

The buzz about wasps

Will this year's wasp season put the sting back in your business?



Bee careful!
Dispelling the myths about bee treatments



Bats: nature's pest controllers
Everything you need to know when dealing with bats



Gull roof nets
Effective proofing against gulls

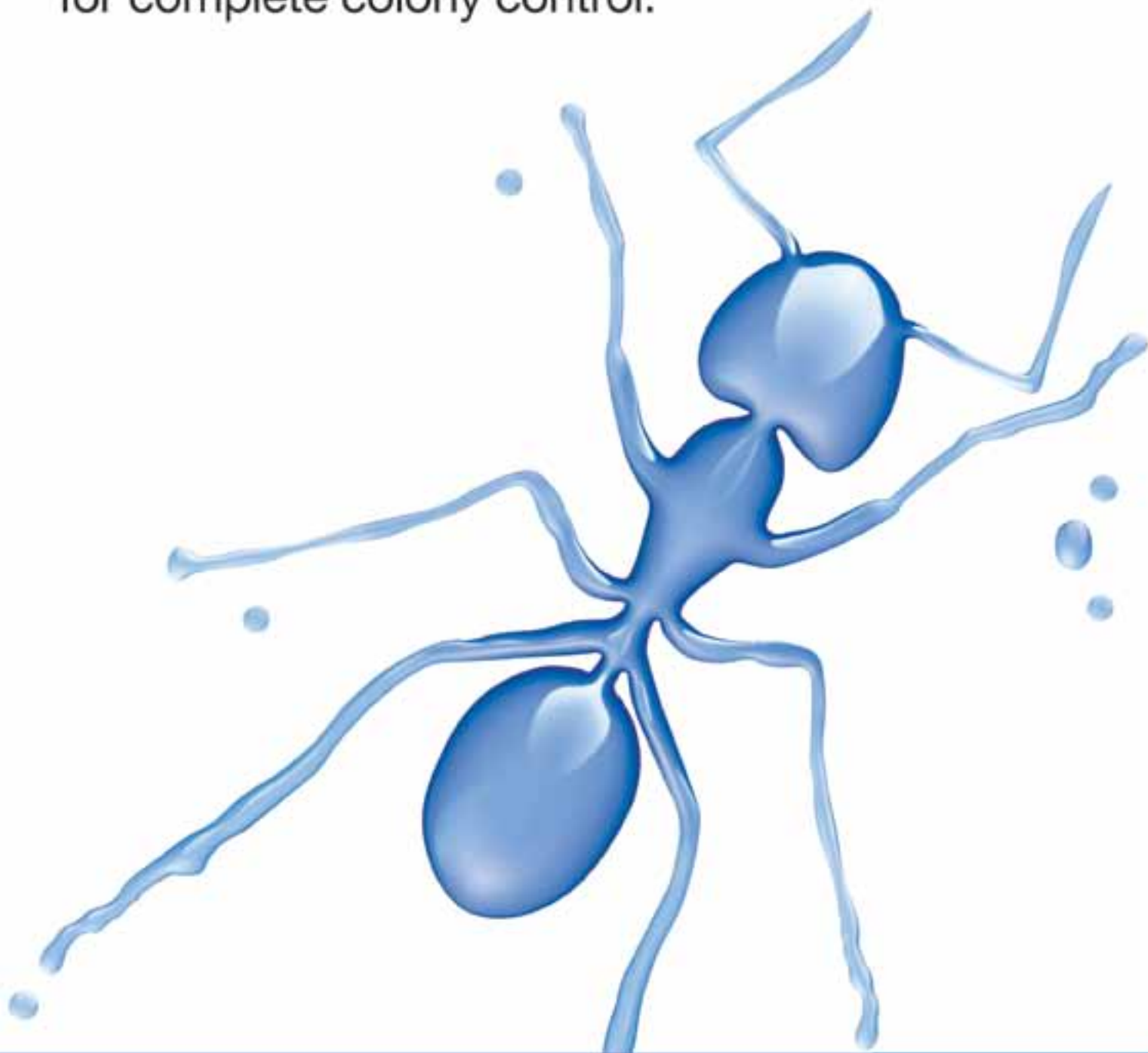


PestEx a smash hit!
A look back at the UK's premier pest event

Formidor[®]



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Formidor[®] contains fipronil. Use biocides safely. Always read the label and product information before use. Formidor[®] is a registered trademark of BASF.

Networking events

BPCA Annual General Meeting

12 June 2013 / BPCA Offices, Derby

www.bpca.org.uk/events

1st Eurasian Pest Management Conference

9-11 September / Moscow, Russia

www.pestmanagement.su

Managing your Pest Control Contract

3 October 2013 / SOFHT, Middleton, Staffordshire

www.sofht.co.uk/events

PestWorld 2013

10-11 October / Phoenix, Arizona, USA

www.npmapestworld.org

Amenity Forum Conference: Meeting the Challenge of Change

17 October / Leicester City FC, Leicester

www.amenityforum.co.uk

PestTech 2013

6 November / National Motorcycle Museum, Solihull

www.pesttech.org.uk

Fumigation Conference

27 November / BPCA Offices, Derby

www.bpca.org.uk/fumigation



Online learning

The flexible approach to pest control training, learn at your own pace at times to suit you.

www.bpca.org.uk/online

| Online learning | Member cost (exc. VAT) | Non-member (exc. VAT) | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Individual modules | Principles of pest control | £100 | £100 |
| | Birds | per module | per module |
| | Insects | per year | per year |
| | Mammals | | |
| All modules | £300 per year | £500 per year | |

Training

BPCA's training courses and examinations are run throughout the year at venues all around the UK.

Full 2013 training calendar
www.bpca.org.uk/training
 ...and in PPC72

| Examinations | 2013 dates | Venue | Member cost (exc. VAT) | Non-member (exc. VAT) |
|---|--------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| RSPH/BPCA Level 2 Award in Pest Management Exams can be arranged to suit other requirements at the discretion of BPCA, minimum of six candidates, there may be an additional cost. | 14 June | Berkshire | | |
| | 19 July | BPCA Offices, Derby | | |
| | 16 August | BPCA Offices, Derby | | |
| | 13 September | Coventry | £130 | £145 |
| | 27 September | London | | |
| | 25 October | Leeds | | |
| BPCA Accredited Technician in Pest Control | 22 November | Essex | | |
| | 13 December | Coventry | | |
| | 17 September | BPCA offices, Derby | £225 | £305 |
| BPCA Certificate in Bird Management | On request | BPCA offices, Derby | £90 | £105 |
| BPCA Fumigation Diploma | 20 September | BPCA offices, Derby | £125 | £145 |
| BPCA Fumigation Certificate of Proficiency | 20 September | BPCA offices, Derby | £285 | £390 |
| BPCA Certificated Field Biologist | 20 June | BPCA offices, Derby | £210 | £265 |
| | 17 October | BPCA offices, Derby | | |

Courses



| Courses | PROMPT CPD | 2013 dates | Venue | Member cost (exc. VAT) | Non-member (exc. VAT) |
|--|------------|------------------------------------|--|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Pest Control Course (modular) | 30 | 4 June - 30 July 10 Oct - 8 Nov | BPCA offices, Derby BPCA offices, Derby | £699 | £899 |
| General Pest Control (residential) * | 24 | 8-13 September 8-13 December | Warwick University, Coventry Warwick University, Coventry | £875 | £1045 |
| NEW BPCA 'Profitable Bed Bug Control' | 12 | On request | BPCA offices, Derby | £200 | £250 |
| Urban Bird Control and Management | 20 | On request | BPCA offices, Derby | £300 | £365 |
| So you want to be a Field Biologist? | 8 | On request | BPCA offices, Derby | £165 | £195 |
| Heat Treatment Technicians | 22 | On request | BPCA offices, Derby | £300 | £365 |
| Pest Control Awareness for Administrators | 8 | On request | BPCA offices, Derby | £165 | £195 |
| Insect Classification and Identification | 10 | On request | BPCA offices, Derby | £165 | £195 |
| 5 Day Fumigation | 30 | On request | BPCA offices, Derby | £875 | £1045 |
| Stored Product Inspection and Control | 10 | 27 June | BPCA offices, Derby | £165 | £195 |

* includes full-board accommodation, BPCA/RSPH Level 2 Award in Pest Management exam fee and access to the BPCA Online Learning programme for six weeks prior to the course.

Book by calling 01332 225 113 or via www.bpca.org.uk/training

Every effort is made to ensure all events run to plan, but BPCA reserves the right to cancel events. A full refund will be given for a booking that is removed by the Association.

Regional forums

BPCA is running a series of Regional Training Forums around the UK designed to help your business compete, and keep you and your staff up to date. Each meeting is worth approximately four CPD points.

Find out more and book your places at www.bpca.org.uk/events

Dates and locations

6 June / Bristol
 26 September / Newbury
 3 October / Cambridgeshire
 24 October / Belfast
 12 November / County Durham
 21 November / Hampshire

PPC

ppconline.org

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CPD for 2013: 2 points

BASIS reference: PC/18449/1011/g



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www.davidson-igd.co.uk



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A week in the life

Occasionally I get asked what does the CEO of a trade association do exactly? Thankfully not always by my Board. I kept a diary of the last week in April to show what I typically get up to...

The week started with me finalising two articles for trade magazines in the local government and hospitality sectors. Our clients' industries want to know what we as a sector are doing about pest issues, but also how their members can work with professional pest controllers to maintain and improve public health. I then went into the BPCA office in Derby for a meeting to discuss our strategy for working overseas. BPCA often gets asked to support training and the development of standards in other countries. At PestEx we were approached by representatives from several countries interested in learning from us. But our meeting was to see if this actually fits BPCA's strategic plan – after all, the 'B' in BPCA does stand for something. While in BPCA Towers I met with Richard Moseley to discuss the HSE SGAR stakeholder meeting (see page 16 for an update), and attended a meeting about our plans for the next few issues of **alexo**, and where we will be focusing our activity.

“I also finalised a letter to the Environment Agency, which seems hell-bent on adding huge costs to your activities”

On Tuesday I worked with Lorraine Norton on our proposed new Articles and Rules and Regulations, which are coming out to all members for their vote soon. A huge and laborious task, but a very important one for the successful running of BPCA. I kept ducking out to write and edit copy for PPC, and look at an ongoing website project for one of our association clients. Having been through the pain of a new website www.bpca.org.uk they really appreciate our support. I also finalised a letter to the Environment Agency, which seems hell-bent on adding huge costs to your activities without any awareness of the negative impacts their decision brings. The letter got copied in to a lengthy list of MPs, CEOs and other dignitaries, so let's see what response that gets.

During Wednesday I went to London to attend a training course on writing Codes of Conduct run by the Institute of Association

Management. I'm very lucky that BPCA will fund my training for the benefit of the Association. Revising the Code of Conduct is our next task in hand through the newly-structured Servicing Committee, and I will be supporting Chairman James Ostler on this task. That day the BPCA phone system was down, so I (and they, probably) got some peace.

By Thursday I'd caught a bit of breathing space to do some follow-up from PestEx, which is taking longer than we thought. In 2011 we set aside five days to get things done, but it's taking lots longer this time – victims of our own success! I also caught up on emails and phone calls, which was another couple of hours. One regular call is with Henry Mott, BPCA President. We try to speak once a week to catch up on industry issues. As my line manager, Henry supports me between Board meetings by giving a steer on where we should be focusing our activity, and provides a useful sounding board.

I finished the week at the Greater London Pest Liaison Group, a get-together for local authority pest control managers from across the capital. It was a tough crowd, who told me in no uncertain terms what they expect from our next *National Survey of Pest Species*. I think I won them over (we'll see). On the train home I started fleshing out a draft agenda for the M&D Committee for consideration by the Chairman, worked on my presentation for the Facilities Show (BPCA is exhibiting there) and got to grips with a problem that the Romanian Pest Control Association has asked for our professional opinion on.

So there you have it – a week in the life. Association management may (does, probably) seem dull to the outsider, but I thrive on the variety and scope of the challenges involved. I hope you can see what we're doing for the money, and that it's worth your subscription. If you don't think so, let me know – and if you do think so, tell a friend!



