ranked the health risk from pesticides higher than the health risk from alcohol or motor vehicles.

In our society, negative connotations are associated with words such as “chemical” or “synthetic”. We are conditioned to associate negative things with these words because of the context in which they are normally used.

The fact is we use chemicals every day to clean our homes, to

wash our clothes, and for many other activities where we do not consider the chemicals to be a risk. In addition, just because a substance is “synthetic”, or man-made, does not automatically make it more toxic or dangerous.

Extremely toxic substances such as botulism and arsenic are in fact “natural compounds”. Toxicity measurements allow an equal comparison regardless of the source or use of a substance.



### **Look at the facts, not perception**

Besides toxicity, the actual risk or hazard from pesticides and other chemicals depends on the way in which products are formulated and used. Even chemicals

with high toxicity can be made and used in ways that greatly reduce the risk of poisoning.

Non-chemical pest management methods and appropriate use of pest management products both protect human life and health. Ultimately, the choices made regarding the degree of pesticide use should be based on facts and not just perception.

Pesticides are a tool, and like using any tool, we must weigh the risks and benefits of using them. Overcoming misconceptions that commonly exist with regard to toxicity puts the “danger” of using pesticides into perspective.



Information in this publication was researched and prepared by highly regarded experts within the pest management industry who 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 the knowledge and expertise we provide to our clients. Information in this newsletter is copyright protected and may not be reprinted without permission.

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