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Bug Problem? Here's How to Deal With Them:

Preventative Measures:

Keep a Clean House

- Bugs are naturally attracted to cluttered spaces. If you provide them with places to hide, they will take advantage of the situation. Clutter makes bugs difficult to find and eliminate.
- Remove all food waste after meals. Crumbs attract ants and other pests, so it is best to clean up immediately after eating and make sure all food is stored appropriately. This is especially true for anything with sugar in it.
- Do not leave dirty dishes in your sink or on counters. Wash them immediately or load them into your dishwasher.
- You will also need to remove water sources. Report any dripping faucets or leaking pipes the moment it starts. Also, please make sure you are immediately mopping up any standing water or spills.
- Take the trash out frequently so that the smell does not attract unwanted pests.
- Make sure you carefully follow all of the directions on any product you choose to use for killing the bugs. Improper use will prevent the product from working and can actually make the problem worse.

Spiders

In the late summer and well into the fall, tenants usually start noticing an increase in the number of spiders in and around their homes. Some of these spiders can actually get quite large, but the need for an exterminator is very rare. Make sure you are following all of the preventative measures, taking extra care to keep up with dusting and vacuuming all of the cobwebs. If you are able, transfer the spiders outside. Or, if you prefer you can vacuum them up. Please make sure you immediately empty your vacuum or dispose of the vacuum bag in the outside garbage containers.

Vegetation and plants can attract spiders. If you have vegetation touching the walls or windows of your unit, you will want to trim everything back. If a landscaping company or PPM is responsible for caring for your yard, please complete a maintenance request to have those areas addressed.

Horse chestnuts act as a natural spider repellent. Putting these in the corners and entry points of your house can help prevent or eliminate a spider problem.

Fleas and Ticks

If you have pets, **prevention is best**. Please talk with your veterinarian about which product would be the best option for your pet. Once fleas and ticks are introduced to the household, it is extremely difficult to remove them. It will often take several treatments to completely get rid of an infestation and all costs associated with a flea or tick infestation are a tenant charge.

If you do have fleas and ticks in your household, you are going to need to do more than treat the animal. You will need to treat your entire home, including your furniture and belongings. Most treatments will require washing, cleaning, dusting and lots of vacuuming. Please make sure you are emptying your vacuum canister or changing the bag after each use. It is important that you immediately dispose of everything in the outside trash container. If you are using any type of spray insecticides or foggers, please make sure you are following all of the directions very carefully. Improper use will often prevent that treatment from working.

Sometimes professional exterminators will need to be brought in to remove a particularly difficult infestation. Since the cost is a tenant charge, tenants can arrange for the professional exterminator of their choice.

Sugar Ants

Sugar ants are tiny black ants that almost always appear in large groups. Tenants will usually start seeing these ants in early spring through the first part of summer. Although sugar ants are often annoying, the need for an exterminator is very rare. Cleanliness is essential for the successful removal of sugar ants. You will want to make sure that there are no food or water sources available for the ants. Empty your trash often in the outside garbage bins.

Sweeping, mopping and general cleaning will not be enough to get rid of sugar ants. Once you have everything cleaned, you will need to use an ant bait to kill the colony. There are many sprays and baits on the market, but the one we have had the most success with is Terro Ant Bait. Follow the directions on the container carefully and make sure you are putting the bait in the travel line of the ants or where they are congregating.

Once you have set out the ant bait, you will see a temporary increase in bug activity. The ants will be attracted to the bait and as they return to their nesting area, the entire colony will be eliminated. We usually see results within the first week.

Carpenter Ants

Carpenter ants are much larger than sugar ants and are identifiable by their heart-shaped heads. These oversized pests are often mistaken for termites because of their tendency to eat wood. However, they leave a different impression on the wood than termites. The wood they leave behind has a smoothed out, sandpapery look, while termite wood looks chewed on and layered.

If you think you have carpenter ants in your house, you will need to locate the nesting site and use insecticides directly on the nest. If you are unable to locate a nest, or it is a continuing issue, you will want to submit a maintenance request.

Cockroaches

Cockroaches are resilient bugs that can be found worldwide. The best thing you can do for yourself and your household is to prevent an infestation. **Keep your unit very clean!** Don't forget the crawl spaces, cupboards, and appliances. Clean up all spilled food and/or water as soon as it occurs. Regularly check your cupboard spaces to make sure there is no food residue. Cockroaches are fond of dark corners and crevices. You will want to be very thorough in your inspections. Take the garbage out frequently. Check your household for gaps and entries that the roaches could be entering through.

If you have a cockroach problem in your household, please make sure you have completed all the required cleaning. Clean out all of your cupboards and dispose of all food items that have become contaminated. Then you will need to submit a maintenance request to the office as quickly as possible. Because of the cockroach's ability to rapidly breed and its reluctance to be killed, please do not delay getting that maintenance request submitted. We will often send our maintenance person out to seal any noticeable gaps and sources of entry before we contact the exterminator.

Fruit Flies

Fruit flies are tiny flies that can be extremely annoying and exterminators are rarely needed for their removal. They are usually introduced into your home through produce. It is very important that you are disposing of all overly ripened or rotten produce into the outside garbage containers. Cleanliness and the removal of food sources are essential for the successful removal of fruit flies.

We have found success with a fruity death trap. Take a small bowl and fill it half full with a berry flavored wine cooler or concentrated apple juice and then add a little liquid dishwashing soap to the wine cooler/juice mix. Do not use dishwasher detergent for this process, as it will not be effective. Do not stir or mix it, simply pour a small amount around the top of the fruity liquid. The liquid dishwashing soap acts as a surfactant and will break the surface tension of the liquid so the flies cannot float on the surface. As the fruit flies land on the juice mixture, they will sink and drown. As long as you have removed all of the decaying produce and the area is clean, you should start seeing results within a few days. If you are seeing more flies, you have a source of decaying produce somewhere that needs to be found and removed.

Bees, Wasps, Hornets, Yellow Jackets

We usually see these flying insects in the spring, summer and fall. Sightings usually decrease once the colder and freezing weather arrives. If you see any wasps, hornets, yellow jackets or any of their nests, please submit a maintenance request immediately. We will send someone over to remove the nest for you.