Simon Forrester
BPCA chief executive
simon@bpca.org.uk



Join the conversation on twitter
[@britpestcontrol](https://twitter.com/britpestcontrol)



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Online CPDs in PPC



BPCA provides at least one article in every issue of PPC into an online CPD quiz. Look out for the ONLINE CPD logo on the relevant page of the magazine, and in the contents list above.

At least two points are given for each quiz, and we even pass your results to BASIS for free within a few days – the only people in the industry to do this!

To access this unique benefit, simply join the BPCA Affiliate Scheme via

www.bpca.org.uk/affiliate

RENTOKIL CONFIRMS COMMITMENT TO QUALITY WITH BASIS PROMPT

Over 600 Rentokil technicians and field biologists have signed up to the BASIS PROMPT professional register. All technicians at the pest control giant are now on the BASIS scheme, which registers qualified pest controllers and helps them to embrace Continuing Professional Development (CPD).



Rob Simpson, Managing Director at BASIS PROMPT welcomed the backing of the UK's largest pest control company, Rob said: "We're really pleased that Rentokil has come on board in such a big way. Rentokil has always been committed to maximising the skill levels of its employees, and this is another example of that. The fact that all Rentokil technicians and field biologists are being registered with BASIS PROMPT sends a clear message to the industry – the firms that offer expert advice and insist on operatives knowing the very latest techniques and regulations will be the ones to succeed whatever the economic climate."

David Cross from Rentokil said: "Regulation and best practice in the industry is evolving continuously, and we're committed to ensuring Rentokil employees are at the forefront of innovation." David added "Our support of the BASIS PROMPT professional register reflects the time and investment we put into training to ensure we provide our customers with a high quality, professional service."

www.basispestcontrol.co.uk

www.rentokil.co.uk

NEW PRODUCT LAUNCH SILVER SPECIAL

Bird Free successfully launched its new silver 'fire gel' at PestEx 2013. The new formula silver Bird Free is even more discreet, while application to pitched roofs and gutters is even easier. It works in exactly the same way as the yellow Bird Free but is in a more discreet colour and is more easily applied and durable in exposed locations.

www.bird-free.com



Saddle sore in Salford



In September Dave Clements and Cliff Eccles of Pestokill will be cycling 100 miles in under five hours in aid of the Joining Jack 100 charity, set up to offer support for a boy with Duchenne muscular dystrophy. The event starts in Manchester with the route going through the Cheshire plains and back to finish at Manchester City's Etihad Stadium.

Having never shied away from a challenge, Cliff and Dave have a very busy few months of training ahead to prepare for the epic ride. Cliff explains "To make the event a bit more tasty we are attempting to average 20mph across the course." Cliff added "If you've done any cycling then you will appreciate that this will make things a little more difficult. We are dedicated to training, and just to keep us focused we're doing a 70 mile ride over four passes in the Lake District the weekend before."

Both Dave and Cliff would be very grateful if you could help their cause by providing a small donation to help them reach their £1,000 target. Dave said "We're not looking for the shirt off your back – we will take anything from a pound as a donation, as they say 'every little helps'" Don't forget to Gift Aid your donation to get the extra support from the Inland Revenue.

<http://goo.gl/nUJNj>



NEONICOTINOID UPDATE

Last month the Appeal Committee of the European Commission voted on a proposed two-year suspension of imidacloprid, clothianidin and thiamethoxan for all applications on so-called bee-attractive crops following a report by the European Food Standards Agency which claimed a link between these compounds and declining bee populations. As of today there is no formal decision made, this is because the vote on April 29 did not produce a qualified majority. In fact almost half of the members states, including the UK, voted against the proposal or abstained from the vote.

In absence of an agreement it is now for the European Commission to decide on the adoption of the proposed restriction, which we believe they will likely enforce, but this may take a couple of weeks to get to a formal decision.

Manufacturers of these products consider the decision as a setback for technology, innovation and sustainability. A spokesman from Bayer commented "As a science-based company, we are disappointed that clear scientific evidence has taken a back seat in the decision making process and we do not believe that the plan by the Commission will have a positive impact on bee health." Bayer and others are lobbying to have public health pest control products containing these actives (such as Maxforce or Quickbayt) exempt from the proposed ban. Until a decision is reached, the products are still available to buy and use, and BPCA will inform members should this situation change.

If you have immediate concerns or need clarification please contact Bayer Environmental Science.

www.bayercropscience.com

Richard Lunn leaves SX Environmental



After a successful transitional period of fifteen months, after the sale of SX Environmental Services to P+L Systems, Richard Lunn has stepped down from his role as consultant.

Peter Mangion, Managing Director at P+L Systems said "We're very grateful to Richard for staying on after selling the company to us in 2012. He's made a valuable contribution to the process of transitioning from a business serving only the UK market,

to one which is part of a family of companies operating globally.

Peter added "The SX team has been well prepared to continue the traditions of delivering innovative products and class leading customer service. It's very much 'business as usual' at SX."

Richard Lunn commented "It's been a pleasure to build, develop and support such a successful company, but it's time to move on. I wish all the staff the best of luck!"

www.sxenv.com



We're gonna need a bigger duster!

Imagine walking into a hallway and stumbling straight into a wasp nest that's nearly 22' across. That's what happened in one home in San Sebastian, the capital of the Canarian island of La Gomera. A

neighbour's growing concern over a vacant house caused them to notify the police, and when they entered, discovered it was home to millions of wasps. The pest control experts that examined and subsequently removed the nest said it was at least 21' 9" in length, and was from an invasive species of wasp which had migrated from Africa. According to Guinness World Records, the largest wasp nest previously recorded was found below a tree in New Zealand in 1963, and measured 12' x 5' x 18' in circumference.

Let's hope this isn't a sign of things to come for the UK – or we're going to need some new ways of working!



PROFESSIONAL PEST CONTROL GUIDE

Bayer showcased their updated *Professional Pest Control Guide* at this year's PestEx event held at London's Excel. As well as offering a comprehensive guide to all of the company's products including insecticides, gel baits, sprays and smokes, the guide had a new dedicated section for rodenticides.

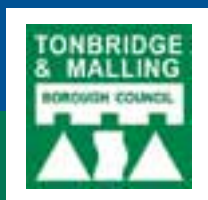
Claire Matthewman, Bayer CropScience's Product Manager explains "We have given rodenticides far higher prominence in this new guide to reflect the depth of information available in helping pest controllers to get the best out of the four formulations of Rodilon®."

The product guide provides pest controllers with detailed information on the correct areas of use and application rates for all products. It also includes an extensive pest section to help pest controllers identify key pests, their specific characteristics and the environments in which they can be found, their lifecycle and recommended control strategies.

"Part of the added value offered to pest controllers who choose Bayer is the educational and informative resources available," explains Claire. "Our guide not only aids control, but also adds to a customer's confidence in the service they are employing, and where a PCO's clear level of expertise is just as important."

Bayer's *Professional Pest Control Guide* is available free. Call 0800 1214 9451 or email pestcontrolexpert@bayercropscience.com www.bayercropscience.com

Tender for the provision of pest control services



Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Councils are inviting quotations from appropriate contractors to provide their pest control services in line with their responsibilities under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949.

A tender pack containing all relevant information needed to make an application is available upon request from:
Environmental Protection Team
Town Hall
Tunbridge Wells
Kent TN1 1RS
 Telephone **01892 526121**
 Email envprotection@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

The closing date for applications is 11 June 2013.

Record referrals for BPCA

One of the key ways BPCA delivers value for money to members is by referring work. Over the last few years BPCA has given out tens of thousands of referrals, each consumer being provided with the contact details of their closest BPCA members. And with the new website, numbers are up significantly.

Now for the first time BPCA can accurately tell each member how many referrals they've received. BPCA Marketing Officer Laurence Barnard explains "Servicing Members can find out how many referrals they've had. We'll contact

| | REFERRALS |
|------|---------------|
| 2011 | 10,831 |
| 2012 | 7,054 |
| 2013 | 30,000+ |

Forecast based on four months' data to 1 May.

members with their referral numbers at the end of the membership year, but if anyone would like to know sooner call BPCA's offices or email marketing@bpca.org.uk

Early reports show that consumer referrals for 2013 are up on this time last year, and BPCA is forecasting a record year from consumer and now commercial referrals. BPCA Membership Manager Kevin Higgins said "We've seen a huge increase in referrals due to the improvement of the search functionality and search engine rankings of the new BPCA website."

Find out more about how you can benefit from this and many other member benefits at www.bpca.org.uk/benefits



PPC picture competition

WINNER ANNOUNCED!

The time has come for us to announce the winner of the PPC picture competition to win a Zarbeco digital microscope. After hours of agonising debate the judging panel decided Stephen Simmons from Northumberland Council was the winner with his selection of 'sneaky rat' pictures (above). BPCA Marketing Officer Laurence Barnard explains: "All the pictures received were fantastic, and we'll try to use some in future publications, but sadly there could only be one winner." Laurence added "Individually Stephen's photos were outstanding, but together they really stood out."

Although this is the end of the picture competition, we'd still love to see what you're snapping! Feel free to email any pictures to marketing@bpca.org.uk and we'll make sure we tweet the best ones from [@britpestcontrol](https://twitter.com/britpestcontrol)



PPC 71 prize



PPC has one copy of *The UK Pesticide Guide 2013* (see PPC70) to give away. For your chance to win, answer this question: **How many years has PPC magazine been running?**

Send your answer, along with your name, contact number and postal address to editor@ppconline.org or complete the competition form on our website www.bpca.org.uk/ppccompetition by 26 July 2013 to be in with a chance.

PestEx prize winners

Over the past couple of months, BPCA had a variety of prize draws for anyone who pre-registered and attended PestEx this year, the winners of which could either win a overabundance of products donated by some of our PestEx exhibitors, or a BPCA favourite – a Kindle Fire.

BPCA is happy to announce the following people all won prizes:

Products prize draw

Michael Lekkos (Protecta S.A)
Neil Patterson (Wandsworth Council)
Andrew Green (Vermatech)
Andras Kovacs (Intro Jobaratok Ltd)

Kindle Fire

Gerry McTernan
(Total Pest Control Solutions)

BPCA thanks the following PestEx exhibitors for contributing products for the prize draw: Bell Laboratories, Quimunsa, Silvanderson, BASIS, BASF, Killgerm, Pelgar, Network Bird, Insect-O-Cutor, Birchmeier and Agralan.



Andrew Green (Vermatech), one of the PestEx product prize winners

NEW PRODUCT LAUNCH

GASSING AGENTS SAFELY BOXED!



RAMPS UK set out in early 2011 a strict protocol for the development and delivery of the safe and controlled supply of highly toxic gassing agents, the subject of forthcoming legislation in 2015. David Himsworth, ADH Baseline's Ltd Managing Director, says "The safe transportation of gassing agents is a key area often overlooked and perhaps not fully understood, but a subject that is an equally important part of their handling."

David added "Safeguarding personal healthcare and the environment when handling aluminium phosphide formed a

crucial design standard for their Chemlock® PEST PARTNER box, a new concept that takes account of the professional operator handling highly toxic gassing agents".

The PEST PARTNER can contain up to eight 90 or 100gm Talunex or Phostoxin flasks, usually sufficient for a full day's work.

Each Chemlock® box has a replaceable high ACN nitrile rubber seal, selected for its high resistance to chemicals and solvents that form part of today's pesticides.

Up to two PEST PARTNER boxes can be securely located within the upper half of the larger 'mother' 30l Chemlock® DUAL box. The area below this provides additional storage for larger numbers of gassing agent flasks. When one or two PARTNER boxes

are stored within a DUAL box an extra benefit of double fume protection is provided.

Duty of care has been a key consideration in the design and manufacture of both Chemlock® transport boxes, hence minimising the risk of litigation.

Their specially formulated thermoplastic material is super strong, chemical resistant, lightweight, and provides significant advantages for users. These benefits avoid the significant risks associated with steel: weight, chemical reaction or fibreglass disintegration. A secure locking facility is provided on each box using a set of three over centre locks with the central one being able to take an optional padlock.

www.chemicaltransportbox.co.uk

BPCA lobbies CRD over council pest control

BPCA has written to Rob Mason the Director of Regulatory Policy at HSE's Chemicals Regulation Directorate to set out our concerns over the responsibilities of local authority chief executives to ensure the safe use of pesticides.

