

Pest control – cockroaches



by Hanlie du Plessis

Cockroaches may become pests in homes, restaurants, hospitals, stores, warehouses, shops, and everywhere food are prepared or stored. They spread germs on food and eating utensils. They can destroy fabric and paper products. Cockroaches may carry bacteria that cause food poisoning and serious diseases.

They are medium-sized to large insects with long antennae. They are active in the night and can run away fast when disturbed. During the day cockroaches hide around geysers, in cupboards, cracks, stoves, outdoor plants and many other places. They go into kitchens and other areas at night.

How do you know if you have cockroaches in your home?

You can make a cockroach trap from a small can. Coat the inside top of the can with Vaseline to prevent the cockroaches from escaping and place a piece of white bread in the can as bait. Put traps against walls behind the stove and the refrigerator and in cupboards. Check the traps every day. You can kill the trapped cockroaches with hot, soapy water. You can also check for cockroaches at night using a flashlight.

Why do they come into your house?

Cockroaches are happy when they have food and water. Even tiny amounts of crumbs or liquids caught between cracks can be enough for them.

How do you prevent cockroaches from coming into your home?

- Store food in containers such as glass jars or plastic containers that can seal
- Keep garbage in containers with tight-fitting lids and remove it from your home regularly
- Stop plumbing leaks
- Make sure that surfaces where food or drinks have been spilled are cleaned up immediately
- Cut off plants and bushes near your house where cockroaches may hide
- Remove rubbish and stored items such as stacks of firewood that provide hiding places for cockroaches from around the outside of buildings
- Seal cracks and other openings to the outside
- Look for other ways that they can enter your house, such as from items being brought inside the house like appliances, furniture and items that were stored.

What can you do to get rid of cockroaches?

- **Dust** – One effective dust is boric acid powder. It works for a very long time. Blow the dust into cracks and lightly spread it in areas where you know cockroaches hide and where people will not touch it. Also throw along the back edges and in corners of shelves in cabinets, cupboards, pantries and closets. Boric acid powder is effective for as long as it is left in place, if it remains dry
- **Sprays and aerosols** – Aerosol insecticides can help to control cockroaches
- **Professional pest control** – If you cannot get rid of the cockroaches, it may be necessary to call in the services of professional pest control people. **UM**