

PCN

PEST CONTROL NEWS®

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE PEST CONTROL INDUSTRY

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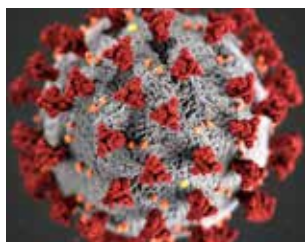
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Report-a-concern appeal for bad practice or illegal supply alerts

At PPC Live in March, rogue practice and non-compliant product supply were frequent talking points with visitors on the CRRU stand. Given the stewardship regime's principle of voluntary self-governance, vigilant pest controllers are reminded they can report concerns confidentially at thinkwildlife.org/stewardship-regime/report-a-concern/.

The 2019 stewardship annual report published in March says 37 such alerts have been received since this on-line reporting tool went live in October 2017. Of these, 34 came from unique sources and three were reported by two or more.

Among the 37, 32 related to internet rodenticide sales. Of those, nine allegations resulted in a product listing being removed, and one had the entire website taken down. The wording of four listings was amended to become stewardship compliant.

Alleged illegal sales of rodenticide were the subject of six reports and passed to HSE. Of the 37 total, 10 reports were not upheld.

For the voluntary nature of rodenticide stewardship to be successful, CRRU chairman Dr Alan Buckle says the entire pest control sector, farmers and gamekeepers included, has to take responsibility for driving out bad practice and illegal supply.

"Without a past benchmark, it's impossible to know whether 37 alerts over a two year period is good or not," he says. "But from anecdotes heard at Professional Pest Control and PestTech events, for example, that number feels a bit on the low side.

"The message to all pest controllers is clearly to grab some evidence and draw attention to bad practice or illegal supply wherever you see it."

CRRU's online report-a-concern function does not replace the ability to raise complaints directly with HSE, which can be done here: hse.gov.uk/biocides/enforcement.htm.



www.pestcontrolnews.com/news



Seagulls in the UK carry antibiotic-resistant *E. coli*

A recent academic study led by researchers at the University of Liverpool and published in the Microbial Drug Resistance journal, looked into urban gulls acting as a reservoir and spreading antimicrobial resistant bacteria in the environment. This study has identified that urban seagulls in the UK are colonised and can spread major antimicrobial resistant *Escherichia coli* strains including some which have clinical relevance for public health. Increasing gull populations in urban environments pose various public health concerns and understanding any role that urban gulls may have could be important for reducing disease transmission. In this study, faecal samples from established urban gull populations (Taunton and Birmingham) were investigated from two species of gull – herring and lesser black-backed. The data showed that antimicrobial resistant *E.coli* was present in half of the samples investigated, including isolates belonging to a virulent and multidrug-resistant pandemic *E. coli* strain (B2-ST131). A particular lineage of this clone (C1-M27) was identified in this work for the first time in the wildlife in the UK and in seagulls worldwide. Previous studies have documented that gull species are important bio-indicators of environmental contamination regarding antimicrobial resistance, especially associated with surface water and coastal areas, from where they can acquire and/or release into resistant organisms.

In conclusion, this study shows that urbanised gulls in the UK can spread and act as reservoirs of multi-drug-resistant bacteria. This will inform development of policies designed to control gull populations. PCN thanks researcher Simon Moon for highlighting this work.

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Adrian Batty

Pest Control News is saddened to hear of the recent passing of Adrian Batty. Adrian took the helm at the Pest Control and Drainage Section at Hull City Council, in the late 1970s,

until his retirement from the council in 2005. He also contributed to the National Pests Advisory Panel, started his own pest control company and assisted Killgerm with the running of the Royal Society of Public Health Level 2 Certificate in Pest Control. He finally retired, fully, in 2015. We hear from close colleagues and friends of Adrian, in recognition of his services to the industry, via a full article available on the Pest Control News website.

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Coronavirus & the pest control industry

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The impact of coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, the causative agent of the disease COVID-19, has been felt throughout the global pest control industry. This special piece examines the UK pest control industry response to COVID-19, with thanks given to the trade associations for their advice and lobbying.

Readers are to note that this piece was correct at the time of writing, April 29th, and that the government website should be checked regularly for any further updates <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> (Note that any change in government advice supersedes this article.)

There is a lot to consider, from the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) announcement that the pest control professionals are confirmed by the government as key workers, to the National Pest Technicians Association (NPTA) advice on stockpiling and pest risks, and National Pest Advisory Panel (NPAP) opinion.



Key worker status confirmed by UK government

Pest management has been confirmed as an essential sector during the COVID-19 pandemic by George Eustice, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

According to Defra, pest management is covered in the key worker list under the "food and necessary goods" section, specifically concerning hygiene.

This confirmation means that pest management professionals in England can continue to send their children to school during the pandemic. The Northern Ireland government has already confirmed pest management is an essential service.

This also likely means that if the UK was to go into further lockdown measures, pest management companies would be able to continue to protect the nation.

While BPCA has already confirmed that pest management workers could continue to provide essential services, this is the first time that a government official explicitly acknowledges pest management to be on the list of key workers.

The news comes after the sector has lobbied for confirmation that pest management appears on the list – including BPCA and CEPA.

Henry Mott, president of CEPA, received confirmation from his member of parliament, Alicia Kearns MP for Rutland and Melton, that she has had approval from Secretary of State, George Eustice MP.

BPCA is pursuing confirmation directly from Defra to support the letter Henry has received from Alicia Kearns MP.

Ian Andrew, BPCA Chief Exec, said:

“We want to thank everyone that has taken the time to write to their MPs on the subject. It’s taken a substantial collaborative effort for our relatively small sector to get the ear of the UK government”.

The ‘number 1’ FAQ: should I go out on a pest control job?

The BPCA have helpfully provided an advice sheet, reproduced below, to answer this question.



Dear BPCA Members

WE KNOW THIS IS A DIFFICULT TIME.

We're here to help in any way we can.

We have:

- Technical pest management support
- HR helpline via BPCA Business Shield
- Guidance on essential work and migrating risk
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- Risk assessment templates
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We'll always try our best to help.

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Stay safe.

Thank you for helping to protect public health.

Warmest wishes,
The BPCA team

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Driving excellence in pest management



NPTA warn about the dangers of stockpiling food during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The National Pest Technicians Association are keen to warn British households about the public health and pest control dangers posed by stockpiling and hoarding during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

As the outbreak continues, temperatures rise and members of the public continue to buy larger quantities of perishable goods, 'good housekeeping' is more vital than ever.

NPTA Technical Manager, John Hope, is appealing to the public to be even more vigilant than usual to combat the risks posed by the current circumstances.

"Stockpiling will have an effect on public health because if you're stockpiling goods, there's more food there to attract rodents," he said.

"It's the same as when rubbish piles up on the street due to missed bin collections; the more that's there, the more chance there is of attracting rodents without actually seeing them, because they can get in there unnoticed by time you get to bottom of the pile."

Mr Hope continued:

"Public health pests such as rodents, cockroaches and houseflies are known to carry bacteria and can pass this on to people.

"There are some simple, sensible tips to reduce the risks.

"Move any rubbish to an outside bin as soon as possible and try and ensure that this is tightly sealed.

"Inspect your home or office for cracks or holes in walls; unfilled voids around pipework etc and remember that mice can squeeze through gaps as small as 5mm. If you find any, fill or seal them as soon as possible.

"Inspect dried food packages for pest signs or activity before use, particularly where excess food is stored.

"Particularly relevant at the moment is the use of alternative storage options for bulk-bought items.

"Be careful about storing food in outbuildings or garages, as these will be at increased risk of pest damage as these buildings tend to be less secure than our homes.

"If possible, keep bushes and shrubbery away from the building to make the area less attractive to pests.

"Repair any leaking pipes, outside taps etc. as standing water can attract many different types of pests, including rats, and as the weather warms, mosquitoes.

"Clean work surfaces, dining tables and floors regularly as any food build up can attract pests. This is particularly important if pests are present to clean any bacterial residues left behind should they pass over them.

"If you develop a problem, call a pest professional. If for any reason they can't visit, consider using break back traps for rodents – but ensure that they are placed in secure locations as they can cause harm to pets and people.

"Be very careful if you consider rodenticides or insecticides to ensure that these are purchased from reputable sources and are used safely and according to label conditions."

National Pest Advisory Panel National Pests Advisory Panel (NPAP) to the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)

NPAP have produced a blog piece serving as a reminder about the importance of public health pest management, during the COVID-19 outbreak, while reinforcing the position that pest management professionals are now recognised formally as 'key workers' <https://bpca.org.uk/News-and-Blog/pest-control-and-management-confirmed-key-workers-by-uk-government-bpca>

The importance of pest management during the COVID-19 crisis

Bob Mayho, Chair, National Pest Advisory Panel

Dr Matthew Davies, Head of Technical Department, Killgerm Chemicals Ltd

Pest management professionals are now recognised formally as 'key workers', highlighting the importance of public health pest management, during the COVID-19 outbreak.

It has been reported anecdotally that there has been an increase in Norway rat and feral pigeon sightings, in the streets, following closure of some food businesses. It is expected that pest management measures will be even more important both while lockdown measures continue and as any potential easing of these measures allows certain food premises to re-open. Ahead of food premises re-opening, a pest management inspection, (ideally by a Field Biologist depending on the site auditing standards), would be beneficial. In terms of general advice, regarding what to look for ahead of reopening, the typical proofing, hygiene and pest activity advice is available in the NPAP-CIEH publication 'Pest control procedures in the food industry'.