Our main points were:

- The new regulations in force relating to use of biocides impose additional responsibilities on local authorities (and others) – but these need to be explicit.
- Public health pest management is not as strictly regulated as our colleagues in plant protection. However, the risks are at least as great.
- It is therefore vital to ensure the competence of those who use biocides, and BASIS PROMPT and membership of BPCA are excellent starting points.
- BPCA is the only trade body that insists all its servicing members meet strict criteria (which we listed), and are assessed on joining and regularly thereafter.
- Similarly, BPCA is ensuring all our

members' staff involved in pest control are trained and keep their CPD up to date – no other association does this.

- Our assertion is that to allow technicians without this level of training to use professional-use only biocides for public health pest control potentially puts the consumer at risk, both from the products and the pest species themselves if a disease-spreading pest is not controlled.
- The range of biocides available to manage public health pest species is already limited. Failure to meet legal requirements may result in the withdrawal of authorisations for use which could result in an increasing reliance on potentially less cost-effective methods of control for your authority.
- Integrated pest management programmes help minimise harm and maximise positive benefit – professionals are best placed to deliver this.
- Over a third of local authorities no longer provide in-house pest control services,

and many simply point end users to private companies – they should be directing people to BPCA members.

- Our industry is working on a European CEN standard for companies, but in the meantime local authorities should be guided by CRD to ensure pest control activity is undertaken by trained professionals.
- Advice is available from BPCA on choosing a suitable pest control company.
- To deliver best value for money, local authorities should insist on professional accreditation such as BASIS PROMPT registration and BPCA membership.

We will continue to fight to ensure BPCA members are best placed to win work following the comprehensive spending review, and the subsequent changes to local authority pest control. If you have any suggestions on how else we can capitalise on this, please contact BPCA chief executive Simon Forrester via simon@bpca.org.uk



20 YEARS OLD – AND STILL GOING STRONG

Professional Pest Controller magazine celebrates 20 years of publication with this latest issue. Over the past two decades the magazine has focused on pest control professionals, delivering the latest industry news, product information, technical articles from industry experts, business features, marketing tips and much more – on a quarterly basis. PPC Editor and BPCA Chief Executive Simon Forrester commented “We’ve all seen PPC change its face over years, but it has always produced high quality and a consistent content, and has always related to pest controllers working at the

sharp end of the business.” Simon added “There is no other publication in the UK industry that has been running this long, which just reiterates the fact PPC has a strong following and is seen as the leading magazine in the industry.”

To celebrate PPC's 20th birthday, BPCA will be uploading the whole back catalogue of PPC issues (from 1 to 71) on the BPCA website over the next few weeks and months – worth a look if only to mourn the lost actives and laugh at the haircuts of some of the industry's old guard!

www.bpca.org.uk/ppc

NYLAR APPROVED FOR BED BUGS

Flea and cockroach pesticide NyLar 4 EW from PelGar International, containing the powerful insect growth regulator (IGR) pyriproxyfen, has been approved for use on bed bugs.

Nic Blaszkowicz, UK Sales and Marketing Manager at Pelgar explains “NyLar 4 EW is an oil-in-water emulsion (EW) formulation that is particularly effective in treating populations that are showing resistance to conventional insecticidal treatments.” Nic added “EW's offer excellent residual control on non-sorbitive surfaces such as vinyl surfaced wallpapers, most plywoods, plastics, laminates, metal and ceramic tiles. It also has a very low odour and is non-flammable.”

NyLar 4 EW joins PelGar's Cimetro and Stingray ME which include pyriproxyfen in combination with synthetic pyrethroids and other adjuvants.

www.pelgar.co.uk



NEW alexo

alexo is now a monthly digital magazine designed to promote the use of BPCA members to the public. Every digital issue of **alexo** will target a specific sector every month – meaning we'll reach a new and different audience every issue. This improved member benefit will give all full members the opportunity to order their own free personalised copies of each digital magazine. Just like the 'why you need pest control' leaflet BPCA currently produces, members can have their logo and contact details placed on every issue – giving them a free marketing tool to send out to potential and current customers. Members can still contribute to articles and editorial for the BPCA version of every **alexo** which will go out to an average of 8,000 people each and every month. The magazine will now reach an estimated 100,000 readers

an improved member benefit

each year, which more than trebles its previous circulation.

This first issue of the new **alexo** was a facilities management special – specifically designed for the Facilities Show held at the NEC in May at which BPCA was an exhibitor. BPCA Marketing Officer Laurence Barnard explains "The new digital version of **alexo** has been designed to give members more. Not only will we be promoting all BPCA members with **alexo**, but now members can use it for their own marketing activities."

BPCA member and Deputy President Martin Harvey commented "I use **alexo** to promote my company to current and potential customers. **alexo** does a lot of marketing for me and goes down really well with my customers."

Find out how **alexo** can promote your business at www.bpca.org.uk/alexo

Pest control in the news

Sandwiches laced with rat poison were delivered anonymously to an office in in Steinfeld, Germany, with a note saying 'bon appétit!' As a result 25 people ended up in hospital. Police believe these were left by a disgruntled employee. Luckily the dose was non-fatal. A similar incident in Hebei, China left two children dead after drinking yoghurt laced with tetramine, a banned rodenticide. BPCA Technical Manager Richard Moseley said "These examples show that the availability of products to the public is of more significance than the HSE would think."

Dirtier Britain

Hit TV show 'Dirty Britain' is to once again feature pest control, with Jim England (Protex Pest Control Services) carrying out pigeon control in a drugs den, including removal of guano containing drug paraphernalia. Jim also worked on a rat infested house – the owner having lived with the problem for 23 years! Broadcast is in late June or early July.

www.protexpest.co.uk



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The European Standard for Pest Management Services (aka the 'CEPA/CEN Project') is nearing completion, and is ahead of schedule.

well and finding we have more and more in common right the way across Europe each time we meet. As a group we are pleased with the draft for public consultation, but we can always improve. The more input and

comment at this stage, the better the final document."

The standard is to come into force during 2014, and will be a useful external measure of professionalism. Roland Higgins CEPA's Director General said "The standard has been designed to ensure that the industry is recognised for responsibly protecting European citizens and the environment in which they live against public health risks. An added benefit of having an officially recognised European Standard is that once it is in place it will be an invaluable self-regulatory reference point for legislators to take their bearings from when the European Union or national

governments consider future regulatory initiatives affecting our sector."

We believe most BPCA members meet the standard already, and costs to meet it will not be high. Assessment against the standard will be done by external audit. Bureau Veritas, experts in this area, say it's likely to take half a day to be assessed against the standard. BPCA is on the CEPA working group drawing up the process – the only trade body involved. Also, BPCA is planning to give strong support to its members who wish to meet the standard, just like we do with those who want to be accredited to CHAS.

Our message is simple: "Don't fear the standard, embrace it!" The speed of growth of the standard will be entirely down to its adoption by clients. Once BPCA members begin to meet the standard, we will ensure clients know about it so we can ensure BPCA members are well placed to win more work.

www.cepa-europe.org



By the time you read this article the final touches will be being made to the draft version, which has been written by a cross-section of the European pest control industry, involving associations, suppliers and servicing companies. This document will be circulated for your views very soon. We need everyone to read it and comment on the content – if you don't like it, please say so and help us to change and improve it.

Rob Fryatt, chair of the CEN TC404 technical workgroup which is drawing up the standard said "We are progressing

CPD: embracing the inevitable



By the end of 2014 all BPCA servicing members will need to ensure their staff carrying out pest control are BASIS PROMPT registered. Similarly, the HSE is looking at how the industry polices itself, with further restrictions to products possible. With this deadline looming, BPCA Field Officer Natalie Bungay explains the importance of joining and remaining a member of a recognised CPD scheme.

Pests that endanger health, contaminate food and damage property must be controlled. This needs to be done by a professional who has been trained and is competent. 'Demonstration of professionalism' is the key to Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The ability to show that you and your company have a commitment to keeping up with industry legislation, product changes and technical advancements – all of which take your company to another level.

We have all had the discussions, whether it be in a business meeting or at the pub. Why are the 'rogue traders' allowed to get away with offering their unprofessional services at low costs? Why is the industry not regulated properly? The answer is that we have to be a self-regulating industry – the latest meeting with the HSE over SGARs clearly demonstrated its wish for us to self-regulate in order to keep the products we depend upon. We have to take it upon ourselves (for now) to ensure 'we' create the clear divide between us and the 'cowboy'. We stand up and say "I am a professional pest controller and this is how I can prove it: I am BASIS PROMPT registered and a BPCA member, having satisfied their criteria year after year."

BPCA has been working alongside BASIS PROMPT to provide a reliable and effective way to record and monitor an individual's commitment to professional development. PROMPT scheme numbers are now at 2,021 demonstrating the wider industry is behind

the scheme. A very minimal cost is associated with the excellent service BASIS offers. At just £25pa for BPCA members and £30pa for non-BPCA members, it is an inexpensive but important way of demonstrating your commitment to professionalism.

The PROMPT scheme offers the route of recording your training and providing you with the identification card to prove it. Once a member of the scheme you should ensure your customers are aware that you are taking steps to ensure professional working at all times. This is what sets you apart from the 'cowboys'. To this end BASIS produces leaflets for you to hand out to clients.

Remember:

- Commitment to CPD demonstrates you are the professional.
- The pest control industry is self-regulated and so we are all responsible for helping each other implement these standards.
- If we don't show that we can use biocides safely they may be taken away.
- Inform all of your customers you are PROMPT registered. Show them your card and make sure they always ask for a card – it might exclude your competition! Show them you are a cut above the rest.

For information on BASIS PROMPT contact Claire Naylor on 01335 30 12 03 or email claire@basis-reg.co.uk

www.basispestcontrol.co.uk

What is your strategy?

The HSE is asking industry to develop stewardship in order for us to maintain access to SGARs (see article, page 16). Therefore, it is likely that in the near future we will have to demonstrate we are fit to use these products. If government insists on demonstration of professional practice, how will your business cope? Could you show your technicians are all qualified and kept up to date?

How can I get CPD points?

Getting the required CPD points every year can be a simple and relatively easy process. You can gain CPD points by:

- Attending pest control events – such as the free BPCA Regional Training Forums or exhibitions like PestEx
- Passing the free online CPD quizzes on the BPCA website available through the Affiliate Scheme – there are two more on bats and feral bees in this issue of PPC www.bpca.org.uk/affiliate
- Completing a training course through an accredited body. Every BPCA training course, be it a one day course, or online learning is credited for CPD points with BASIS PROMPT. For more details see page 3 or visit www.bpca.org.uk/training
- Working for a BPCA member company gets you two points
- Reading PPC magazine. By becoming a subscriber to PPC magazine, you automatically get two CPD points – congratulations, you're on your way to reaching your CPD target already!
- Setting up In-house CPD. If you've bought a new piece of kit and have been trained or are training others, you can get CPD points. Just contact BASIS who will help you through the process.

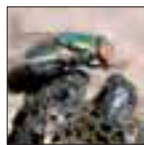


Are you a registered BASIS PROMPT professional?

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PestEx a smash hit!

This year's PestEx broke all previous records, proving to be a huge draw – the perfect combination of exhibitors and seminars to bring in a whopping 24% more people over the two days. The show saw 2,369 people (including exhibitors) attend, who were attracted by the many innovative products on display, plus the range and depth of technical and business seminars.

The run-up to the show had seen unprecedented demand for stand sales. The show sold out and then when BPCA added in extra stands, they sold out too. 42% went to exhibitors who hadn't attended previously, bringing new products and services to the UK market.

PestEx extended the strong international flavour of previous events, with around a quarter of visitors coming from overseas (similar to the 2011 event). The significant increase in overall visitors came from the UK, and this growth made the show a real success.

Many visitors and exhibitors alike commented that the 'buzz' in the aisles was strong throughout the two days, and it was difficult to move without bumping into old friends or new contacts. But quality was not sacrificed for the sake of quantity: the majority of visitors were in roles where they had the final decision over or major influence on the purchase of pest control products and services.

