

# 5 Things You Should Know Before You Hire a Pest Control Company

by Jan TenHoeve



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### Introduction

Considering the fact that roaches were around long before humans – even out-surviving the dinosaurs – it seems safe to say that the pest problem is just a natural part of life, and one that is not going anywhere. Mankind has recognized the need to defend home and land from pests from the dawn of civilization. As a matter of fact, records from as early as the beginning of recorded time indicate that our ancient predecessors used a variety of pest control methods, ranging from defensive barriers to herbal concoctions to biological means.

If you are responsible for pest control for your building or property, then you may find that all of your options can be confusing, especially if you are not knowledgeable and experienced in all that is pest control. After all, there is a wide variety of pests that can take up residence in your indoor and/or outdoor spaces – from ants to gophers – and each of those pest problems is best remedied in a different way. You may attempt to maintain your own pest control, or you may choose to put your pest control in the hands of professionals. If you are leaning toward the latter, then there are some things you need to consider before moving forward. I have included in this report, the five most important things you should know before you hire a pest control company.

Jan TenHoeve

## Pest Prevention

### 1) Prevention is king.

As the old saying goes, the best defense is a good offense, and that couldn't be any more true than when it comes to pest control. There are certain measures you can take to keep pests at bay, so that you never have to deal with an infestation. The keys to pest prevention include:

- **Blocking off entryways.** This means sealing off all cracks, holes, and crevices through which pests may sneak. Remember that mice can get through holes as small as  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch, so it is important here that you give your entire home a thorough inspection. Also, apply weather-stripping around doors, and caulk around windows. Pests can also enter your home through ventilation ducts and pipes that lead from the outside in, and by way of the roof, if you have any loose or missing roof tiles.
- **Cleanliness.** Make sure you are not inadvertently attracting and feeding pests by keeping your home as clean as possible. Spaces underneath cabinets, furniture, and appliances tend to collect crumbs and other food remnants, making these dark places the perfect hangout for hungry pests. Clean these areas regularly, and don't ever leave food or drink out at night. Outside, keep your yard free of dead brush, elevate log piles, and trim foliage away from the perimeter of your home; pests love to hide out in these places, and can easily move from hideout to home.

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- **Ensuring your environment is not pest-friendly.** Most pests thrive in warm, moist environments. Make sure you are not hosting a pest breeding ground by thoroughly inspecting your home for damp, dank places that will be inviting for pests. The attic and the basement are generally ripe for such conditions, so you should be extra vigilant about proper ventilation, humidity control, and the prevention of standing water sources in these areas.



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## Natural Pest Control

### 2) Natural pest control.

Although many people opt to use insecticides for their pest problems, and pest control companies are likely to also use chemical compounds to kill pests, you need to know that there are other pest control options that are non-toxic, and therefore safe for your family and for Mother Nature. The following are common methods used for natural pest control:

- **Traps.** Pest traps are exactly what they sound like. They come in a few different forms, from the common mouse trap to the more complex cage/box traps for larger pests like raccoons. Traps are inexpensive and simple to use; just remember that you will have to handle the pests once they are trapped and either release them into the wilderness or dispose of them properly.
- **Beneficial insects.** Just as there are pests that prey on your outdoor foliage, there are also insects that prey on pests. You may order beneficial insects through pest control catalogs. Different beneficial insects may be used to counter different pests, so be sure to do your research before you order.
- **Kitchen pantry items.** There are a number of effective pest control products that can be found right in your kitchen pantry. Coffee grounds, mint leaves, cinnamon, lemon juice and cayenne pepper are effective at warding off ants. A mixture of garlic juice and water is effective in

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detering mosquitoes. Lemon juice kills fleas on contact; simply mix some with water and rub it into your dog's fur.

- **Plants.** Marigolds release a scent that keeps mosquitoes and other flying insects at bay. A flowering plant in the daisy family called fleabane is an effective flea deterrent for your yard area.
- **Diatomaceous earth.** This chalky substance is actually crumbled fossilized algae. It is non-toxic and harmless to humans, but it can wipe out a large number of common pests, including ants, cockroaches, bed bugs, rodents, and fleas. Sprinkle it in pest hangout areas and let it go to work.

>>>> Insert Company Logo or Business Info Here <<<<



## Rodent Control

### 3) Rodents are pests, too.

When most people think of pests, they picture things like ants, cockroaches, and termites. However, rodents are also a very common pest problem. Rodents include mice, rats, bats, raccoons, moles, gophers, and more. Handling a rodent problem comes with its own specific set of considerations; namely, you need to learn as much as you can about the particular rodent(s) you are dealing with. Although rodent control encompasses the same elements of most all other types of pest control – prevention, traps, and bait – different rodents react differently to each method, so you must therefore use rodent-specific techniques when dealing with any rodent problem. There are also both natural (organic) and chemical ways to rid your home and lawn from rodents, so you must weigh out the pros and cons of each.