As we enter the warmer temperatures of Spring and Summer, it is even more important that food businesses and households dispose of their food waste properly and in secure containers. We have heard of a number of local authorities that have curtailed the recycling and collection of food waste for the duration of the lockdown, which has the potential to increase the incidence of pest activity if householders do not dispose of their food waste and organic matter carefully and safely. Disposal must be in line with local authority advice.

Insects

It is anticipated that changes in household food waste collection and processes, in conjunction with increasing temperatures, could impact on fly populations. A 2019 peer-reviewed research paper reported that of bacterial isolates taken from flying insects, sampled in UK hospitals, over 50% showed resistance to at least one class of antibiotics. Furthermore, almost 20% of such isolates, showed resistance to more than one class of antibiotics and were defined as 'multi-drug resistant'. It follows that risks to public health from unchecked fly problems are unacceptable and it is imperative that fly control, particularly in sensitive situations such as health and food facilities, should continue.

Rodents

In urban situations, rats harbour salmonella and over half of UK house mice are a reservoir of *Toxoplasma gondii*, which is a parasite posing risks to pregnant women and their unborn children.

Furthermore, it is recognised that pest rodents, Norway rats and house mice, can be the main driver for salmonella infection in poultry flocks. It is well established that pest rodents consume and spoil stored crops and animal feed, including causing crop damage while still in the field. The potential and actual impacts of rodent spoilage and contamination of the food chain are well documented, whether this is in relation to the food processing section of the food chain, or the food storage section or once food is on the shelf. Rodent control is therefore imperative in preserving the 'farm to fork' delivery of provisions to the public during the current coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) crisis. Rodent activity is also estimated as being the cause of approximately 50% of fires on farms, thus presenting a different risk of damage to food supplies.

Birds

In December 2018 it was reported, by the national press, that two deaths occurred at Queen Elizabeth University hospital in connection with *Cryptococcus* infection. *Cryptococcus* was traced to feral pigeon (*Columba livia*) excrement on site and had entered the ventilation system.

Invasive species

The efforts of Public Health England, the Non-Native Species Secretariat and the Animal & Plant Health Agency, in keeping invasive insect species at bay, depend on being able to access technical support and biocides including associated application equipment and personal protective equipment from suppliers. Such species include the invasive vector *Aedes albopictus* (Asian tiger mosquito) and *Vespa velutina* (Asian hornet) that poses a serious threat to honeybee health. It will be vital that these agencies are able to maintain their

efforts as we enter into the Spring and Summer, and warmer temperatures, especially with regard to monitoring and guarding against non-native mosquito species.

The role of pests as reservoirs of coronaviruses

While there is much to be determined regarding the current coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), it is known that different coronavirus infections of UK rats *Rattus norvegicus* are being monitored and may pose a threat for cross-species transmission to humans. As a general comment, regarding rodents, bamboo rats in China have been suggested as a possible intermediate host from bats to humans in the emergence of coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2).



Bayer

COVID-19 advice

COVID-19 and Pest Management – A Perspective from Bayer Pest Solutions UK

The current situation that the UK, and the world, finds itself in as it struggles with the grip of COVID-19, is unprecedented. The worldwide pandemic has impacted every level of our lives - from the tragedy of loss, the fear of unemployment, to the inconvenience of running out of toilet rolls. Every aspect of our lives will be impacted. In a rollercoaster 3-hour period last week a close relative had her A-levels cancelled, her part-time employer closed, and her driving test was cancelled for at least 6 months. I am sure that families around the land are being tested in similar, and in many cases, more tragic ways.

However, in the pest control industry we can be assured of one fact in a confusing and contradictory world. Pests do not stop! They do not adhere to curfew, they do not allow shopping hours for the vulnerable and key workers, they do not enforce a 2-metre contact rule, and they do not worry about contaminated surfaces. In fact, given the opportunity they thrive, and if unchecked, they can make a severe situation catastrophic. When food is scarce, they will consume and contaminate it, when people's health is compromised, they spread infection and disease, and when the country is required to stay in our homes, they can destroy properties, causing fire and flood. And as a country finally starts to win the battle against a disease like COVID-19, pests could be the forgotten transmitter that resurrects the spread of infection.

The Need for Critical Worker status

Given the risks associated with pests, it is of vital importance that the pest industry in the UK, and beyond, is seen as an essential part of the battle against COVID-19. Indeed, our Bayer colleagues in the USA are working with and supporting pest professionals who are classed as essential workers, helping the US battle the virus and control the negative impacts of pest infestation. Bayer fully supports the work being carried out by our colleagues at the British Pest Control Association and the National Pest Technicians Association to highlight the vital role of pest managers in the UK, and where Bayer can we will use our influence to guide governments throughout the world. On the first morning of the UK lockdown it is essential that professional pest controllers continue the battle to protect public health.

Bayer Pest Solutions Industry Support

Bayer will also use our knowledge and experience to support and guide the professional pest industry in the UK. We will endeavor to keep our products available and support our key distributors. It is essential that our customers have access to the tools required to control pest infestations and to maintain disease and infection free environments. Our Pest Solutions team experts are also still at the end of the phone to help with any technical issues about products and pests – if you need our support please use our knowledge and expertise. The future weeks could be lonely ones for our pest control community, so please reach out if we can help.

Will This Change the Face of Pest Management?

It is probably too early to say, but in the short term without pest management in a 'National emergency', the key food stores and manufacturers that are supporting the UK may suffer, as will essential services such as hospitals, care homes, schools... the list is a long one. We also must consider the

issue of people being restricted to homes with pest infestations that cannot be controlled, not good for general health or mental wellbeing. With many business locations on lockdown, without access for pest management we may see a rise in pest problems later in the year when shops and services re-open. Where possible, these sites should remain open to pest management services, as if they do not, we run the risk of having to deal with a rise in pest related infections, just as we turn the corner with COVID-19.

In the medium to long term we may find that technology has more of a role to play in the management of pests, especially in key manufacture and service industries. If food manufacturers go into lock down, limiting site access to protect workers and concentrate on production, technology may be able to offer a level of management and continued service on such sites. Remote monitoring technology could also allow the professional pest controller to maintain links with their sites and keep their customers informed of pest activity, allowing the quick and efficient control of pests before they become a serious issue. Technology will in many cases allow us to communicate effectively and work successfully from home during a lockdown period – in the future it seems impossible to picture a pest industry that doesn't grasp the benefits that technology offers our pest managers and their customers.

Unprecedented, but Pest Controllers have crisis experience!

Some may remember the foot-and-mouth crisis in 2001. Foot-and-mouth disease is a viral infection that affects cloven hoofed animals. During this crisis professional pest controllers were at the heart of the operation to stop the disease spread, as rats moving between farms were potential carriers of the virus. I, along with hundreds of other pest controllers, spent many months working on farms to control rats and slow this disease. It was long, hard work and required strict controls around PPE and disinfection to prevent transmission between sites. It was devastating for the farmers and communities involved. However, with hard work and, management, foot-and-mouth, was controlled, and communities recovered. We as the pest control industry can make a vital difference, and although it may not seem so now, we will return to a level of normality in the future. The pests will still be here, and we will still be vital to manage them.

Safe Working

As pest controllers we potentially work with disease every day. We understand risks and we understand how to control them. However, these are unparalleled times with an invisible threat. If we are carrying out pest treatments to protect the vulnerable, our hospitals, care-homes, food manufacturers and supply chains, we need to protect ourselves and our families. Always refer to the government guidance and use the excellent tools and information that have been developed by our UK pest control trade bodies designed to keep you safe and protect their professional and committed members.

And remember, the Bayer Pest Solutions team is here to help if we can. Do not hesitate to contact us if you need our support.

Stay well, stay safe and stay vigilant.



British Retail Consortium (BRC)

BRC have published advice regarding management of sites during the COVID-19 outbreak.

How to manage pest control during COVID-19

The sites still need to meet the requirements of the Standard. Therefore the twin objectives for the safety of both the site employees and the pest controller need to be met whilst ensuring that product is also protected from any risks associated with the ingress of pests.

It is recognised that access to sites is currently challenging for many service providers due to the ongoing circumstances relating to COVID-19. In these situations the site is responsible for reviewing their processes to ensure the continued production of safe products and the site must therefore have sufficient controls in place to ensure this. It is the site's responsibility to ensure they look at options and decide how this happens. It is not acceptable to simply cancel pest control activities.

We would expect that pest control operators have in place processes to safeguard their operators and ensure that they reduce the risk of introducing

coronavirus if they visit sites. This should also be challenged by sites. Pest control operators must of course comply with the site's coronavirus management processes and any legislation in the country or region in which they are located.

Clearly not all manufacturing environments face the same risk from pests, this may depend for example, on type of products manufactured, age/construction of the site, pest history and seasonality. This needs to be considered when deciding how to proceed. Where the pest risk is considered high sites may need to accommodate a visit from their pest controller. Where pest control risks are considered to be low, pest control visits may be postponed for a short period as part of a site's coronavirus control measures, however we would expect that internal controls such as pest awareness and reporting are increased and pest controllers are called wherever an issue is identified.

There are lots of options where pest control contractors can and should continue to assist their clients, including online support, video technology and training (for example virtual, online or answers to specific enquiries).

The Standard is used internationally and does permit pest management to be undertaken by the site where suitably trained individuals are available.