Initial analysis of the visitor feedback showed the number one reason to attend was to update industry knowledge (75%) with networking a close second – and with over



80% of delegates finding the BPCA networking café of real value. Visitors were keen to update their technical knowledge, and 83% rated the extensive seminar programme good or excellent.

Though the majority of attendees were not there to look for a specific product or service, 84% of those who were found what they were looking for – demonstrating the breadth of the show.

Visitors commented on the range of interesting new technologies, especially in the area of remote monitoring of bait stations and software systems. This is perhaps an indication that, in the recession, our industry is seeking less labour-intensive methods of control. Despite there not being a huge range of brand new products, many manufacturers took the opportunity to tweak existing product lines and demonstrate these at the show (see PPC news).

/continued over...

“... the majority of visitors were in roles where they had the final decision over or major influence on the purchase of pest control products and services.”

Praise for PestEx

Exhibitors

"It was a great experience for us, the show was a lot bigger than we were expecting, for our first foray into the UK pest control market it was very promising."

Robert Middleton, ServicePro.net

"Just a short note to say thank you very much for organising PestEx. From my perspective it went really well - good numbers and a good mix of visitors, and some very useful new contacts."

Clive Boase, Pest Management Consultants

"I would like to congratulate the BPCA team on an excellent exhibition... we had a fantastic couple of days."

Sabra Fearon, Killgerm

"For me PestEx is a platform to potential suppliers and speak to industry experts. The seminars were very informative with a high level of expertise. I will certainly be coming back to PestEx in the future."

Ton Abel, Zapi

Visitors

"Please could you thank the whole BPCA team for a great 2 days and for their professionalism and friendliness, they are always smiling and oozing positivity. All are a credit and assets to BPCA."

Steve Gould, Effective Pest Management

"PestEx is definitely becoming more international, and is always a good learning curve, especially with the quality of seminars."

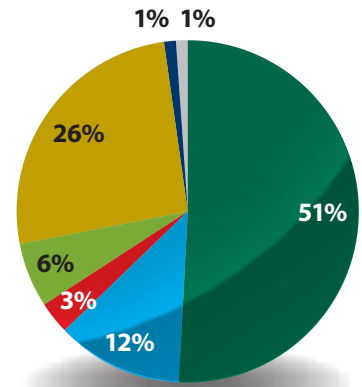
Terry Ashley, St Georges Pest Control

"PestEx is a great opportunity to catch up with friends and acquaintances. We used the day to meet with our Irish contacts and actually use the opportunity to reinforce relationships. The BPCA also deserve credit for organising the event. It was great to catch up."

Andrew Green, Vermatech

On the seminar front, PestEx provided a wide range of presentations on business, technical and practical topics. While space does not allow a true reflection of the full programme, some highlights were:

Bait Station Efficacy research by Professor Gai Murphy of the University of Salford, who told the standing-room-only audience that the risks of non-target poisoning are amplified where treatments to control house mice (*Mus domesticus*) are undertaken, it being important to strike a balance between safety and efficacy in these situations. To explore the efficacy of bait boxes in this setting, the research team from Salford University worked closely with the pest control services unit at Manchester City Council. Feeding trials were run in infested blocks, using the experimental design outlined by Buckle and Prescott (2010). The results found that the formulation and bait boxes used did impact on mouse feeding; the results being written up for publication in the trade press soon.



Who attended PestEx?

- Director / owner / partner
- Senior Manager
- Field Biologist
- Supervisor
- Technician
- Administrator
- Other

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health launched a consultation document on sewer baiting best practice. Since legislation and privatisation, the UK water industry's implementation of rodent control programmes has been patchy. CIEH's National Pest Advisory Panel has therefore further developed existing operational guidance on sewer baiting treatments to



include training and qualifications of pest control technicians; health & safety aspects; treatment methodology; all necessary for a safe and efficient treatment programme. The consultation process was completed at the end of April, and the new document will be launched soon.

Dr Richard Naylor from CimexStore and the Bed Bug Foundation gave a presentation answering the question “Why do bedbugs disperse?” Using custom-built arenas and artificial hosts, Dr Naylor was able to recreate bedbug infestations under laboratory conditions, making it possible to unravel the factors affecting their aggregation and dispersal behaviour. It seems illogical that a bedbug should abandon a reliable source of food and the security of its harbourage and head out into the unknown, with no guarantees of ever finding a new host. Yet active dispersal between rooms within an infested building is an important factor in their spread. Thus improved understanding why they abandon one host in search of another has important implications for their control.

The long-held belief that females disperse to avoid unwanted male attention seems not to be supported by the laboratory studies. However, competition for suitable crevices in

the vicinity of the host may be much more important than previously thought. Dr Naylor finished his presentation with an update on the work of The Bed Bug Foundation, including an overview of what’s new in the latest version of the *European Code of Practice for Bed Bug Management* as well as the Foundation’s direction for 2013 and beyond.

BPCA’s own Simon Forrester gave a talk on research carried out with the British Retail Consortium on why food premises fail audits. Specification non-compliance is an expensive and potentially damaging process. His talk outlined the key areas for failure against version 6 of the standard, and set out some potential ways forward for clients, auditors and pest management professionals to minimise future non-conformity. More on this topic in the next issue of PPC.

Other presentations included:

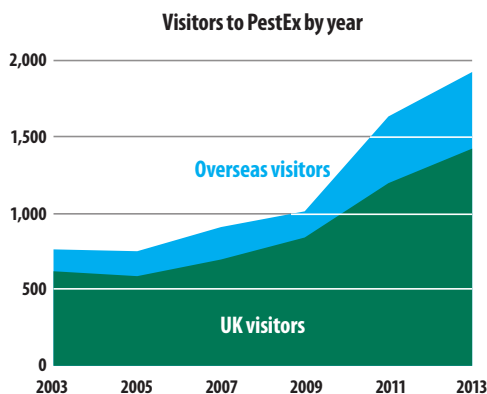
- Feral bees (see page 22)
- Waste management (see page 24)
- Gull roof net design (see page 25)
- Rodent control: BASF gave a talk on understanding behavioural aspects to improve results
- Ship cargo and container fumigation: how industry can prevent incidents like the recent one in Northern Ireland and ensure the safety of those opening containers at their destination. BPCA will be running a conference on this topic on 27 November.

BPCA President Henry Mott confirmed the success of the event. He commented “I didn’t hear a single moan from any visitors or exhibitors and indeed they all commented how well managed and attended PestEx was. My thanks to all those involved in the organisation of the event, and of course the



exhibitors and visitors without whom the show would not have been such a resounding success.”

So there you have it, the UK show of the year. The industry should give itself a pat on the back for coming together and strengthening PestEx’s place as the premier pest management event.



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LONDON - 25 & 26 MARCH 2015
www.pestex.org

PestEx is happening again in 2015, with provisional dates of 25-26 March again at ExCeL in London. Get the dates in your diary, and keep an eye on PPC and the BPCA website to see what other news we have on our training and exhibition presence around the world.

www.bpca.org.uk/pestex

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This article is now available as an online CPD via www.bpca.org.uk/affiliate and is worth at least two PROMPT CPD points.

Bats: nature's pest controllers



Brown long-eared bats in roof corner Picture: Hugh Clark / Bat Conservation Trust

Long-eared bat feeding remains

Picture: Kent Bat Group / Bat Conservation Trust



50 years ago bats were considered by many to be pests: unwanted in the home, feared and misunderstood.

Today bats are being recognised as a natural pest controller, playing a key role in our environment. Helen Miller from the Bat Conservation Trust explains their importance and what pest controllers should do if they meet their flying cousins!

As bat populations plummeted last century people began to realise the crucial role bats played in the environment. Bats make up a large portion of the UK's biodiversity: 17 resident species of bat account for nearly a third of our native mammal species. All bats in the UK eat insects (a single pipistrelle bat can eat up to 3,000 midges in a single night) and are an important part of the ecosystem, with their presence an indication of a healthy and biodiverse landscape.

Facts about bats

As well as realising the role bats played in controlling pests there was also a realisation that bats were in fact nothing to be scared of and were not responsible for damage to buildings. Bats are not 'mice with wings' and in fact are more closely related to humans than they are to rodents. Bats don't make nests or chew wires, and actually roost in existing nooks and crannies in buildings and trees.

Bats live for around 30-40 years, and tend to only have one young a year, making bats slow to recover from population losses. They are socially complex mammals: they look

after their offspring fastidiously, often forming crèches where other females will look after the pups while the mothers go out to forage for food. The one part of the stereotype that is true is that bats do like to roost in old buildings, but they can also be found in newer structures as well.



Bat droppings in loft space
Picture: Nick Tomlinson / Bat Conservation Trust

Why do bats roost in buildings?

About half of the bat species in the world use holes in trees for roosting. The other half use either caves or cavities. However, as 'natural'

roosting sites have become scarce due to land developments, bats have adapted to use buildings more often. Buildings offer a range of possible roosting opportunities that mimic those found in the natural environment and are often cleaner, safer and warmer spaces compared to natural roosting sites. Crevice-like or tree cavity type spaces include those found in both modern and traditional houses such as behind fascia and barge boarding, spaces beneath roof tiles, wall coatings, hollow mortice joints, rain gutters and chimneys. Cave-like spaces include attics and cellars that are dark, with

stable temperatures and humidity. These spaces may be found in a range of buildings including barns and other farm buildings, historic buildings, castles, churches and terraced houses.

UK bats are very small – the pipistrelle bat, which is most commonly associated with roosting in buildings, needs only a 15-20mm gap to access a space. Most bats will cluster together in tight groups to generate heat, and will often go unseen and unnoticed. It is said that 3,000 pipistrelle bats could squeeze into the space the size of a shoe box, which illustrates how difficult it can be to find bats which could be utilizing just a small space in the dark corners of a building.

Bat droppings on window ledge
Picture: Anne Youngman / Bat Conservation Trust



Brown long-eared bat droppings

Picture: Anne Youngman / Bat Conservation Trust

Signs of bats

The most obvious sign of their presence is droppings, sometimes seen in the loft space itself or on external walls and underneath access points. Bat droppings are frequently mistaken for mouse droppings, but a simple 'crumble test' can identify the owner. Bat droppings consist largely of insect remains and crumble easily between two fingers to a powder of semi-shiny fragments. Rodent droppings are smooth and quickly become hard. Droppings of UK bats do not present

any known health hazards, and they can be easily and safely swept up and used as an excellent fertilizer in the garden. Large accumulations may reflect use over a number of years rather than large numbers of bats at any one time. Other signs to look for are grease marks on the rafters, urine splashes, cobweb free corners, or insect remains from a feeding perch.

What to do if you find evidence of bats?

Unfortunately for bats, even man-made roosts are now under threat. Demolition of old buildings, renovations, changes in use, chemical treatments, artificial lighting and the move towards air-tight buildings, all have implications for bat populations using buildings. Combining this with the loss of foraging habitat has meant that bat populations have suffered drastic losses in the last century. Bats and their roosts are therefore afforded very strict legal protection and any work that may affect bats and their roosts requires advice.

In the UK a free advice service is provided to homeowners where bats are present. A

volunteer licensed bat worker on behalf of the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisations (SNCO) can visit to provide information and advice, for example if pest control work is planned in a loft space where signs of bats have been seen. In England this service is organised on behalf of the SNCO by the Bat Conservation Trust.

With bats often going unnoticed, pest controllers can be the first person to discover a bat roost. By identifying signs of bats and their roosts, making owners aware of bat presence and ensuring that advice is sought where works are planned that could disturb bats, pest controllers can play a crucial role in helping to conserve one of nature's natural pest controllers.

If you find any signs of bats and work is planned or advice is required, call the Bat Conservation Trust national helpline on 0845 1300 228.

Further information about bats can be found at www.bats.org.uk

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What's the future for SGARs?

BPCA Technical Manager Richard Moseley and Natural England's Paul Butt report on the latest news in the fight to keep SGARs.