## When to Hire a Professional

### 4) When is it absolutely necessary to hire a professional pest control company?

There are some cases in which it is advisable, and actually necessary, that you hire professionals to help with your pest problem. If any of these circumstances apply to you, then it is time to start looking for a pest control company to hire:

- **Termite infestation.** Termites hide out in places that are hard to find, and that are even harder to reach, especially for a layman. Termite treatment also requires special machinery, and involves drilling down into your home's foundation. For these reasons, a termite problem is best left to the professionals.
- **The problem is recurrent.** You may have been successful at getting rid of pests, but only temporarily. If they keep coming back, then it is likely that you need help with ongoing pest control maintenance.
- **Stinging insects.** Pests like wasps, bees, and hornets are extremely dangerous to deal with. Anything you do to aggravate these stinging insects can potentially land you and/or your family members in the hospital. Pest control professionals are armed with what it takes to handle these life-threatening pests, so it's best that you not take that risk.

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- **You need help identifying the problem.** If you notice the tell-tale signs of pest infestation – droppings here and there, gnawed furniture legs, mysterious sounds within your walls, etc. – but you have not seen any pests to confirm your suspicions, then you need to hire a pest control company to inspect your home and diagnose the problem. Pest control professionals know exactly where pests of all types hide out, and can therefore find pests in places that you may not have even thought to look.
- **Bed bugs.** Contrary to popular belief, bed bugs don't limit their habitation to your mattress. These tiny parasites hide in very elusive places, and many times it takes a pest control company to find and treat them.



## How to Choose the Right Company

### 5) How to choose a pest control company.

Not all pest control companies are created equal. Some specialize in certain pests and limit their services in that way, and most use a specific set of pest control methods, tools, and chemicals, leaving you with no option to choose based on your preferences. It is important that you take certain measures to ensure that you are making the right choice of pest control company for your individual needs. Here are some suggestions for how to choose a pest control company:

- **Search online.** You can find a multitude of pest control companies in your area with a quick online search. Create a list of candidates to research, and then get information on each one before making your decision.
- **Reputation.** Ask your friends, family, coworkers, neighbors, and acquaintances who they recommend for pest control. A company's reputation is perhaps the best indicator of what it will be like to work with them for your own pest control needs.
- **Methods.** Different pest control companies use different methods of extermination. Some pest control companies use only a specific type of pesticide, which means that you have no options in that regard when you choose one of those companies; other pest control companies are more earth-conscious and employ only natural/organic means for pest

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control. Ask all of the pest control companies on your list which methods they will use for your particular problem, and then gauge your comfort with those methods.

- **Specializations.** Some pest control companies specialize in certain pests, while others may choose not to handle certain pests. For example, it is not unusual for a company that specializes in termite control to not handle rodent problems at all. Make it a point to choose a company that has plenty of experience handling pest problems related to your own.
- **Integrated pest management (IPM).** This type of pest management is a multifaceted approach that focuses on preventing pest infestations, exterminating existing pests, and protecting you against re-infestation, and all while using as little toxic pesticide as possible. For these reasons, you should choose a pest control company that uses integrated pest management.
- **Affiliations.** There are a number of industry organizations that reputable pest control companies should belong to. These include the National Pest Management Association (NPMA), QualityPro, BedBugFREE National Network, the Better Business Bureau (BBB), and state and local pest management regulatory associations. When you choose a pest control company with these important affiliations, you

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know that the company regularly meets certain standards that are indicative of quality pest control practices.

- **Licensing.** If your company of choice uses chemical pesticides, then that company should be licensed with your state's pesticide regulatory agency. A company that can't prove that it holds this necessary licensing is a company you should avoid.



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### Conclusion

As you can see, there is a lot of information to absorb when it comes to pest control. Consider these important things before you undergo the process of hiring a pest control company, and then consider hiring the competent professionals at Sentry Termite & Pest Control for all of your pest control needs. We can be reached by phone, at (973)697-7979 .

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### About The Author




Sentry Termite & Pest Control, Inc. was established in 1978 as a family owned and operated business. Jan, along with his wife JoAnn work diligently to continue the exemplary work ethics that have been their philosophy for over 28 years. Jan will often be found working in the field along with their dedicated staff providing the highest level of service our clients have come to expect. JoAnn continues to manage the office bringing a personal touch to doing business with Sentry that many large commercially driven pest control firms can't seem to manage.

Our technical staff are among the most highly trained and skilled individuals in the industry. Many of our technicians are "CERTIFIED CREDENTIALLED Wood Destroying Insect Inspector" by the New Jersey Pest Management Association (NJPMA). Always courteous and eager to listen to our clients concerns, we provide service in all of Passaic, Morris, Bergen, Sussex, and Warren counties as well as many areas of Essex County .

Along with a full range of pest control services, we provide structural damage repair. We also offer crawl space encapsulation and basement waterproofing to aid in the control of insects, wood rot and/or moisture damage and to aid in conserving energy costs in your home.

We welcome the opportunity to be of service and look forward to meeting and exceeding your needs and expectations.

If it bugs you, call.... 

"Large enough to handle your needs...Small enough to care."