We have discussed pest control with a number of organisations, including the BPCA (British Pest Control Association) and agree and support their current advice and position.

Increase in rat sightings during quarantine measures

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported, according to rodentologist Dr Robert Corrigan, an increase in rat sightings in urban areas of the United States during quarantine.

Coronavirus: Why more rats are being spotted during quarantine

The closure of restaurants and the retreat by humans indoors is having an effect on the eating habits and behaviour of rats, say experts.

Late last month, the French Quarter in New Orleans had new swarms of visitors wandering its famous streets. Not long after the coronavirus closed bars and restaurants in the Louisiana city, rats were coming out of hiding.

That more rodents were being spotted comes as no surprise to renowned urban rodentologist Robert Corrigan. "When you have a colony of rats on a block that has been depending on tourists littering and lots of trash put out at night - it could be DC, it could be New York - any place where rats have been depending on the easy handouts, and that disappears, then they don't know what to do," he says. As Claudia Riegel, with the New Orleans pest control board, told journalists: "These rats are hungry."

Humans around the world are changing their behaviours due to the threat of the coronavirus pandemic. In some places, quarantine means rubbish that rats depend on is no longer available, and so they also adapt.

Dr Corrigan, who has an office in Lower Manhattan, says he's had messages from friends in the city who have seen rats in new areas and at odd hours for the usually nocturnal animals. Others haven't seen any change in their local rat habits. Those colonies might feed on household waste, of which there is still plenty, and not restaurant rubbish.

In the UK, the National Pest Technicians Association warned this month that "the closure of schools, pubs, restaurants, hotels, tourist attractions and other public places to enforce social distancing will have unintended consequences". If there is food available, pest populations could thrive in empty buildings and become emboldened by the absence of people - or pests will go out in search of food, it said.

'Masters of adaptation'

Hungry rats "can wander quite a distance and end up in a different neighbourhood completely that had no rats prior", Dr Corrigan told the BBC. They are "formidable mammals" very good at sniffing out sources of food, and their powerful teeth can make short work of barriers like doors, plastics, or fabrics. "They're global, they're everywhere, and they didn't get to be completely global if they weren't very skilled at being masters of adaptation," he says.

But seeing more rats around doesn't mean cities will be overrun. In fact, Dr Corrigan says now is the perfect time to bring in control techniques and New Orleans officials said they are bringing in extra measures to control the city's robust rat population. Rats with empty bellies will be more likely to take food from baited traps. The rodentologist also tells people that "sanitation is pest control" - without food, the rats "turn on themselves and they will control their own numbers".

Rats are "officially associated with about 55 different pathogens", though there have been no reports of rats carrying COVID-19.



Rural pest control – trapping and shooting. Advice from the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC)

BASC has updated its UK-wide advice for conducting essential pest control during the Coronavirus restrictions:

In line with the Prime Minister's statement, when making a decision on whether or not to conduct essential wildlife management you should consider:

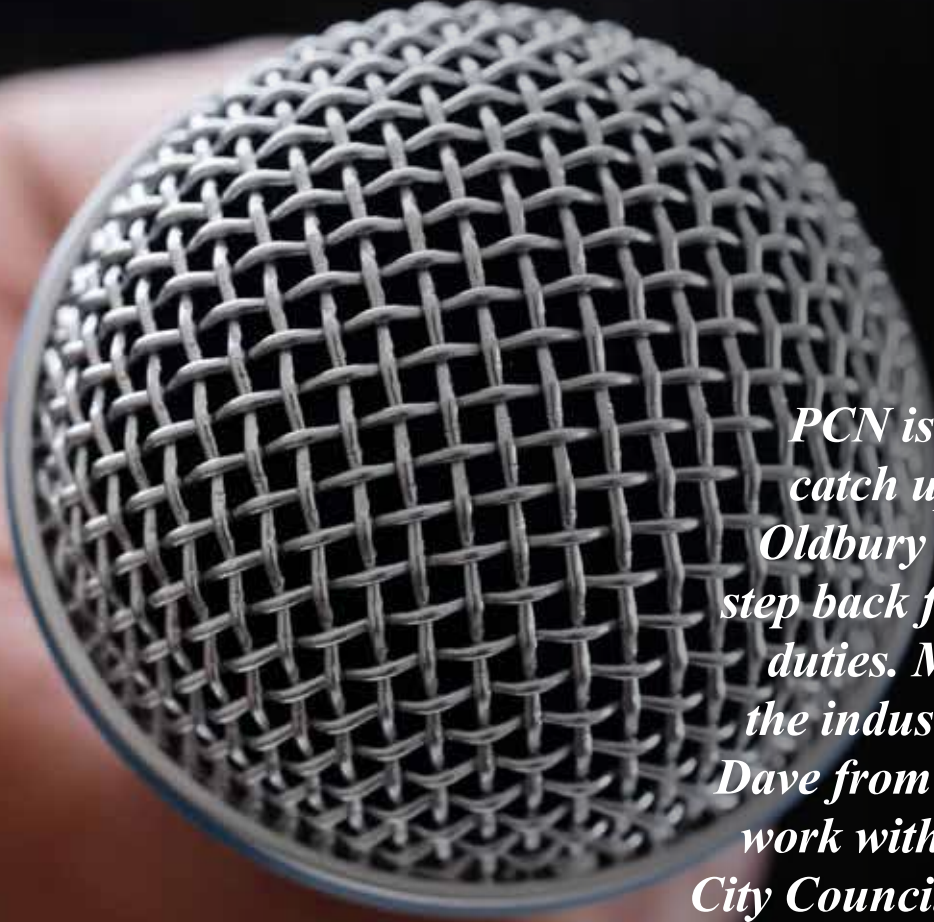
- Is the landowner, or person responsible for giving permission, happy for you to be on the land in the current crisis?
- Can you maintain effective social distancing?
- Is the management involved absolutely essential?
- Is there a risk that your activities could result in the emergency services being called out? For example, someone reporting shots being fired.
- Should you inform the local police in advance that you are going out? If you do, secure the reference number for the call.

Everyone's circumstances are different so individual decisions will have to be made, although the onus will be on remaining off the land. So-called 'recreational shooting' or taking clients shooting are ruled out at present.

Be aware that you should be able to stand up your decision if you are challenged by the enforcement authorities or you risk a fine and may put your certificate at risk.

Dave Oldbury, industry stalwart, on stepping back from training duties

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PCN is privileged to catch up with David Oldbury as he takes a step back from training duties. Many of us in the industry will know Dave from his excellent work with Manchester City Council, his support of the National Pest Advisory Panel, expert training, and all-round championing of public health pest control.

Your engaging training style is talked about with enthusiasm by those who have attended your courses – what is the best training experience that you have had? Perhaps a course or lecture sticks in your mind.

One of the best training experiences I have had occurred only recently. I was delivering training to over 25 delegates on the Drainage Related Pest Control course run at the Killgerm Training Centre, Ossett. The delegates were extremely interested in the course subject and interacted in the most enthusiastic way, reciting their individual experiences to the whole class and discussing several pest related drainage scenarios. Discussions still ensued over lunch and during coffee/tea breaks. It was extremely rewarding as a trainer to receive such a positive response from the delegates and made the training day most enjoyable for all concerned.

Do you have any training course mishaps to confess to?

Yes, it was many years ago when I was conducting a health and safety COSHH training course with a classroom full of technicians. In those days visual aids were by overhead projector and 35mm slide projectors. Unfortunately, as I put my first acetate slide on the overhead projector there was a large bang as the projector lamp blew.

Undeterred, I then turned on the 35mm slide projector to illustrate hazardous scenarios to the class, only for the projector bulb to blow in sympathy when it was powered up.

Fortunately, ad-libbing was the only remaining option. This took me up to the lunch break when replacement bulbs were hastily sought and installed into the equipment to save further embarrassment.

Since then I have always ensured that I had spare bulbs for subsequent training sessions!

We want to know about some of the glamorous... and less so, training venues that you have worked at. Can you tell us something about that?

I've delivered training at a range of glamorous and not so glamorous venues, from five-star hotels through to hospitals, catering facilities, aircraft hangers, local authority operation depots, refuse waste collection staff offices, water treatment plants and the humble sewage works!

What is the most memorable pest problem that you have had to deal with?

There are two really – Moss Side block disinfestations of system built flats and houses and the Chinatown project for the disinfestations of restaurants and shops in Central Manchester.

Who had the most influence on you in terms of your experience?

There are two individuals really Jonathan Peck, he was without doubt the most influential person, his drive and enthusiasm particularly in relation to public health issues and his support for the CIEH National Pest Advisory Panel was second to none. I have to say feel a little sad that the industry has failed to fully acknowledge his outstanding contribution to the pest management industry.

Peter Fielding of Killgerm (now retired) who actively encouraged me to impart my knowledge and experience gained during the course of my career and become an industry trainer.

Do you have any tips for those interested in developing their pest control skills?

Yes, it sounds obvious but it is essential to keep abreast of technical developments within the industry. Interacting and engaging with participants ideally on an individual basis during a training session. It is such a vital aspect of the training experience allowing delegates to be part of and contributing to the subject matter of the training day.

Where do you see the industry going over the next 5 – 10 years?

I feel there will be even more products being withdrawn from use due to the inability to comply with stricter environmental measures being adopted, however, we must not lose sight of the fact that our industry

is there to protect public health and our ability to do this should not be compromised.