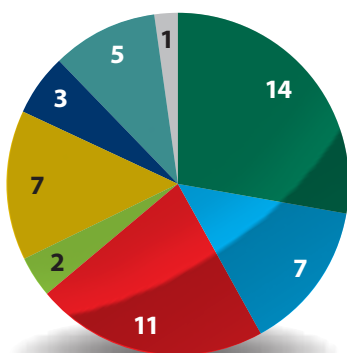
The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is part way through a consultation concerning environmental risk mitigation measures for the use of Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs). Phrases such as the "35 day rule", "in and around buildings" and "open areas" have been confusing and of concern to the pest industry since the consultation was made available for comment by the HSE in August 2012. BPCA responded to this consultation document on behalf of our membership, and 49 other groups also gave their views.

heads and wondering how we could ever provide effective control of the rat infestations that we deal with every day. The concern of BPCA and other responders was that draconian measures would be put in place without proper consultation with the groups who rely on SGARs to control rodent pests as an important part of the services that they provide. However, from the moment the consultation became available, representatives from the HSE made it clear that this was the start of this process, not the end.

The HSE accepts that SGARs are essential for the control of commensal rodent species, but these actives can be viewed as dangerous to health and the environment. As such, they must be subject to assessment, to ensure that where they need to be used, their application is made as safe as possible. The risk of using SGARs will never be zero, but there are circumstances where the requirement to protect public health, animals, foodstuffs and property will outweigh the environmental concerns. It should also be borne in mind that SGARs have been used a number of times to protect endangered wildlife species from predation by rodents. A restriction on the use of these products could ultimately lead to the extinction of some species.

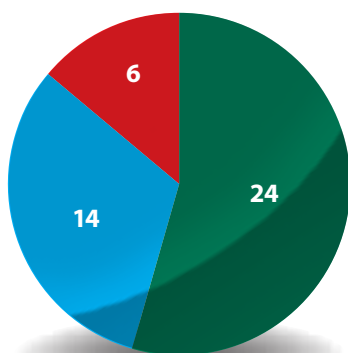
HSE representatives have made it clear that the initial consultation was a fact finding mission to allow them to gain information to help them make informed decisions about the use of SGARs. They were honest enough to admit that they are not specialists in the application of rodenticides, and they were aware that the consultation would raise potentially contentious questions that would prompt strong responses. As predicted, the responses from a number of organisations within the pest industry were loud and clear. If the HSE was not particularly well informed about the pest industry before the release of the Environmental Risk consultation in August 2012, they were certainly given food for thought after it.

The culmination of the 50 responses that the HSE received from organisations with an interest in the use of SGARs was a Stakeholder Workshop hosted by the HSE at Crosby, Liverpool on 23 April 2013. All groups that responded to the consultation were invited to attend this meeting, and approximately 30 stakeholders were represented. At this meeting several stakeholders were allowed to 'set out their stall' on behalf of their organisations by delivering a short 10 minute presentation to give attendees and the HSE representatives an understanding of the key issues that surround the



Stakeholder responses

- Pest control companies and users of pest control services
- Rodenticide manufacturers
- Trade associations and trade unions
- Wildlife organisations
- Local government bodies
- Non-department public bodies
- Non-governmental and academic organisations
- Members of the public



Should non-professionals have access to SGARs?

- Yes
- Yes, but only indoors
- No

The consultation itself has been reported on in great detail for a number of months, and the question on many pest controllers' lips is "what happens now?" Several of the recommendations in the original consultation would have had serious consequences for the way that we currently control rodent species. Instructions not to bait beyond 5m around buildings have, for example, left pest controllers scratching their

use of SGARs. BPCA, NPTA, CIEH and the National Gamekeepers Organisation all delivered presentations covering how important these products are to the groups they represent. Further presentations were delivered by The Barn Owl Trust and the Predatory Bird Monitoring Scheme to give the stakeholders an understanding of how SGARs can enter the food chains of birds of prey. The clear message was how to find a balance between protecting wildlife and the environment whilst still controlling rodents - particularly rats in outdoor locations.

The afternoon of the stakeholder meeting was dedicated to group discussions about how best to manage environmental issues regarding SGARs whilst still making them available to control rodents. One way that this can be done is through the implementation of new legislation. The fear with this for many pest controllers is that any legislation put in place for SGAR use could be so rigid and restrictive that it effectively means that we could no longer use anticoagulants to control rodent pest species. We have already had an acceptance from the HSE that it, unlike us, is not the specialist in pest control. Every rodent infestation is unique, and professional pest controllers must have the flexibility to deal with infestations in the most appropriate manner. Legislation stating 35 day treatments and 5m baiting restrictions would not be practical in many situations and could make SGAR use impractical. The HSE acknowledged that there is little scientific evidence to support any arbitrary restrictions of this type. Were these to be implemented, we would then have to consider other control measures such as trapping, gassing etc. All treatments have their place, but some are not suitable for particular situations and infestations. The enforcement of such legislation could also be potentially problematic and expensive.

If all-encompassing legislation is not a preferred option then what would be a suitable means of ensuring the responsible use of SGARs when controlling rodents? Interestingly, much of the afternoon discussions at the stakeholder meeting was dedicated to the possibility of stewardship being used to manage the use of SGARs both for applications "in and around buildings", but also in "open areas". A stewardship scheme would offer professional pest controllers the flexibility that is required when treating commensal rodents to make sure treatments are ultimately successful. For the majority in the professional pest industry, stewardship is second nature – manufacturers, distributors and trade associations have used stewardship for many years to maintain standards and to ensure that only suitable users have access to professional products. However, we need to remember that professional pest controllers only account for part of the SGAR market. Amateur users and groups such as farmers and gamekeepers are significant users of SGARs and any stewardship proposals must reach and involve these markets. Will this be done via the label, codes of conduct, leaflets compliance schemes, journals? As of yet we do not know. The HSE made it clear that training and demonstrations of competence will play an important part in any future strategy.

Moving to the other key markets, those of amateur users and 'professional' use by farmers, it would appear the HSE is relatively relaxed about secondary poisoning from these sources; and so further work needs to be done to emphasise that additional controls are needed.

In summary, the stakeholder session on April 23 was a very positive meeting at which the HSE emphasised its desire to work with the stakeholders to ensure that SGARs continue to be available for use by our industry. The suggestion about controlling applications with a

stewardship approach will probably hold no fears for the professional pest controller (particularly those on BASIS PROMPT), but we need to be aware that SGARs are used far beyond our own industry. It should also be borne in mind that discussions about stewardship are at a very early stage and we are yet to see how the HSE proposes to introduce stewardship across all the groups that use SGARs. We need to take heart from the fact that the regulators are listening to the industry and taking note of our views and concerns. BPCA will ensure we keep pace with developments and provide assistance and guidance to the HSE where possible.

It will be some time before this consultation is complete and all of the changes are implemented. In the meantime we all have a part to play in ensuring that this process runs as smoothly as possible and the outcomes meet the needs and demands of current and future rodent control requirements.

BPCA will continue to fight to keep SGARs in the toolkits of professional pest controllers for all its members and the industry as a whole. Our members are best placed to keep SGARs in their toolkits, as it appears CPD and recognised qualifications will be the key to demonstrating professionalism. BPCA's servicing members must of course meet this standard to remain in membership past the December 2014 deadline. Download a copy of the full summary of responses at goo.gl/scYxf

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Define your brand

The first step is to decide the personality of your business. It may sound strange but this is important. Think about some famous brands you use on a regular basis, and then think about what they stand for. If you are a small company much of this 'brand' will come from your own personality.

Things to consider are:

- The values your company stands for such as quality, customer service and technical or specialist expertise. Mention these in all communications.
- The look at all of your communications. Everything should use the same colours, look, even the font.

Online marketing

The internet both complicates communication and also makes it easier. It can be seen as a great leveller as, if handled correctly, a small business can have a higher profile than a large business with big budgets. But navigating the choices on offer is a minefield – you will have been called or emailed by 'experts' offering guaranteed benefits – take these with a pinch of salt and if in doubt, call BPCA for free and impartial advice.

Having a website is a must for every business. This online brochure tells people primarily about your business and how to contact you. The look and content of your website will often decide whether or not you get business, and a professional look can often help you charge more for your services. Other sources will then feed business to your website. These can be used to present your expertise and encourage enquiries. It may be as simple as the BPCA 'find a pest controller' service or a



BPCA marketing officer
Laurence Barnard talks about
promoting your business and
standing out from the crowd.

pay-per-click service like Google Ads, both of which allow people enquiring about your services to link through to your website. At a higher level are blogs where you can post articles which demonstrate technical expertise or details of successfully completed projects – these can drive lots of people to your site, and are definitely worth considering if you have a good message and are willing to update the blog every week or two.

“Companies with a smart appearance and strong brand can charge more for the same service.”

Up another level again are social networks, and each delivers something slightly different. The key is that they all provide a form of referral. People have always selected services based on referral, but today the process of referral extends beyond work colleagues, friends and neighbours to what are often very large networks of online contacts.

One of the features of the internet is to link all of this together. An item on LinkedIn or Twitter might refer to a blog article which in turn links to your website. These methods are used both in domestic and business environments – after all, you don't stop using Google when you get to work, do you?

Traditional marketing

Despite the growth of online marketing there is still a role for traditional communications channels – PR articles and paid-for advertising in hardcopy magazines, newspaper and directories. You can also use **alexo** to promote your business to a range of target audiences. For more information visit www.bpca.org.uk/alexo

Direct mail

Direct mail might be a letter or email, and the success rate is never high – it's very much a 'shotgun' approach to marketing. Costs are low, but as you will know yourself, junk mail and 'spam' can actually put you off using a business, so think carefully before choosing this method.

What to say

People do not want to be sold to, so your messages need to focus on helping and informing them. This might take the form of specialist advice, explaining the impact of legislation on their business, or suggesting the best way of solving a problem, perhaps drawing on some of the work done by BPCA. Case studies are another popular feature, showing people what can be done and giving ideas. These can include testimonials from satisfied customers.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Before you start to build your brand, understand what your customers, potential customers and suppliers think of your company – even a ring-round or quick survey can help. You might find some factors that you did not realise or took for granted. Also be prepared for some shocks and act to put anything right which people criticise.

Website

- A must have. Build-it-yourself websites are available from many sources and cost very little to operate. BPCA offers all members a mini-site for free – which will be launched in the coming weeks. Keep an eye on your email for more information.
- Use your website to explain your services, also include examples of successful projects with customer quotes. People want to know your capabilities, and why you and not your competitor.
- Ensure you include contact details on every page.
- Consider using something like Google Ads to direct enquiries to your website, these can be tuned to your local area.
- See our article in PPC68 on making your website more visible on search engines, and the pitfalls that can trap the unwary.
- To ensure a professional look to the website you can employ a designer, but select a company which has produced websites you like (including those of your competitors!) You want to employ someone creative, not a techie. Try to ensure your website has a content management system which allows staff change text themselves, keeping costs down.

Blogs

A useful method of demonstrating your technical expertise. Consider writing articles about how you solved customer problems, or specific pest problems and how they are addressed. Project stories are a 'must' – publish stories about successful jobs with third party quotes from customers. These can be used on the blog, website, in press releases, newsletters, even proposals. Often people will request anonymity, but this is not a deal-breaker, and these are worth their weight in gold.

KEY MARKETING INITIATIVES**YouTube / Flickr**

Another opportunity to provide testimonials. Perhaps a video or pictures of your work – can be kept private if you wish.

Facebook

This can be used to inform people in your area about your services and link to blogs, YouTube or your website.

“... make sure everyone in your business knows what is expected of them in terms of appearance, behaviour etc.”

Letterbox drops

A means of creating awareness if you need to build your business, although people get fed up with getting junk mail so don't expect much response. A postcard or fridge magnet is easy to keep, with your contact details and details of your services. BPCA again supplies a 'why you need pest control' leaflet with your logo and contact details on for free.

Van

Your van will be parked outside buildings, and seen by those in the neighbourhood, so keep it clean and ensure there are clear details of what you do and how to contact you on display.

Appearance

A smart appearance always impresses, so have a uniform e.g. a polo shirt in your corporate colour with your company name embroidered on it. Easy to get and relatively low cost thanks to the internet. You may be surprised that studies show companies with a smart appearance and strong brand can charge more for the same service.

