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How to Pest Proof Your Home

Home is often thought of as a safe haven, your space to relax and enjoy your life and family. Feeling safe in your home, on all levels, is very important to most homeowners.

Insects and other pests can, at times, strip you of the secure and safe feeling you have in your home. Children and pets are at the greatest risk due to their natural curiosity.

Here are a few simple solutions to help reduce the amount of pest activity in or around your property.

The first step in pest proofing your home is a thorough inspection of the interior. Before beginning it is advised to have the following items on hand:

- Flashlight
- Clear waterproof acrylic caulk (Kitchen & Bath caulk is recommended)

Begin at your front door; choose a direction to begin (left or right) following the interior walls of your home. Following the interior walls will ensure all rooms are inspected. You should end up at the front door upon completion of your interior inspection.

Using your flashlight inspect interior baseboards, windows and exterior doorways for possible gaps, cracks or openings.

Always check the seals around windows and exterior doors; this is the most common entry point for insects.

If gaps or cracks are found along the baseboard or windows use a small amount of caulk to seal. This eliminates tiny entry areas that ants and other small insects use to enter your home.

If you see large gaps in your exterior doors you may want to have a professional install new doors sweeps or seals.

Some rooms in your home have specific areas to consider when inspecting.

Bathrooms:

Check all accessible plumbing protrusions & exhaust vents.

Moisture is an insect attractant, insects commonly harborage in and around high moisture areas ensure any cracks around plumbing is sealed to help reduce insect activity in your bathroom.

Placing a fine mesh screen on the inside of the exhaust fans will eliminate an additional insect entry area.

Kitchen:

Check plumbing protrusions, as well as any gas or electric lines coming in to your home from the outside.

Seal around any areas that may offer an entry point for insects. Check kitchen countertops and flooring for any small cracks or gaps, fill with caulk. Removed excesses bags. Stored paper and plastic bags attract pests, especially roaches.

Office:

Keep boxes, loose papers, folders and books off the floor. Items stored for long periods of time create the perfect home for several different types of pests.

Garage:

It is highly recommended to keep all stored items in air tight containers versus boxes. Boxes attract spiders, crickets & scorpions.

The second step in pest proofing your home is the exterior inspection.

Insects live outdoors. Following the suggestions listed below will greatly reduce the harborage and breeding areas around your home as well as eliminate or reduce entry points.

- Cut away any trees or bushes currently touching your home. Trees and bushes offer insects a bridge from their home to yours.
- Store wood away from the exterior wall of your home. Wood piles are notorious harborage areas. The farther away from your home, the better.
- Move or clean under any potted plants you may have on porches and patios at least 2x per month. Potted plants and planters create a wonderful breeding ground for all types of insects. Moving and cleaning under your potted plants greatly reduces activity.
- Clean and remove any dropped fruit at least once a week. Dropped fruit not only attracts insects it can attract pest birds and or rodents to your property.
- Clean and remove any pet waste from your yard at least once a week. This greatly reduces all types of flying insects.
- Avoid planting bushes or plants closer than 18 inches from your home.
- Check irrigation and meter boxes often, these areas attract sewer roaches and crickets. If you have not opened your irrigation or meter box in a while take great caution and be equipped with an insecticide before opening.
- Thoroughly inspect grills, patio furniture, pool pumps & outdoor kitchens. Several species of spiders adapt and build webs in these types of outdoor areas, so take caution when inspecting. Remove spider webs and egg sacks often to reduce spider activity.
- Inspect for standing water. It only takes a small amount of water for mosquitoes to lay eggs in; any standing water around your home should be removed immediately.

This information is intended to help you maintain an insect and pest free home as part of an ongoing professional pest control program. It will not, however eliminate all insects.

Please feel free to contact Lisa Beadle at Beadle Bug Patrol at 480.659.5422 or email Lisa@beadlebugpatrol.com with any additional questions you may have or to schedule your complimentary in-home pest inspection.