What has been the biggest challenge during your career?

Whole block treatment for cockroaches and rodents – managing / coordinating the treatment programme, getting access to dwellings for treatment and having to resort to the Magistrates' Court for warrants to break into properties with the assistance of the police on numerous occasions to carry out the necessary treatments.

Which species did you encounter the most often?

In Manchester it was Oriental cockroaches mainly followed by German cockroaches, rats and mice.

Do you have any pest control 'horror stories'?

Refusing to be intimidated by threats from drugs gangs not to gain access to certain vacant premises within the block control programme in inner city Manchester because they were being used as "drug drops".

Getting called out to deal with the unfortunate deaths of suicide victims and their flyblown bodies and congealed body fluids all requiring disinfestations just prior to taking my wife out to a restaurant for dinner.

What is your 'pet hate' as an environmental health professional?

My pet hate was being referred to as the "rat catcher" throughout my professional career.

What did you do before you got into the industry?

I qualified as an EHP in 1972, in those days you had to be 21 years old to be issued with a full enforcement powers by the local authority. I was not of age and had to bide my time for a year in the offices until I attained the magic age of 21. I then started my career as a district EHP in general public health/food hygiene issues. Several years later and having been engaged as technical director of a commercial pest control company in Canada I returned to the UK and specialised here in pest management and the rest as they say is history.

What job would you have done if you hadn't been successful in the pest control industry?

Coming from a family background of medicine and engineering I probably would have taken up a career in either of these professional disciplines.

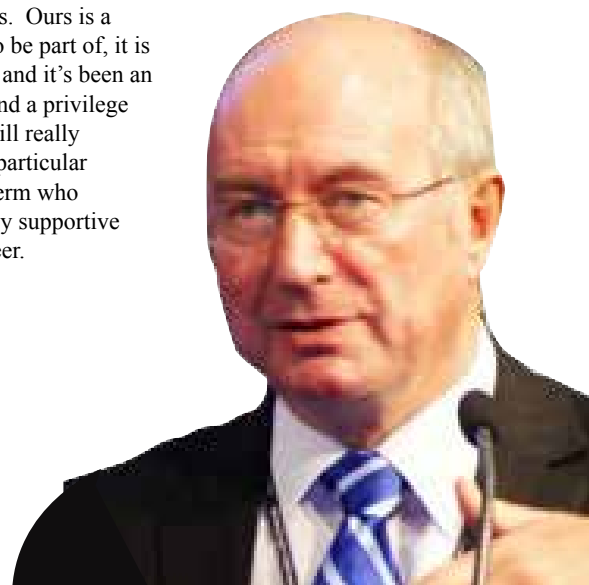
So, make us all jealous – what are your plans for retirement?

Plans for retirement? Continuing to support my wife with her ongoing battle with her long term illness and to occasionally sneak off to my cabin at the bottom of our garden where I am in the process of building of 4mm scale computerised train layout for (myself) the grandchildren. I also have a couple of greenhouses where I grow tender perennials for our garden and for the family.

I certainly won't get bored!

What will you miss the most about the industry?

The people I have met in the industry over the many years. Ours is a fantastic industry to be part of, it is extremely friendly, and it's been an absolute pleasure and a privilege to be part of it. I will really miss this aspect in particular colleagues at Killgerm who have been extremely supportive throughout my career.



Keep your creative juices flowing during lockdown

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During this pandemic, if like some Pest Controllers, you have to stay at home, why not make the most of any free time you may have and improve your website, social media presence and overall brand. Do the important jobs you perhaps didn't have time to do before!

Despite having the essential worker status, as announced by the BPCA, you may have some spare time on your hands than usual. Whether that be due to less work available, not being able to socialise or you may even be at the point of self-isolation. The very slim silver lining is that, despite all of this, the spare time that you wouldn't ordinarily have provides opportunity to galvanise your branding from the comfort of your own home. Something you can tick off your list of things to do on a rainy day...

Branding benefits

Do you have a logo that stands out from the crowd? Logos are used to identify, and a careless logo implies a careless service. It's the first thing that customers see whether that be online or offline, and it's vitally important to set the right first impression in an industry as competitive as pest control. A great logo is simple but effective; implying trust, loyalty and overall superiority.

It's best to have an idea in your head already before you open any kind of software. The idea should capture what your brand stands for without going in to too much detail, for example Apple's logo embodies the slick nature of the design of their products and the simplicity of the logo implies their comparatively easy-to-use operating systems. There's often a tendency to over-complicate logos to try and tell a story but here, less is more and that's the case for every company from FTSE 100 companies right down to sole traders.

When it comes to designing the logo, there's ample free websites and apps to help you through it and to make it as easy as possible. The easiest to use is Canva; it's free, has an abundance of tutorials on YouTube to aid you through the process and it also allows you to save templates using your brand colours which makes it far easier to create consistent graphics for your website and social media. It's worth having a go at this first before pursuing paid routes.

If you've exhausted your free options and you're not happy with what you've created, then another option is to outsource the design of your logo to a professional design or marketing agency. There's plenty of agencies suitable for a whole range of budgets and they'll liaise with you from the initial call to the finished product to ensure that the logo is perfect for you. It'll be a one-off payment and you may even be able to get a bundle where they'll design a website for you too. Small businesses are understandably reluctant to part with cash, but the intangible value of an effective logo is a great return for a single, small investment.

Getting in line with online

Love it or loathe it, nobody can deny that online marketing is a huge aspect of the business world as we see it today. Technology is forever changing, and your online strategy must be spot on or you risk being left behind. Today, social media and websites go together in terms of content and branding, with very basic guidelines that are suitable for both.

Arguably the biggest similarity between websites and social media sites is the need to maintain professionalism. Content needs to be fresh, relevant and packed with key words for search engine optimisation, with extra care being taken on which images are used online. The lines can often be blurred for acceptable images, but just remember, you see different things to your customers on a day-to-day basis, the average customer doesn't want to see dead rats on their news feed when they are scrolling through social media!

Social media is a massive free marketing tool, it's becoming less and less generational by the day and is now used by almost every demographic you can think of. It is important that you get to grips with the basics of social media, and now is the perfect time! There's an abundance of online tutorials to help you teach yourself.

There are seemingly endless social media platforms with new ones being developed constantly, but the main three that are suitable for pest control are Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Facebook and Twitter are more suitable for connecting with end users, whereas LinkedIn is the world's largest online professional network where you're more likely to earn contracts. Once life is back to normal, to save on time, there's a very handy free app called Hootsuite that lets you connect your social

media profiles and schedule posts to be published by your accounts whenever you want.

To get the most out of your channels, it's best to have an ongoing plan. Initially, you should set out what you hope to achieve, whether that be to drive traffic to your website, gain more followers or to show your customers what makes you different - is it the service you offer or a specific pest that you specialise in treating?

It is also important to tailor your social media posts to the different social media platforms; where it might be useful on Facebook or Twitter to post about a pest free garden to appeal to small businesses and the general public, LinkedIn is more suited for posting about large commercial buildings such as factories or offices to display that you have the capability to take on large clients and contracts. Case studies, customer reviews and pest control tips are perfect for this.

Once you are on a roll with your posts, it's important to constantly review and analyse. One way to do this is by using a traffic light system. Stop (red) if certain types of posts are ineffective, don't create any more of these. Continue (amber) if posts are doing well, continue with them. Start (Green) if you have an idea for a post or have seen a post on a competitor's social media feed that seems promising, start posting these types of things and review at a later date.

Social media and your website are great for boasting about achievements, whether that be new qualifications or courses and training attended; your customers want to know that you're keeping up to date and continuing your professional development in the best way possible in order to provide the best service possible.

For more information on social media management head to podcast.killgerm.com and listen to episode 6 for more in depth guidance on how to manage your social media sites. You can also claim your CPD points too!

Sharpen your service

Training may not seem like an aspect of marketing but the marketing mix (or 4 Ps) has been used in business now since the 1940s, and one of those 'P's is product. While pest controllers don't provide a product as such, it's still applicable to the essential service provided and any chance to increase knowledge and keep updated should be grabbed with both hands.

Killgerm has launched Killgerm Training Online <https://training.killgerm.com/> where you can take selected courses digitally and gain your qualifications, as well as free downloads for all work studies and how to guides on the Killgerm website. The Killgerm podcast is also available for streaming or download on the Killgerm website, Spotify, Apple Podcasts and more. As a bonus, if you're a member of a trade association such as The National Pest Technician Association or The British Pest Control Association, you can log your training and earn CPD points without leaving your home.

So, what are you waiting for?

Overall, the most vital ingredient is consistency. The professionalism, colours and templates right from the logo needs to be carried through everything from social media graphics to the logo on your van and everything in between. While this storm continues to brew in the background of everything you do, your marketing can be the silver lining and the umbrella keeping you dry until the cloud passes, and the sun shines again.

Keep those creative juices flowing in your own home and please, stay safe.

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Retailers urged to register for BASIS rodenticide audit scheme amid coronavirus site visit restrictions

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Pesticide retailers who have yet to sign up for BASIS's Rodenticide Point of Sale audit scheme are being urged to get in touch with the organisation to ensure that they can continue to trade during the coronavirus lockdown.

BASIS says that the Government's current travel restrictions have forced it to suspend its on-site auditing programme, which may have an impact on some sellers of professional rodenticide products who do not have the required certification to enable them to buy the products from their own suppliers.