**Local networking**

Look at local business networks you can join or other voluntary organisations for a subject you are interested in. But don't approach these with the aim to get business, no one wants to be pestered. Approach it with the attitude 'how can I help you' and business will come your way.

Business cards

Always have business cards in case people are interested in your service. As well as your contact details make it clear what service you offer, with a list of your principal services on the back. Try to leave a few cards with anyone you do work for in case they want to pass on your details. Try to set up agreements with other local businesses (window cleaners, plumbers, electricians, drainage contractors) to swap cards and make sure you recommend each other – this is great marketing, often at the price of a pint!

Brand

Finally, make sure everyone in your business knows what is expected of them in terms of appearance, behaviour etc. One bad experience for a customer can have huge negative perception on your whole business, especially if they then turn to Twitter or Facebook to complain.

SUMMARY

There is probably more you can do to improve your standing in the minds of your customers and potential customers. Think about your business needs, and how the way you market yourself can change customer perception and deliver more business and more profits.

REWRITING THE RULES

The Association periodically reviews the documents that govern how we operate. Recent changes to company law means that BPCA can, by adopting entirely new Articles, have the equivalent provisions of its Memorandum in the new Articles. The original documents will remain on file at Companies House but will no longer be relevant once the new Articles of Association have been adopted.

While we undertake this review, we are also taking the opportunity to look at BPCA's Rules and Regulations – the document that sets out how the Association's processes must work. Both these documents may be very dry, but they are vital to the successful running of your Association. The BPCA Board has reviewed the documents and sought legal advice to ensure they are fit for purpose. We have also invited interested BPCA members to make comments, and these have been incorporated where appropriate.

The documents are available from the BPCA website members area. In summary, the proposed main changes are:

- Merge the Memorandum and Articles of Association and start afresh using a new style which reflects current legislation and our particular requirements.
- Change the process of voting for the President to one that mirrors our parliament, i.e. Members elect the Board of up to 15 people, and the Board selects a President from among their number. This will help ensure that the President has spent some time on the Board, and understands how the Association works. Members can still elect their preferred individuals to the Board, and any full Member in good standing can fill these roles. Similarly, under the proposed document the Treasurer would be selected by Board members, and Board members could put themselves forward to be Vice-President, but would have to convince their peers on the Board of their suitability.
- The Chairmen of the three Standing Committees (Servicing, Manufacturers and Distributors, Fumigation and Controlled Environments) would be elected by their own committee members. This is proposed to ensure the members who know the work of the individuals best can assess each candidate, and then vote for their preferred person rather than having this ratified at an AGM.
- Allow the President the right to stand for up to three years, and to be re-appointed each year. This is to allow Presidents the option of a third year in office, but also the flexibility to stand down after one

or two years. Presidents would be allowed to stand for two consecutive terms, but then must stand down. Should the President not be able to fulfil their duties, the re-appointment process will ensure the Board can swiftly select a replacement.

- Allow the Board to select more than one Vice-President (currently called Deputy President) each year, so that duties can be shared, and there can be more than one candidate for President. It is hoped that this will promote healthy competition between Board members for the Presidential role, and avoid 'Buggins's turn' i.e. the longest-serving member taking up the role by default.
- No more than two (currently three) people from the same member company may serve on the Board. This is to prevent bias and ensure as wide a representation of the membership as possible.
- Remove the requirement for companies applying for membership to be nominated by their peers. This is to assist new companies wishing to join the Association who may not know any BPCA members – we are not a 'closed shop', and we want our processes to be clear and above board.
- Remove the requirement for the Board to consider applications at the Board meeting, in order to speed up the admission process. The Board will still oversee and sign off each application, but this will be done using modern technology.
- In the event of the Immediate Past President being unable to take up their role, the Board may co-opt someone to fill this vacancy who has previously served as a President. This is to allow us to bring in expertise to assist the President if needed.
- The Regulations now include a section on failure to meet standards of conduct/ethical behaviour, and the consequences.

The Board believes these changes are beneficial and will improve the Association. These documents are the ones by which we both run and police the Association – you are bound by them and so you should ensure you are happy with them.

Every full member will be given the opportunity to vote on the adoption of these documents at the forthcoming AGM on Wednesday 12 June (or by post beforehand). The Board recommend you as members accept the documents by voting in favour. In the meantime, if you have questions about the content or process please contact BPCA Chief Executive Simon Forrester simon@bpca.org.uk or Henry Mott, BPCA President president@bpca.org.uk

WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN THE BPCA SERVICING COMMITTEE?

Under new Chairman James Ostler, and with new terms of reference, the BPCA's Servicing Committee is looking for new dynamic members who want to develop the Association, and can commit to quarterly meetings, occasional teleconferences and round-robin emails to process the work of the Committee. This includes:

- Ownership of servicing standards including codes of practice
- Servicing membership benefits
- Assessing standards and processes
- Overseeing membership criteria and application processes including appeals and disciplinary action
- Contributing to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for servicing members
- Keeping abreast of implications of legislation, best practice, industry developments, new products and processes.

Committee membership is open to employees of member servicing companies (including franchises), consultants and individuals (sole traders) that are proprietors of member servicing companies in good standing. Committee size is limited to 20 members, so only one committee member is allowed per member company. Members must be on a recognised CPD scheme (e.g. BASIS PROMPT).

The Servicing Committee is looking at a more structured ethics/complaints procedure to deal with cases where members have not met the standards of BPCA membership. If you would like to be a part of this process, please apply to join the Servicing Committee.

If you would like to join the Servicing Committee, simply download the application form via the BPCA website members area. Spaces on the Committee are offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

Find out more by contacting BPCA on 01332 225 112.

Refuel at up to 5p per litre below pump prices!

It feels like the price of petrol and diesel is fluctuating on a daily basis, and with the lack of certainty surrounding the future of oil prices, now could be the best time to implement some cost saving measures to safeguard your company.



BPCA has teamed up with The Fuelcard People to give all members a discount at the pump. Research carried out by BPCA shows the average pest controller spends around £3,650 filling up their van each year, so there are some major savings to be had.

When you fill up with diesel or petrol, you can ignore the price shown on the pump. Even better, you do not have to pay for the fuel there and then. With a fuel card you'll enjoy terrific benefits, including:

- Reduced annual charges for all members, and free of charge for the first 12 months
- Discount diesel and petrol – up to 5p per litre off pump prices
- Up to 10p per litre off motorway pumps
- eServices, an online fuel management system to control your account 24/7
- Interest-free credit
- Reduced administration costs
- Single invoice for easy VAT reclaim
- No cash involved – just card purchases
- Chip and Pin facility on most cards.

Unlike most fuel card companies, this offer gives you a choice of fuel cards accepted at major retailers including Shell, BP, Esso, Tesco, Morrisons, Texaco, The Co-operative and many more.



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How do I access this great new member benefit?

This is open to all! Simply call our BPCA Fuel Card experts on 0844 870 8537, or visit www.discountfuelcards.co.uk/bpca for more information.

Not a member yet?

Join now - we can save your business much more than the cost of membership. To find out more about how to access these benefits or to join BPCA contact Rachel Eyre on 01332 225 112
rachel@bpca.org.uk



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If you mention problems with bees to most pest controllers, their first thought would probably be of honey bees. Yet bee control can also include masonry bees and occasionally bumble bees. Each species requires specific attention.

In some ways honey bees are strange pests for pesties to be involved with at all. Jane Moseley, Operations Director of the British Bee Keepers Association (BBKA) points out beekeeping is a significant industry in itself. "There are over 24,000 amateur beekeepers in the UK", which if you think about it, is a far larger number than there are pest controllers. The BBKA estimates that one in three mouthfuls of food we eat is dependent on pollination from bees. So with bees being such an important species, what are the potential problems we may face?



HONEY BEES (*APIS MELLIFERA*): WHY DO THEY SWARM?

- Overcrowding
- Peak population for available food
- Disease – foul brood disease; AFB; EFB; nosema; varroasis; dysentery
- Old and dirty comb

Bee swarms

This most common scenario occurs when a large bee swarm leaves a hive, often on a hot day in early summer (usually in May or early June). Typically these intimidating swarms will first set up a temporary camp somewhere nearby, such as a tree branch or fence post. However, in almost all cases, the swarm will take off again within a day or two to occupy a more suitable permanent home elsewhere. "Most bee calls received are about temporary swarms" says Tony Baker of

Alphakill, author of the *Pest Management Alliance Code of Practice on Feral Bees* and a beekeeper in his own right. Tony adds "Normally it is best to contact a local beekeeper to collect the swarm, and in the majority of cases this works well. The BBKA will be able to put you in contact with a nearby expert, and if the beekeeper cannot reach the swarm, then we normally try to convince the customer to wait a day or two, by which time it will have gone away."

Bees in situ

The other scenario is where a honey bee colony is permanently established within a building void, such as in a disused chimney. Such colonies are not always a concern and some people have shared their property with bees for decades without any problems.

Honey bees, both feral and colonised, are important beneficial insects, and are not normally considered as pests because of their beneficial role. Every effort should be made to avoid carrying out control treatments against honey bees. However sometimes it does prove necessary to apply a treatment, and a dust is often the most effective approach. Before you treat the colony, make sure you can either block all the entrance points, or remove all the honeycomb, but preferably both. If you fail to do that, you may face some problems with

oozing honey, but more seriously bees from hives in the area will soon realise that several kilos of honey are sitting there, accessible and unguarded, and will start to rob it. Unfortunately for them (and for you), if foraging non-target honey bees find a nest which has been treated, they may come into contact with the treatment and may carry away contaminated honey back to their hive. As a result, a nearby beekeeper is likely to find several thousand dead bees lying around their hives, and such incidents are regularly investigated by Defra, who will likely prosecute if an offence has occurred. Coupled with the recent media interest in bee colony deaths and the possible link to neonicotinoids, the press would have a field day with any pest controller who caused a colony to collapse.



Dispelling the myth

It is not illegal to destroy feral bee colonies! However this should only be treated when all other options are exhausted. If you are asked to treat for bees you should consider the following carefully:

- Are they causing a risk? Consider the location and danger to the public.
- Are there any other alternatives before treating? If the swarm is in a sensitive area and is easily accessible, it can probably be collected and re-housed in a suitable hive. If you do not have the expertise to do this, contact the British Beekeeper's Association for assistance.
- If the swarm has only recently formed it is best to leave it undisturbed for 48 hours and allow it to move on.
- Has the swarm recently invaded a property? If it was less than 48 hours it may be possible to persuade it to move on using non-pesticidal smoke.
- Post treatment, it is inevitable that

there will be some residual smells from the honey and comb following removal, also the queen pheromone will be lingering. This will make it more likely that another swarm may take up residence the following year as the smell of an old colony can be irresistible to scouts looking for a new nest site. It is therefore recommended that the smell be masked or destroyed. There are several deodorising compounds on the market but if unobtainable, creosote oil or Jeyes fluid are excellent substitutes.

- Finally, the decision to treat will depend on if it is possible to close the entrance(s) to the nest after treatment. It may be possible to use extension lances to get the insecticide to the nest, but access equipment may be needed to close entrances safely. If the client is not prepared to pay for this, then it will not be possible to carry out a treatment legally.

Waste disposal

If the client will not pay for removal of the comb, ensure you have a signed document stating they have accepted liability for leaving the comb in place. If the client will not agree to fund the correct removal of the bees or fail to sign a disclaimer on your behalf, then walk away! However if you become involved with the removal of the treated honey combs, you must treat these as 'controlled waste' and dispose of them via a licensed waste carrier to a licensed waste contractor as 'non-hazardous waste'.

If stung

Finally, and most importantly, bee stings are at best unpleasant and at worst can trigger potentially fatal anaphylactic shock. Always use a bee veil and gloves. If you have reacted badly to a sting in the past, then discuss this with your GP. In the event that you or a colleague develop a sudden and severe reaction within minutes of being stung, then seek medical advice immediately.

Remember!

Only use those preparations cleared for use for the target species, and make sure you have costed the job fully, covering all bases. Properly executed bee treatments or collection of bee swarms can be an excellent additional revenue stream to your business.