Effective proof of competence controls at the point of sale is a central requirement for the implementation of the CRRU UK Rodenticide Stewardship Regime, which was introduced to ensure that professional use rodenticides are used responsibly in order to minimise their impact on non-target wildlife species.

Introduced in 2017, the BASIS Rodenticide Point of Sale audit scheme requires that anyone who wants to purchase professional use rodenticides must first prove their competency, whether they are the end user or a retailer looking to sell it on.

In the case of retailers, they must show their own suppliers a valid BASIS Rodenticide Point of Sale audit certificate of compliance or a recent, compliant BASIS audit report before they can replenish their supplies. It costs £183 + VAT to join the scheme if you are not already registered with the BASIS Stores Inspection Scheme, with retailers then audited on-site by BASIS Auditors.

Each audit visit takes around 20 to 30 minutes and the auditor will check sales to ensure traceability of the product right through to the end user.

Members of the scheme are normally given two weeks' notice ahead of a site

visit, however, with all but essential travel banned for the foreseeable future during the coronavirus outbreak, BASIS is currently unable to set dates for site visits. This will have an impact on those retailers who have not yet registered for the scheme.

BASIS Auditing & Compliance Manager Lindsay Smith says that, with three years having elapsed since the scheme was introduced, the number of non-registered retailers will be in the minority, but she urged them to get in touch, nevertheless.

They will still be registered to the system for 2020 audits and will then have to wait, although if they are in dire need of purchasing, BASIS may be able to set up remote audit over the phone or via a social media app. BASIS also carries out annual audits for existing scheme members and these too have been suspended until the Government announces the lifting of the travel restrictions.

Lindsay said: *"The vast majority of retailers will undoubtedly have signed up for the scheme already, but in this current climate, we wanted to make sure that those who have yet to get in touch are able to continue to trade."*

"We took an early decision to suspend our on-site audit programme as part of our commitment to helping the UK fight the coronavirus outbreak, but we appreciate how inconvenient this may be at what is a difficult time for retailers. Contingency plans are in place should the travel restrictions continue, and we are ready to change how we audit if the need arises."

"That's why we are committed to helping them in any way we can and why we would also encourage anybody who has signed up for the scheme but who has a query about their continuing membership to contact us."

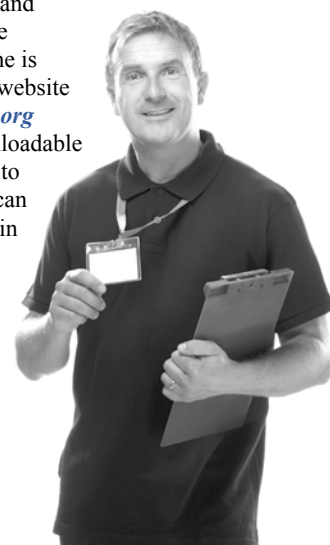
Only 2% of registered retailers, including online vendors, failed to achieve a compliant grade during 2019, with the number of companies passing their inspection first time exceeding 72%.

The most common fault discovered by BASIS auditors concerned Declaration Forms that were not signed or fully completed, some of which related to Farm Assurance membership, where the details held appeared to have expired or a date had not been recorded.

Lindsay added: *"The pest control industry has taken its responsibility for helping protect wildlife very seriously and we have seen excellent sign-up rates and excellent compliance with the point of sale scheme amongst retailers of professional use rodenticides."*

"The last report on the progress of the UK Rodenticide Stewardship Regime showed that more work needs to be done to ensure that professional use rodenticides are being used properly and responsibly and we at BASIS are committed to ensuring that we do whatever we can to ensure compliance throughout the retail chain."

Frequently asked questions relating to the Point of Sale audit and the UK Rodenticide Stewardship Regime is available from the website www.thinkwildlife.org together with downloadable Declaration Forms to ensure that sellers can get their processes in place.



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Always looking to make a difference!

As the strapline of the Killgerm 2020 catalogue says, 'Killgerm are always looking to make a difference'. Whether it's to their customers, to the pest control industry or helping to make the environment a better place to live.

Killgerm are doing their bit to make your world a greener place by using UGP, a business energy supplier for their offices in Ossett.

UGP (United Gas and Power) pride themselves on making a positive impact on the environment by moving businesses to renewable energy. Moving to a renewable supplier seems to be moving up the priority lists for many business owners, especially in the current climate and Killgerm is one of the businesses to do so and are hoping a little makes a difference.

Working with UGP, all the electricity that Killgerm uses for their offices and warehouses comes from 100% renewable energy sources. UGP have also joined partnership with the Yorkshire Dale Millennium Trust, on their 'Together for trees' campaign. They believe in the tree planting movement set by the Woodland Trust, which explains that the UK needs to plant 1.5 billion trees by 2050 to reach net

zero emissions.

In a hope to help make this happen, UGP now funds the planting of a new tree in the Yorkshire Dales for every new customer they have, and any customer who renews their contract with them.

From this campaign, so far, UGP has planted 5 trees on behalf of Killgerm. The total annual usage of the renewable electricity also means that Killgerm are offsetting the carbon footprint just short of 10 employees per year. A great step in the right direction.

Tom Menaldino, Senior Account Manager for UGP says, 'Having a positive impact on the environment is both a priority for the business and each individual member of the team at UGP. We also have a waiting list of staff who want to go out and plant trees for each customer that joins UGP. It is a much different working environment for many members of our team, they are experiencing a different renewable supplier and we love being different!'

If any businesses want to follow Killgerm's lead in helping the environment, you can contact Tom directly on 01134 672924 and e-mail tom.m@ugp.co.uk.





Pest Management Training and Qualifications during COVID 19

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You will all be well aware of how the response to the COVID 19 pandemic escalated very rapidly.

Initially we were told to wash our hands often, cover our mouth and nose with our arm if coughing and sneezing; then to keep our distance, followed by working from home if possible and not going to pubs and restaurants and finally to pubs and restaurants being told to close and not to travel unless absolutely essential.

The qualifications team at RSPH attempted 'business as usual' initially. Some staff worked from home, but the office was also manned so that post could be received and exam papers, results and certificates sent to centres.

When they finally had to close the office, they were still able to send e-certificates to centres, issue results on-line and arrange for the marking of any scripts that we had received.

But the COVID 19 restrictions, which prevented gatherings of more than two people, essentially brought a stop to most pest control training.

However, on-line training can continue. This may be by e-learning packages that were already available to the innovative use of Zoom and related video-conferencing systems, which everybody now seems to be an expert in.

Assessment, however, is still problematic. The security of the exam papers must be maintained and the exam itself must be invigilated even if it is a single individual taking an exam at home. The completed scripts then must be returned to RSPH for marking.

Despite these problems (or perhaps because of them) RSPH has been discussing with their centres that still want to continue training and assessment, how to manage this. Of course the safety of individuals is paramount, but those centres that have been able to continue training safely and without breaching the COVID 19 restrictions have been able to do so, albeit in a limited fashion, and have been able to make arrangements with RSPH for their learners to be assessed.

Those of you who are currently studying for an RSPH pest management qualification will be aware that some of the qualifications have time limits on them, with all of the constituent units in a qualification having to be completed within a certain time-frame. If this affects you, or any of your staff, you will be pleased to hear that RSPH has removed this constraint for the foreseeable future and we will review this when training is able to return to 'normal'.

The work of pest controllers is perhaps more important now than ever, and it certainly will be when food premises re-open and find that they have become populated by a whole host of pests in their absence.

But in carrying out your essential work, make sure that you STAY SAFE.

RSPH
ROYAL SOCIETY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
VISION, VOICE AND PRACTICE

Six general licences reissued for the control of wild birds

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Licences reissued on a temporary basis ahead of new licences coming into force on 1 August 2020. Defra has announced that six general licences for the control of wild birds are reissued on a temporary basis ahead of new licences coming into force on 1 August 2020.

The current licences GL26, GL28, GL31, GL34, GL35 and GL36 are reissued from 1 March to 31 July. They are available here <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/general-licences-for-wildlife-management> No action is required by licence users, beyond the ongoing requirement to act in accordance with the licence conditions.

Defra announced a longer-term review of general licensing in June 2019 which has made significant progress. An online survey to gather key information from stakeholders closed on 5 December 2019, receiving over 4,400 responses from organisations, licence users and other stakeholders. A series of consultation workshops with stakeholders have also been held.

The reissue of licences is necessary to complete the required analysis of evidence, both from scientific sources and from the online survey, and to hold further stakeholder workshops so that longer-term licensing arrangements are informed by the best available evidence. As part of the process, Defra will also consider Natural England's statutory advice.

Defra intends to publish new licences in early July to allow user groups to become acquainted with the changes before they officially come into force on 1 August.

Environment Secretary, Theresa Villiers said:

We are working intensively on delivering a robust licensing system for the future which balances the different interests at stake in a fair way. To do that, we need to ensure that we have carefully considered all of the relevant evidence, including the detailed responses to our online survey.

This extensive consultation and review process will be completed in the coming months, with the new licences coming into force on 1 August.

The general licences allow users to kill or take certain species of wild birds for a range of purposes such as the protection of livestock and crops, conservation, or public health and safety.

Following a legal challenge by Wild Justice in April 2019, Natural England revoked three general licences and subsequently issued three licences (GL26, GL28 and GL31) to cover some of the species and purposes covered by the original

licences that were revoked. Defra subsequently issued three interim licences (GL34, 35 and 36) while the longer term licensing requirements were reviewed. NE's licences have remained in place, since they allow for specified activity on European protected sites which are not covered by Defra's licences. These interim licences expire on 29 February.

Further Information:
The six general licences are:

- Carrion crows: licence to kill or take them to prevent serious damage to livestock (GL26)
- Canada geese: licence to kill or take them for public health and safety (GL28)
- Woodpigeons: licence to kill or take them to prevent serious damage to crops (GL31)
- Licence to kill or take wild birds to conserve wild birds and to conserve flora and fauna (GL34)
- Licence to kill or take wild birds to preserve public health or public safety (GL35)
- Licence to kill or take wild birds to prevent serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber, fisheries or inland waters (GL36)

Licence users seeking to kill or take wild birds on or within 300 metres of a European site, and which General Licences 26, 28 or 31 do not permit, must continue to apply for individual licences from Natural England. You can view the areas excluded from the General Licences here <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

Read guidance on applying for an individual licence here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wild-birds-licence-to-disturb-kill-or-take-for-health-or-safety>

RENEWED GENERAL LICENCE INCREASES PROTECTION FOR SCOTLAND'S WILD BIRDS

Eleven species of birds, including rooks, great black-backed gulls and collared doves have stronger protection from April 1, as they have been removed from general licences by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). All wild birds are protected by law. General Licences allow certain birds to be killed without the need to apply for individual licences – for example, to prevent serious damage to crops, to protect public health and to help prevent predation of other, at-risk bird species. General Licences can only be undertaken where non-lethal means have been tried and proved ineffective. They cover relatively common situations when there's unlikely to be any conservation impact on a species.

The renewed licence rules mean those seeking to control birds not included on the updated list will be legally required to apply for a licence.

The amendments to General Licences follow a public consultation which received over 700 responses. An additional SNH review of the latest available evidence shows that while many wild bird populations are in a healthy condition, a range of pressures, including climate change, means others have decreased, and are in need of greater protection.

The licence review also concluded that the control of greylag geese, a species already listed on the licence, should be extended to year-round control, to help minimise widespread agricultural damage to grass pasture and emerging crops.

Robbie Kernahan, SNH's Head of Wildlife Management, said:

"We want to make sure our licences remain relevant, evidence based and fit-for-purpose and our new General Licences will better balance current conservation research with the needs of licence users. Our role is to help wild birds thrive, but we must also safeguard the public from health and safety risks, as well as make sure farmers can protect their crops." SNH has also introduced greater transparency around the use of traps, which require individual users to register to increase understanding of how General Licences are used.


The use of General Licences will additionally be restricted over a number of designated sites in Scotland. This will include Natura sites also classified as Special Protection Areas for capercaillie, golden eagles, red-throated divers, black-throated divers, merlin, hen harrier, peregrines, and common scoter.



Update on licences for control of lesser black-backed gulls and herring gulls and of birds on or close to protected sites

By Dave Slater, Natural England's Director for Wildlife Licensing.

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Natural England has now started issuing decisions in relation to applications for individual bird control licences for those circumstances which are not covered by the General Licences issued by Defra in January. The purpose of this article is to update applicants on the progress of applications to control gulls on their land or for control of birds on or close to protected sites.

In January, we announced changes to licensing for lethal control of herring gull and lesser black-backed gulls, introducing individual licences for this purpose and a new application process for obtaining a licence. This is because of strong evidence of serious population decline in these two species. Our research indicates that the breeding population of herring gull, a red listed species, has fallen by 60 per cent since the 1980s, with amber listed lesser black-backed gulls declining by an estimated 48 per cent.

Since opening the new application process, we have received very high numbers of applications for control of the two gull species and for control of wild birds on protected sites. The scale of lethal control of these gulls that has been applied for is considerably greater than the levels of lethal control which Natural England has concluded are ecologically acceptable for these species.

Natural England must ensure that the licences it issues will not be detrimental for the conservation status of protected species. It must also ensure that the licences it issues do not adversely affect the conservation objectives of statutory protected sites. We understand that some applicants will be disappointed if they do not receive licences. However, Natural England must comply with the legal requirements outlined above and applications will be rejected if they do not meet the required criteria.

Natural England will issue licences where there is enough evidence and information in applications for us to conclude that:

- there is a genuine problem to resolve or need to satisfy for which a statutory licensing purpose applies;
- there are no satisfactory alternatives, including that non-lethal solutions have been tried and/or shown to be ineffective;
- the licensed action will contribute to resolving the problem or meeting the need; and,
- the action to be licensed is proportionate to the problem or need.

Many applicants will want to urgently act upon their licences, especially now that the bird breeding season is upon us, and I want to thank them for their patience. This work has taken longer than we originally anticipated, for the reasons explained below.

We have to date received almost 1000 applications, around three quarters of which arrived with us in March, many of these after the gull application deadline of 15 March. A significant number of these applications did not include all the required information and have taken additional time to go back to applicants to ask for this necessary information. We have brought more people into the licensing team to increase our capacity to address this unexpected additional workload. We have also been working with stakeholder groups to test that the conditions in the licences, for example on avoiding disturbance to other protect species such as raptors, will be clear and workable for users.

For the named gull species in particular, we need to ensure there is adequate information on large numbers of applications, and then assess them together. This is because we must undertake an assessment of cumulative impacts on conservation status before we issue these licences. In addition, where any applications are on protected sites, such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs), we need to ensure that we have the information we need in order to be certain there will be no adverse effects on those sites.

We continue to work hard on completing the technical assessments for these licence applications and have started issuing decisions to applicants. I will provide updates on the Natural England blog website as the process of decision-making progresses. I recognise it will be challenging for those who want to carry out control measures that were previously covered by the general licence, but we must abide by the law that is in place to protect bird populations. I sincerely appreciate your patience as the issuing of decisions on this new licensing process gets under way.

Further information on our gull licences can be found here:
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4872103923023872>.

Note that this article was correct as of 1st May.

The latest situation is available via the blog link here:

<https://naturalengland.blog.gov.uk/2020/04/21/update-on-licences-for-the-control-of-herring-gull-and-lesser-black-backed-gull/>

Tech ed note: If users have received their licences by the time of reading, PCN are interested to view an example. technical@pestcontrolnews.com



Tetramethrin reclassification

Insecticides containing tetramethrin at a concentration of 1.0% and greater will, from the 1st of May 2020, be required to feature a new hazard phrase on the label: 'H351: Suspected of causing cancer' due to their reclassification as category 2 carcinogens. Such labels will also feature the 'health hazard' warning symbol.

The key word here is of course *suspected*.

Another key point to make is that processed meat and alcohol are group 1 carcinogens in that they are known to cause cancer. Insecticides with a tetramethrin concentration at 10% or higher will additionally feature 'H371: may cause damage to organs.' A further talking point is the fact that many insecticides based on tetramethrin are diluted greatly prior to application.

WHY IS THIS LABEL CHANGE COMING?

First, a description of the different categories

A substance should be classified as carcinogenic Category 1A when it is known to have carcinogenic potential based on human evidence. There is no information about the potential carcinogenicity of tetramethrin for humans and therefore Category 1A is not supported. A substance can be classified as carcinogenic Category 1B when it is presumed to have carcinogenic potential in humans based on human evidences, while Category 2 is reserved for substances suspected to be carcinogenic based on evidence not sufficiently convincing to classify as Category 1.

Tetramethrin reviewed

In a review of tetramethrin following a proposal made by Germany, The European Chemicals Agency Risk Assessment Committee (ECHA RAC) noted that, despite the statistically significant increases in testicular interstitial cell tumours in two independent rat studies, the evidences are not strong enough to place tetramethrin in Category 1B. This is because there are uncertainties related to the mode of action and the relevance for humans. The ECHA RAC however considered that not all potential modes of action without relevance in humans can be disregarded with the available information and hence the relevance to humans cannot be ruled out. In conclusion, the ECHA RAC supported proposals for classifying tetramethrin for Carcinogenicity Category 2 (H351: Suspected of causing cancer). This applies to tetramethrin (ISO) and d-trans-tetramethrin and is in accordance with Article 37 (4) of Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008, the Classification, Labelling and Packaging (CLP) Regulation.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR USERS?

- Products with tetramethrin at 1% and higher are required to feature

the new phrase from the 1st May 2020

- Products with tetramethrin at lower than 1% will not feature the phrase on their labels
- This is a timely reminder to follow label directions, especially risk mitigation measures
- Remember that the Health and Safety Executive have continued to authorise tetramethrin products at 1.0% concentration and above. This means that by following risk mitigation measures, on the label, you can keep risks to an acceptably low level for both users and others
- Continue with COSHH assessments
- A COSHH assessment may point you towards a product without the 'suspected of causing cancer' phrase, especially when you can gain equivalent control of the target pest with an alternative treatment
- Ensure you continue to make accurate records of treatments and COSHH assessments

REMINISCENT OF THE RODENTICIDE RECLASSIFICATIONS 'TOXIC TO REPRODUCTION'?