For more information on dealing with feral honey bees, download the latest Pest Management Alliance Code of Practice at www.pmalliance.org.uk

SPENT RODENTICIDE WASTE CLASSIFICATION WHERE DOES THE PEST CONTROLLER STAND?

Waste has always been a complicated matter to deal with. As pest controllers, we know we will create it, and we know that we will need to dispose of it. But how do we do this legally without risking potential prosecution by groups such as the Environment Agency? BPCA Technical Manager Richard Moseley investigates.

If you create waste, you have a legal 'duty of care' to ensure it is correctly dealt with. This duty of care applies to everyone involved in the handling of waste from the person who creates it to the person who finally recovers or disposes of it. If you are responsible for controlling the waste created by your organisation, it is essential that you perform due diligence on your waste management company to ensure they are actually allowed to deal with your waste, or you may be liable for prosecution.

Before you get to the point of disposal, you need to categorise your waste to ensure it is placed in the correct waste chain. This process is achieved by using a series of codes that are found in the *European waste catalogue list of wastes* (EWC 2002). The EWC 2002 is a harmonised, non-exhaustive list of waste types established by the European Commission. The Environment Agency (EA) is clear that if you create the waste, it is your responsibility to allocate it the correct code to ensure its correct disposal.

This can cause confusion for many pest controllers who struggle to understand which is the correct code for each type of waste. Unfortunately, this article cannot answer that question, as this is currently a topic we are in discussions with EA over. One of the key issues with waste codes is that there are a number of different codes available for pesticides and spent rodenticides. A series of codes found in chapter 16 of the catalogue have been used by many organisations to dispose of spent rodenticides. These codes allowed pest controllers the flexibility to assess their waste and classify it as hazardous or non-hazardous, depending on the levels of active ingredient present in the waste. As the active in anticoagulant rodenticides was less than 0.1% active, it was always thought possible to classify the waste as non-hazardous. However, in January this year, the EA indicated to a BPCA member that they did not necessarily feel that the chapter 16 codes were appropriate for the disposal of spent rodenticide, although they did make it clear that, ultimately, it was still the responsibility of the creators of waste to code their waste as they thought appropriate. In the EA's opinion, the use of code 20-01-19 was a more suitable code to use when disposing of spent rodenticides, and they indicated that they would be amending their guidance to reflect this.

The use of the chapter 20 code to dispose of spent rodenticides brings with it some issues that pest controllers may not have encountered previously. The chapter 20 code is what is termed an 'absolute' entry – the waste must always be classified as hazardous – there is no possibility of assessment by the creator. All spent rodenticide disposed of using 20-01-19 will require a consignment note when it is transferred to your waste contractor. However, hazardous waste requires consigning from its point of creation to ensure traceability, and we will now need to very carefully consider at what point we create our hazardous waste.

Historically pest controllers have argued that rodenticides on customer's sites remain our property as they are professional use products. We have never issued the customer with any form of documentation other than a treatment report as there has been no

transfer in ownership of the waste. However, if spent rodenticide waste is classed as hazardous waste, it must be consigned from where it is created. If this is the customer's site, you will have to issue your customer with a consignment note. The cost of the consignment notes and the administration of the documentation could increase the price of pest services from professional pest companies and ultimately result in reductions in pest services, leading to increases in pest activity.

BPCA Chief Executive Simon Forrester recently wrote to the Environment Agency in an attempt to open a dialogue to help find a resolution to the issue of how best to classify our spent rodenticides. A number of potential options exist, such as derogations that can be granted by the EA to reduce the financial burden of consigning hazardous waste. However, this will require the pest industry to accept that spent rodenticide is hazardous, and if a derogation is not achieved we will all face an increase in cost (one estimate put this as high as 10%) for pest services. We will also be investigating at what point we classify rodenticides as waste – is it on the customer's site or back at our stores where we can assess returned rodenticide for recycling or reuse. As always, we will endeavour to keep members informed of our progress and hope to issue a guidance document in the future with the support of the Environment Agency. In the meantime, BPCA advice is to continue working as before, safe in the knowledge that your Association is attempting to resolve this issue on your behalf.

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Due to reduced availability of food at sea, coastal gull populations have declined. Meanwhile, the gulls have found inland conditions to their liking: they have developed a taste for foraging for food from human waste, and have found buildings to be comfortable and protected places for nesting.

Gull roof nets

Gulls are long-lived birds (herring gulls and lesser black backed gulls typically live for 25 years), and with each pair of adults generally producing three offspring per year, urban populations are escalating. But living in close proximity to man has brought trouble. The problems associated with these urban gulls are numerous including: disease spread, threat to public safety, property damage etc. So people are increasingly looking to protect themselves, their property and their livelihoods from gulls. Roof nets are now a well established and popular technique to deter these pest birds from an area.

The problems associated with gulls are numerous, and are a danger to public health and public safety. Accumulations of bird droppings pose a risk by making walkways and stairways slippery and unsafe; property can be damaged; nests and dead birds can block drains; and if they are roosting near food premises, hygiene standards may be compromised. Gulls get more aggressive as they build their nests, lay their eggs and protect their young, and with gull breeding on the rise (two or three chicks per pair per year), they can become an increasing danger to workers who may be attacked when they need to access roof areas for maintenance.



Why would a building owner want their roof proofed against gulls?

SAFETY

Gulls rearing young birds can become very aggressive to people in the vicinity, even at ground level.

DAMAGE TO ROOF EQUIPMENT

Gulls will peck at insulation materials and window seals, and they will pick up and drop stones onto roof windows.

FLOODING

Feathers, droppings, carcasses and discarded food debris from gull infestations can block gutters and lead to buildings flooding.

NOISE

Gulls are active very early in the mornings, which can be very disturbing on domestic roofs.

MESS FROM FOULING

Gulls droppings splattered over roofs and walls can be very unsightly and deter people from using the buildings.

DAMAGE FROM FOULING

Droppings can damage stone and paintwork.

EFFECT ON SOLAR PANELS

A small number of droppings on solar panels can lead to big reductions in the efficiency of panels.

/continued over...

Why should pest controllers install roof nets?

There are several advantages to pest controllers installing roof nets, the main one being the high profit margin – installing roof netting is lucrative work (some large roof net installations can sell for tens of thousands of pounds). Roof nets should also be checked and maintained on a regular basis, so the income can be ongoing. Job satisfaction – roof net design and installation is challenging work and you'll get a great sense of satisfaction when completed and working well. Moving the problem next door – any form of proofing such as netting or spiking will only displace the gulls onto another building. So once you've finished netting one roof, you may find the neighbouring building could do with the same.

How roof nets work

Gulls like the protection from wind of being close to the roof surface. Installing a net above a roof prevents the gulls from reaching the roof surface; if they settle on the net itself they will still be exposed to the elements.

“... installing roof nets is lucrative work (some large roof net installations can sell for tens of thousands of pounds).”



Figure 1: network roof mounts with 2m net support pole.

Roof netting – design principles

HEIGHT

The net needs to sit at least 400mm above roof height in order to ensure it does not sag to the roof surface when gulls land on it prior to displacement.

TENSION

Nets need to be taut, primarily to help prevent birds getting entangled if they land on it (as they often will, especially when the net is first installed), but also to help prevent chafing and snagging of the net on roof equipment or the net support framework.

SPACING OF SUPPORTS

To ensure the net is adequately supported it is recommended that perimeter support brackets are spaced at intervals no greater than 5m. On installations where the support brackets are at least 1m high, then internal support brackets can be up to 10m apart.

COMPONENT SPECIFICATION

The wire rope needs to withstand the weight of any snow that may settle on the net and the force of any wind stresses. 3mm wire rope is the minimum thickness recommended both for horizontal net support and for counter tensions around the perimeter: 2mm wire rope can just snap under the strain. Use M8 barrel strainers to give tension. Stainless steel components are generally stronger and more durable than galvanized.

NET ANGLE AT PERIMETER

The outer edge of the net will ideally be vertical, and this can be achieved if secure brackets are fitted to the top of the wall. When non-piercing roof mounts are used then the angle needs to be 45° in order to equalise as far as possible the tension on the mount tops whilst maintaining appropriate deterrence to gulls landing.

PROTECTION OF PARAPETS

Where there is a parapet around the perimeter of the roof, the net can either be brought down to the outer edge of the parapet, or brought down to the inner edge with the parapet itself being protected with electric deterrent, spikes or bird wire.

NET MESH SIZE

75mm mesh net, which is difficult for gulls to walk on, should be used for horizontal and angled nets. 50mm mesh net is better for vertical sides.

Net supports

There are a variety of 400mm high net support brackets that are available off-the-shelf such as dormer or roof ridge brackets. They are suitable for smaller buildings such as domestic properties. Non-piercing roof mounts are usually supplied in kit form for easy transportation up onto the roof, and assembled in situ. They are generally weighted in place with paving slabs, though they can also be screwed in place through the ridges in corrugated roofs, or fixed onto standing seam roofs using standing seam slumps. Network roof mounts (see figure 1) are adjustable to fit flat roofs, sloping roofs, roof ridges and roof gulleys. The kits utilise spun galvanized steel components together with pultruded fibreglass poles.

If suitable off-the-shelf brackets are not available, then brackets can be fabricated specially for an individual installation. Note that strong brackets are of paramount importance – many roof nets collapse due to weak DIY brackets. Also ensure the brackets are strong and durable by using box section steel with braces across corners, fabricated with quality welds. A custom bracket manufacture solution is available from Network and all quality suppliers.

Whichever mounts are used, ensure they are secure. On thin metal clad buildings, if it is not possible to fix right through to solid substrate behind; a group of fixings can be used to spread the strain. If the substrate is weak consider securing in place using fixings perpendicular to the line of pull (see figure 2).

Common pitfalls – reasons for net collapses

- Insufficient number of support brackets
- Bracket design was too weak
- Brackets were not adequately secured
- Counter tensions were omitted
- Wire ropes used were too thin



Figure 2: perimeter wire ropes each anchored using a pair of angle brackets and a central cross wire where the tension pulls the screws sideways rather than directly out of the cladding.

Installation techniques

Install the complete bracket/roof mount and wire framework before starting to install the nets. That way it is possible to ensure a good tight support structure with the tension balanced across the roof. Orientate wire rope grips and barrel strainers to get free ends facing down, so that when you come to pull the nets over they are less likely to get snagged. It is generally easier to use smaller sections of net rather than struggling to manhandle very large nets into place. Join the nets at a support wire, where you can hogring every mesh of each net onto the wire.

Safety

Working on roofs is potentially very dangerous work and safe working procedures are paramount. Installers should be trained in safe working at height along with specific training in the access equipment being used. PPE will be required, generally including harness and restraint lanyard. If using heavy materials such as paving slabs, special lifting equipment such as cranes might be required for lifting the slabs up to roof level and two-man lifting devices for carrying them across the roof.

Summary

Installing roof nets can be challenging yet lucrative and enjoyable work, but there are many important design criteria that need to be considered, and pitfalls that need to be avoided. Don't forget, solutions to gull problems are determined by the pressure at the site and of course the client's budget. There is a whole range of other measures available. Netting systems will provide a complete deterrent and prevent bird access but may not always be appropriate for the client from an aesthetic point of view, so it is recommended that you take into account experience from past installations and proofing to help ensure you deliver exactly what your client wants to ensure the success of your installations. If in doubt seek expert advice from BPCA or your supplier.



Would you like to know more?

Interested in making bird work a lucrative addition to your portfolio? BPCA's Urban Bird Control course takes place on 8-9 October, and includes Grahame Turner as one of the lecturers. See www.bpca.org.uk/training for details and to reserve your place.

COMING SOON!

BPCA is producing a 'why you need bird management' flyer for members to use with potential customers. Keep an eye on the BPCA website members area for more information.

P+L Systems offer a wide variety of training and technical support on all aspects of urban bird pest management. For more information call 0800 988 5359, send an email to info@pandlsystems.com or visit www.networkbird.net



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The buzz about wasps

The depressing and dreary British summer of 2012 left us all hoping this year wouldn't give us that 'groundhog day' feeling. Finally, now the long cold winter is over and the new wasp season has begun, Phil Bowman of Lance Lab Ltd and PPC Environmental examines the potential for the summer, the latest equipment and products, and the changes in legislation to prepare you for the season ahead.

Traditionally now is the time to dust off the wasp gear (excuse the pun), inspect kit, replace seals, and prepare for a busy summer. The unprecedented collapse of the wasp population last year was a result of the mild spell in late February when temperatures reached record highs of 20°C in some parts of the UK. This brought the queens out of hibernation too early, and the plunging temperatures that followed caused many to die due to lack of food. This sequence of events resulted in the lowest wasp numbers for over 25 years, making us all want to forget this awful year for wasp control.

The 2012/13 winter has been another long and cold one. However, we haven't suffered another premature warm spell followed by a cold snap, and as a consequence it is expected that wasp numbers will begin to recover this season. The early signs look promising with many pest controllers reporting an early increase in ant callouts – one possible indicator of increased wasp populations.

Products

So, assuming this year won't be a write-off, let's look at some of the new and existing products available to us...

Dusting and pressure dusters

The vast majority of UK wasp nest treatments are carried out using insecticidal dust, usually applied through one of a number of dusters. If using a compressed air pressure duster it is beneficial to choose one that holds a high volume of dust. The Birchmeier DR5 holds up to 5kg of Ficam D, and Dust Master from SX Environmental also has a decent capacity.

These high capacity dusters enable prefilling within the safety of your own premises where a windless environment is best. Often enough dust can be loaded to complete over 50+ nests, thus eliminating the need to refill onsite. This has multiple benefits by

saving time onsite, and also reducing contamination that might occur when loading powder even in the lightest of winds. Unfortunately this is not possible with some duster equipment that requires dust chambers to be filled onsite each time for treating one or a small number of nests. This is something that should be taken into account when choosing which duster kit to use.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

It is important to ensure that the correct protective clothing and gloves are worn when treating, to protect yourself and avoid possible inhalation of biocides. When filling dusters or dust chambers, nitrile gloves should be worn (gauntlet length recommended). Also, as a minimum, a dust mask should be worn when refilling is carried out (and when dusting at close range). Full instructions should be contained in your product COSHH sheets kept in your vehicle together with the product safety data sheets.

Extension lances

A large proportion of wasp nests are located in roof voids and eaves. For health and safety reasons, it is always best to treat from the ground rather than an elevated position (e.g. on a ladder or platform) so it is inevitable that extension lances are likely to form part of the job when carrying out a treatment.

There are a number of lances on the market such as the new XL 8 D, The Dustick, Wasp Wand, or the Gas Pot PA2 system, with the 1.5m metal lances that can be joined together and attached to various pressure dusters. Anyone who has had the experience of connecting three or more of the 1.5m metal lances will know that it is a real challenge to lift and control them. This has always been an issue and as a consequence means that this kit is best suited for closer work and heights below 4m. There are likely to be risk assessment issues for use of this type of kit at longer lengths.

The Birchmeier XL 8 D telescopic 8m adjustable duster lance was



one of the products recently launched at PestEx. Its fully adjustable 8m telescopic lance is light and easy to handle. It can be used at various lengths from 1.5m to 8m, and easily locks at each section joint. It comes with an innovative FlexiTip that is simple to bend to the required shape and can be quickly assembled saving time onsite. The XL 8 D is currently the longest duster lance on the market and can also be custom ordered in 10m and 12m versions via Lance Lab Limited www.lancelab.com. It attaches to the DR5 duster and the DustMaster, enabling bulk prefilling to help reduce spillage and contamination. The new FlexiTip makes nozzle kits redundant. The long reach lance enables treatment of high and difficult to reach nests to be treated from ground level reducing the need for ladders and ensuring you comply with *The Work at Heights Regulations (2005)*.

Dustick uses a connectable metal pole system which can be used at a number of lengths with a range up to 5.5m. There is also a new multi nozzle pack on sale which fits the Dustick, improving dusting at difficult angles.

The Wasp Wand is a light weight telescopic extendable duster that extends to 4.6m (but is recommended for use only at the fully extended length). It attaches to the DR5 duster and the Dust Master, enabling bulk pre-filling to help reduce spillage and contamination.

With all extension lances it is important to take into account the maximum reach, the ease of assembly, the time that can be saved during difficult treatments, and of course the health and safety implications.

Traps

The use of traps is not really considered an essential tool for wasp control. However many pest controllers with commercial clients are finding their clients are demanding a 'wasp free' environment to operate a profitable business. It is now more common for professional pest controllers to use some aspect of trapping (as well as dusting) to show the client a duty of care to their customers and thus reducing the risk of wasps to as low as reasonably practicable.

WaspBane wasp traps are considered the most efficient and effective wasp traps in the market. These catch and kill 100% of the wasps, with a self-sealing and self-contained disposable refill system which protects the user from any wasps that have been caught. Karol Pazik of WaspBane puts their success down to their unique Integrated Wasp Management (IWM) approach to wasp control. Karol explains "The absolute vast majority of people stung by wasps are stung outdoors around food areas, yet orthodox wasp control focuses on nest eradication. Interestingly, comparatively few people are actually stung around wasp nests. Of course, wasp nests found in premises are a hazard and need to be treated, but this does little to reduce the total number of people actually stung." Karol adds "IWM looks at addressing this issue and in so doing has opened another revenue stream for pest controllers which sits alongside nest eradication but which is far more commercially robust."



/continued over...

NEW

XL 8 D

for Birchmeier DR5 duster

**Long reach 8m telescopic extension lance:
The ultimate kit for treating wasp nests!**

FEATURES:

- Long and light allowing precision dusting at height
- Easily adjustable telescopic lengths from 1.5m to 8m
- Reduces time taken to treat difficult to reach nests
- Reduces risk of stings when treating large or disturbed nests
- Reduces need for ladder and access equipment, saving time and cost
- Unique FlexiTip - making nozzle changes a thing of the past!
- Ensures compliance with work at height regulations

SPECIFICATION:

- Telescopic fibreglass lance in 7 sections
- Stores into compact 1.3m tough carry case
- Overall weight (kit and carry case) 1.5kg
- Unique FlexiTip easily bent to shape required
- 10cm high viz sight tip
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“...you need to ensure you are kept up to date with the latest legislative changes and guidance notes, allowing you to carry out your work effectively and within the limits of the law.”



Other traps on the market such as Pest-Stop's Wasp Trap Bag or the new SX Wasp and Fly Pot are simple to use and ideal for outdoor eating areas. Although highly effective against wasps, the bag doesn't attract or harm bees, an essential component to modern day wasp control products.

Last year saw orthodox wasp control suffer its lowest revenues for a generation, falling by some 90% on previous years, yet WaspBane's IWM business, and that of other wasp trap manufacturers, grew by more than 10%, showing traps are becoming a regular tool of wasp control.

Product innovations developments

Some of the products discussed such as the Dustick, Wasp Wand and the XL 8 D lances have been developed by servicing pest control operatives with hands-on experience of the job required. Following the 'Pest in show' feature from PPC67, it seems likely that future innovations will continue to reach the market in a similar way. Glen Pickering of Lance Lab explains "In the case of our newly launched XL 8 D, the development took place through a partnership between Swiss sprayer manufacturer Birchmeier and practicing technicians to create a smaller company Lance Lab Ltd / Wasp-Reach.com, bringing the industry a product that will work in a practical setting."



Health, safety and legislation

There is some confusion about wasp stings, as many believe that they are highly allergenic, when it is possible they are not. The body responds differently to an allergen such as a wasp sting every time it is exposed. It creates a histamine response which is usually localised to point of venom injection. Symptoms include soreness, swelling and pain, all of which develop quite slowly. In some instances for no apparent reason the body's immune system will have an extreme overreaction to the venom and may cause Anaphylaxis, a potentially a life-threatening allergic reaction which can affect many of the systems in our body, including; airways, breathing and circulation. Anaphylaxis can happen very quickly and requires emergency medical attention. Helen Ainsworth of Barretine Environmental explains the signs of anaphylaxis: "Symptoms include breathing difficulties, dizziness, changes to your skin such as itchy patches or a raised red skin rash, and swelling of certain body parts such as your lips, hands and feet." Helen added "It can also cause long term health problems such as muscle damage and renal problems."

Now we've considered our weapons, and reinforced our armour, we're ready to joust with wasps this summer – or are we? Don't forget you need to ensure you are kept up to date with the latest legislative changes and guidance notes, allowing you to carry out your work effectively and within the limits of the law.

Work at Height Regulations (2005),

Legislative changes and tightened safety practices require that 'work should be carried out using equipment from ground level where possible.' This means that to comply with legislation you should only use ladders when treating areas that cannot be reached with the longest lances available. In these irritating times of ambulance-chasing lawyers it may prove costly if an accident occurs when using ladders and shorter duster lances. When ladders are an absolute necessity it is important to ensure you are aware of and compliant with the safe use of ladders guidance. This can be done by taking the free BPCA Ladder Safety CPD quiz on our website.

Pest Management Alliance Code of Practice – Control of Feral Bees

Treatment of Bees is something that can only to be done as a last resort and most bees are now classed as protected species. The recent publication of the *Pest Management Alliance Code of Practice for the Control of Feral Bees* provides clear guidance on what to do when

Anaphylaxis is uncommon. It is estimated that only 1 in 1,300 people in England will develop the symptoms of anaphylaxis at some point during their life. However, the pest control industry is a high risk industry and precautions can be taken to safeguard yourself, and your employee's health and safety when treating wasps:

- Do a risk assessment
- Wear appropriate PPE
- Carry aspi venom, antihistamine creams, tablets or sprays
- Know where your nearest A&E is
- Consider taking antihistamines or carry adrenalin if you are in rural areas
- Download the British Red Cross emergency app
- Sign up for a first aid course
- Tell someone where you are working
- Have a lone worker policy
- Tell a colleague what medication you take if you work in pairs.

Just having done some of the points outlined above will prepare you if the worst was to happen.

“There is some confusion about wasp stings, as many believe that they are highly allergenic, when it is possible they are not.”

dealing with Feral Bees. The document is available online at www.pmalliance.org.uk or you can also read more about controlling bees on page 22.

Bats guidance

The dramatic decline in bat numbers over the last century prompted various forms of legislation (*Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, The Conservation Regulations 1994 and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010*) which provides protection for all bats and their roosts. It is recommended that you familiarise yourself with the laws relating to bats at www.bats.org.uk or by reading the bat feature on page 14.

Risk assessments

With any treatment remember it is important to complete a risk assessment, even for the smallest and easiest of jobs! As a benefit of BPCA membership you can get support with risk assessments (including guidance documents and model templates) through the free BusinessShield service at www.bpca.business-shield.co.uk

Don't sit back and wait for the season to start

Richard Moseley says “With the potentially hectic summer ahead make sure you're suitably prepared, checked your equipment works, you're stocked up and fully staffed, ready for the busiest summer of the past few years. Well, hopefully.”

www.lancelab.com

www.wasp-reach.com

www.sxenv.com

www.waspbane.com

www.waspwand.com

www.barrettine.co.uk

www.pmalliance.org.uk

www.bats.org.uk

www.bpca.org.uk

www.bpca.business-shield.co.uk



If you want to find out more about wasp traps and IWM, WaspBane offer a free-of-charge training day for professional pest controllers at their Huntingdon offices, with each course pointed six BASIS PROMPT CPD points.

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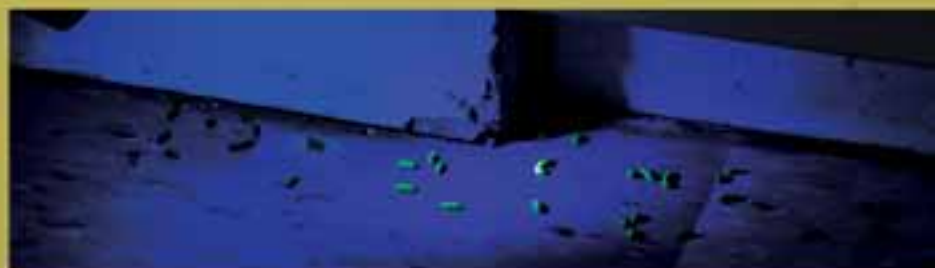
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