- This change is perhaps reminiscent of the 'toxic to reproduction' reclassification applied to certain rodenticides, which placed further emphasis on following the label and mitigating risks
- However, the word 'cancer' perhaps has a greater impact

KEEPING UP TO DATE

- It is a good idea to refresh your insect control training and to join an independent Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme
- Regarding insect control training, a course followed by an examination through an Awarding Organisation is recommended
- Keep up to date with news like this by working with a reputable product supplier that offers technical support
- Subscribe to industry periodicals edited by technically competent advisors

SEEKING ADVICE

- Speak to industry technical advisors for technical advice regarding how these impacts on specific products

Flour beetle ID corner

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A research poster, presented at Insecta 2016, by Bakula *et al* reported confused flour beetles *Tribolium confusum* feeding and breeding successfully on polystyrene. Perhaps polystyrene foam, in building insulation and product packaging, is an often unconsidered source of flour beetle activity. Here we show the rust-red flour beetle *Tribolium castaneum* and its identifying features.

Tribolium castaneum Family: Tenebrionidae

A common pests of stored products e.g. cereals. Also recorded from oilseeds and their products, groundnuts, bones, spices, drugs, chocolate and dried fruits. Unable to feed on undamaged grain.

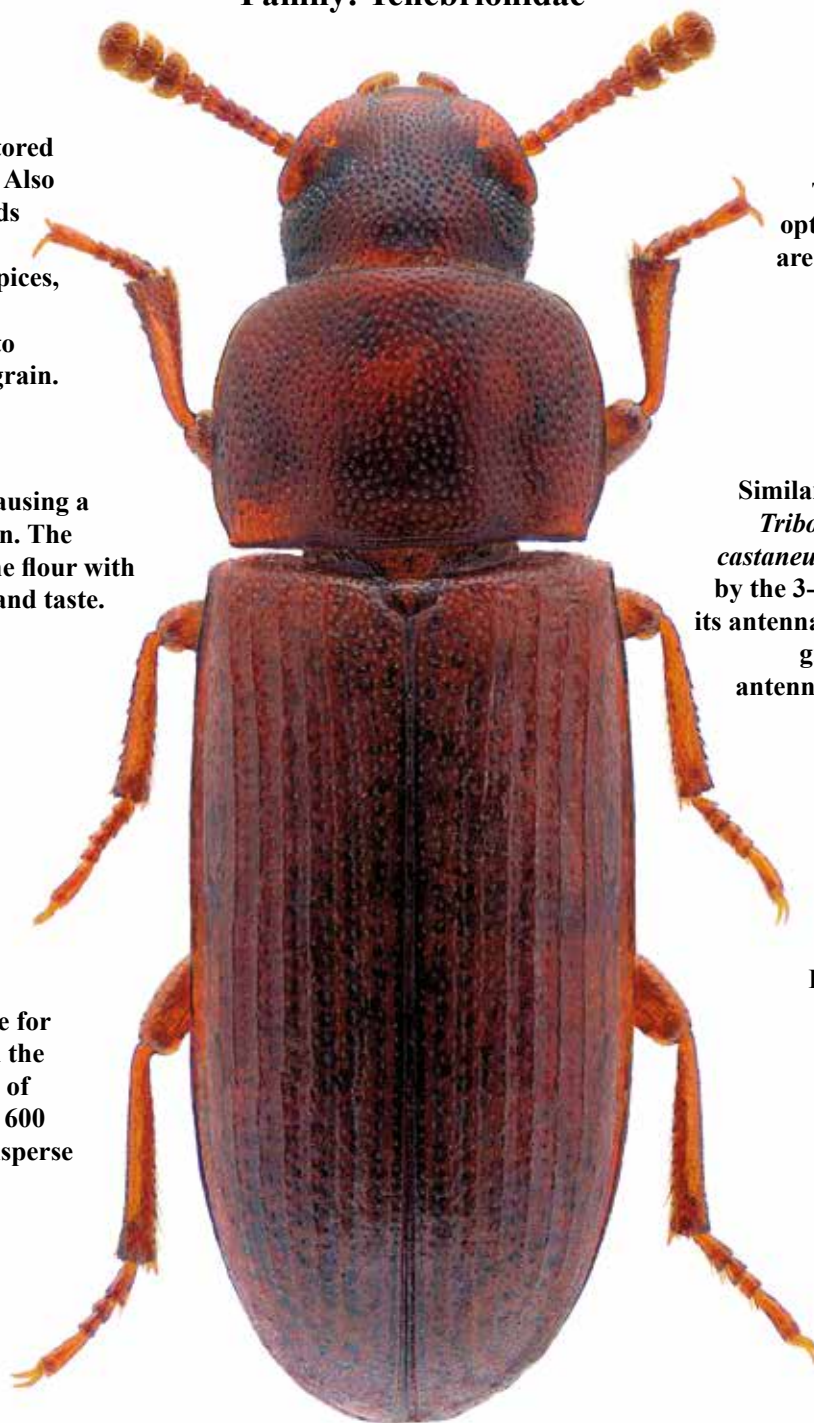
They taint flour by causing a greyish discolouration. The beetles also render the flour with an unpleasant smell and taste.

The adult can live for up to 3 years and the female is capable of producing 300 to 600 eggs. They can disperse by flying.

Thrives at high temperatures. The conditions for optimal development are 35°C and 60-80% humidity.

Similar in appearance to *Tribolium confusum*. *T. castaneum* is distinguished by the 3-segmented club of its antennae vs the indistinct gradually widening antennae of *T. confusum*.

Adult size is 3-4mm, reddish-brown in colour. Larvae are 4-5mm in length and yellowish-white in colour.



Tribolium castaneum. Udo Schmidt (CC) Flickr.

Moths on the increase, what can we do?

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*In this the second article about clothes moths *Tineola bisselliella* and their reported increase in the last few years, PCN speaks to English Heritage to find out what they do and how they handle clothes moths. Dee Lauder, English Heritage Collections Pest Control Manager kindly answered our questions. Thankfully no surprises but a clear emphasis on integrated pest management - the cornerstone of our industry.*

1. Treating clothes moths in historic houses is understandably a challenge, partly due to restrictions on various chemicals and procedures which might destroy valuable articles. How do you overcome this? Which procedures have you found to be most effective?

The main priorities given on this, at English Heritage Trust (EHT) properties housing vulnerable collections and through our Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Programme, are as follows:

- It is essential that English Heritage staff helping with the IPM Programme are trained in carrying out correct insect identification. Collections Conservation staff are also trained to either carry out physical treatments such as freezing or overseeing the services of a controlled humidity heat treatment which will prevent damage to vulnerable collections. We are fortunate to be able to use the services of a company who can actually bring an on-site heating chamber to carry large scale collection treatments at our properties when required.
- A good housekeeping programme based individually on the requirements of our many properties housing collections is the next priority. This is carried by trained staff through a targeted and thorough vacuuming programme which involves moving heavy items and cleaning underneath them regularly, vacuuming around the edges of carpets against walls using a targeting vacuum nozzle, vacuuming inside cupboards and storage chests etc. targeting the edges and any ledges and finally carrying out regular deep cleans and checks of vulnerable textiles and other objects such as natural history specimens and wooden items.
- Our final priority is using sticky blunder Museum traps and clothes moth traps on a seasonal three month basis to help us identify and catch potential problems at an early warning stage. This has helped us to set up individually based thorough housekeeping programmes on a yearly basis for staff and very importantly has helped in discouraging major insect pest infestations and damage to our collections to date.
- Our guidelines on freezing items, good housekeeping measures and key tips for clothes moth prevention as well as individual case studies are available in our 'Pests in Houses Great and Small' publication: <https://www.english-heritageshop.org.uk/books-media/pests-in-houses-great-and-small>. We also have an Insects Guidance section on the English Heritage website where our 'Insect Pests found in Historic Houses and Museums' poster can be found and details are given for ordering a copy (it's free of charge). There are also fact files available to look at on the various insect pests, birds and rodents. <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/learn/conservation/collections-advice-and-guidance/>

2: The pest control industry has seen different non-chemical procedures come and go. Heat treatment has been one of the procedures that has stayed. Are there any other non-chemical procedures used to help keep collections and houses free from pests?

Heat is used but on historic objects it must be humidity controlled to avoid damage. Otherwise our good housekeeping measures and freezing objects in chest freezers at some of our sites is preferable.

3: The pale-backed clothes moth *Monopis crocicapitella* was found in higher than expected numbers when English Heritage carried out a survey around their houses in 2017. Is it an upward trend of this moth or did the general moth numbers come back as higher than expected?

Operation Clothes Moth was launched in April 2017 after we saw over a period of five years, the numbers of common or webbing clothes moth (*Tineola bissellella*) double and observed the appearance of the pale-backed clothes moth (*Monopis crocicapitella*). English Heritage called on the public to help it decide where and how to concentrate its conservation efforts – visitors to English Heritage sites were given a free clothes moth trap and asked to record the presence and type of the pest in their own homes and then post their results to the English Heritage website.

The reported catch of the common clothes moth was significantly higher in London and South East than anywhere else in the country. As for the pale-backed clothes moth, 460 were registered – a number far higher than expected when compared to our sites where only 15 were caught. This surprise result gives us further warning to look out for this moth on our traps and in our properties and thereby prevent possible damage to our historic collections.

4: What is the worst damage you have seen? How was it treated?

The IPM Programme has been successfully carried out at English Heritage, through its application and hard work of all the staff involved, since 1997 and it has prevented serious damage to our many collections we look after around the country to date. Objects we do have which display insect pest damage are mainly evidence of historic damage. The only time serious damage has been found was in ordinary stored items of furniture which were not part of the historic collections. These were disposed of as a precaution to prevent the infestation from spreading into areas where historic collections were housed.

5: Have there been any occurrences of clothes moth larvae eating other things? Expectation would be the standard textiles, building fabric materials, birds' nests etc. (Recently we have seen lab data and found anecdotally of stored product insect larvae consuming other typically non-food items!).

We have seen evidence with dead rodents, birds and natural history specimens in display cases.

Back to basics

With a back to basics response we can all learn from this approach, especially with tightening restrictions on insecticides. Key focus is on monitoring and identification with non-toxic methods [heat or cold] as a first port of call. This is a perfect risk hierarchical response to pest control. Hygiene and housekeeping are reiterated as essential practices as well as training. Education of the front-line colleagues likely to handle collections items first, leads to an ideal system for early warnings of moth issues. English Heritage can act fast to treat and prevent further damages caused by these pesky moths. The last question also had an interesting answer, particularly with regards to general pest control management. An apt reminder that dead rodents could also create a feeding source for textile moths, accentuating the need to search for rodent bodies in all circumstances not simply outside but inside too, preventing secondary pests arising from an initial infestation.

In short...

- Look out for 'other' clothes moth, such as the pale-backed clothes moth *Monopis crocicapitella*
- Don't be afraid to go back to basics and emphasize hygiene and housekeeping.
- Be diligent with monitoring and identify the pest as well as the source of the issue.
- Act fast and continue to monitor to check progress and treatment efficacy.
- Work to the treatment hierarchy as much as you can and do what is proportionate to the situation.



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flyDetect[®] by PestWest[®], is the industry leader in online flying insect monitoring, and has recently been launched into the market place. It has been installed into a hospital in Sheffield by Gareth Scatchard, Environmental Services Team Leader at Sheffield City Council, in February this year. PCN has since interviewed Gareth to see his views on the new technology!

Q. When you first heard about flyDetect® what were your thoughts?

"My initial thoughts were that flyDetect® incorporates an excellent use of technology which has made the use of remote monitoring possible. It appeared that the unit would have significant potential for the industry, modernising the way we carry out insect monitoring. The covert design and functional construction would allow the use of this unit on a wide variety of sites from public areas to areas that were potentially difficult to access on a regular basis."

Q. How long has flyDetect® been installed in Sheffield Hospital?

"The install was undertaken alongside Mark Ward from Killgerm and Andrew Nulty and Maike Schmitz from PestWest on 11th February 2020."

Q. Why was it important to install flyDetect® in the hospital?

"There was no requirement as to which type of site the units had to be installed in, however the hospital offered a wide range of scenarios and environments to enable the devices capabilities to be fully explored. The hospital requires zero tolerance of pest species. This helps promote and protect the service user's health and wellbeing while receiving care, and the well-being of staff. This fly control unit would help play a huge part in achieving this."

Q. Does it work effectively?

"During the 3 months, the units have allowed us to detect fly species early, and plan appropriate attendance, or to offer comprehensive advice to help resolve the issue. We have been pleased with the reliability of the connection between the flyDetect® app and the unit. The app identified that one of the flyDetect® units had gone offline, and it allowed us to check the connection remotely. However, an Environmental Services Officer attended site and referred to the comprehensive instruction manual which enabled us to resolve the issue effectively."

Q. Is flyDetect® easy to work with and is the app easy to use?

"Yes, the functionalities of the fly unit itself are easy to use compared to a traditional unit. It's the remote monitoring, high definition camera and app system which makes this unit unique to the market. The app itself has been made user friendly and is pretty much intuitive, however, the instruction manual provides additional support too. The app looks very professional and uses the most up to date technology to make it visually satisfying. The colour coding trigger system, using satellite images for the location of the flyDetect® units and providing detailed images of the sticky boards each day and when required are good examples."

Q. Does having remote access and being able to access a live photo of the trap 24/7 have any benefits?

"The benefit to the pest control business allows for early identification of potential pest problems and which ensures only necessary visits to site are carried out. This is a more proactive pest management system for the client, resulting in a higher quality service, in areas where zero tolerance of insects is required. The technicians can check traps daily and potentially send the client a weekly report, advising the species caught and levels of insect life within their facility."

How often have you had to visit the traps?

"Since installing flyDetect® units, pest control technicians have only had to attend the site for regular maintenance, when notified by the app that the unit had reached the threshold number of flies and when the unit went offline."

Q. Is there a place in the market for this kind of remote monitoring?

"Yes, it allows a professional, effective response prior to receiving contact from the client raising insect issues within that area. Remote monitoring appears to offer significant benefits for controlling pests, in

particular within the health service, food industry and other industries where there are areas with regular accessibility difficulties due to site specific issues."

Q. What advantages do you see for flyDetect® in comparison to other conventional UV traps?

"Straight away the main advantage is the 24/7 monitoring with the high definition camera allowing mobile monitoring. The unit itself can be wall situated or ceiling hanging both of which offer a professional image. Compared to the conventional UV traps, flyDetect® offers a chance for immediate pest identification. It also allows the technician the opportunity to build an understanding of when insect numbers increase on site and identify how the infestation may be occurring, for example, in summer, if doors have been left open by staff on site."

Q. Have you found it helpful during the Coronavirus pandemic, to use a remote monitoring trap where accessibility is limited in areas like hospitals, compared to servicing traditional fly killers which you would have to visit regularly?

"Yes, due to having limited access to areas within the hospital grounds, flyDetect® has helped pest control during the Coronavirus pandemic. These units are allowing us to continue to monitor sites remotely, meaning we are able to protect our clients from potential unnoticed infestations. It will then allow us, if required, to plan a treatment according to government guidelines and correct working practices during the Coronavirus outbreak. These units will help protect our members of staff because they don't have to physically go to the site to check them. This will minimise contact with NHS staff and service users and help protect them from unnecessary contact with Pest Control Officers."

Q. How has it changed pest control for you?

"The most significant change I have experienced is that we are able to be more proactive in our jobs, meaning our customers/clients encounter fewer fly infestations, due our ability to monitor daily fly activity. Without flyDetect®, clients would have to make contact to raise an issue or wait until an operative carries out a regular routine inspection, which could be once a month. This early identification will help protect food safety and public health by resolving issues before they become established within the clients premises."

Q. What do you see as the future of pest control? Is remote monitoring the way forward for all kinds of pests?

"Yes, as technology develops the pest control industry must also develop. A lot of companies have already introduced the production of electronic reports for clients and are operating electronic rodent monitoring. All of these new systems are developing and becoming more accessible to the industry on all scales. However, with these systems including flyDetect®, there is still a need for highly experienced operatives to be carrying out proofing inspections, assessing and evaluating environmental factors, hygiene and evidence of pests, which may require professional intervention. Technology like flyDetect® and competent, forward thinking operatives, will make the industry more effective in the early identification and management of pest species overall."

Q. Would you recommend flyDetect® to others?

"Yes, I would recommend the flyDetect® system to other pest control companies because it will provide excellent protection to vulnerable sites and allow pest control operatives to further project a professional image."

**Confidence in
Fly Control**



How do ...Indoxacarb-based insecticides work?

In the second of a new series of ‘how do’ articles, PCN looks again at how certain insecticides actually work. While we use them every day, we perhaps don’t fully appreciate their mode of action (“they kill stuff!”) and true relevance to pest control.

In this instalment we examine the novel active ingredient ‘Indoxacarb’. In further ‘how do’ articles we will explore other insecticides, their modes of action, including rodenticides and how other pest control options function.

Mode of action

Indoxacarb is a member of the relatively new, to the UK public health pest management industry, oxadiazine class of insecticides that act by inhibiting sodium ion entry into nerve cells. The target insects’ enzymes break down indoxacarb to produce the bio-active form, which is the more powerful form of the insecticide. Its novel mode of action means it is excellent for resistance management. As it blocks the insect nervous system, rather than overexciting it, insects are paralysed and often die ‘nose down’ appearing as though they have ‘run out of steam’.

‘Reduced risk’

Indoxacarb is classed as a ‘reduced risk’ active ingredient by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The safety profile of Indoxacarb is particularly interesting. Non-target mammals, should they accidentally ingest the bait, break indoxacarb down differently vs insects. The small amount of insecticidally active end-product produced by mammal metabolism is excreted readily in urine.

What is ‘tertiary kill’?

Indoxacarb is also the only bait active ingredient with proven ‘tertiary control’. Indoxacarb has a neutralisation time (NT50) of 12-24 hours. A neutralised cockroach is defined as being immobile i.e. paralysed or physiologically dead. Although indoxacarb does not have the fastest initial action, it is a thorough treatment, due to its extensive ‘cascade effect’. The slower neutralisation time is beneficial in terms of the ‘cascade effect’ leading to ‘tertiary control’.

The ‘cascade effect’ is also described as ‘secondary kill’ or the horizontal transfer of bait in cockroaches. It has been reported that the probability of secondary effects on other members of the cockroach population decreases when a quickly acting insecticide is used. These secondary/indirect effects (‘cascade effect’) offer time and cost-effective methods of control via one insect exposing others to the insecticide. Physical contact, coprophagy (consuming faeces, often found near or inside harbourages), necrophagy (consuming the dead) and emetophagy (consuming vomit) are methods by which cockroaches expose each other to pesticide baits.

The ‘cascade effect’ of indoxacarb has been researched independently by Purdue University in the USA. Researchers found that indoxacarb

has secondary effects via the above methods of transfer and even has proven ‘tertiary control’ of cockroaches - a three-step chain reaction is set in motion, which multiplies to kill secondary and tertiary groups, so it is possible to kill 54 cockroaches for every one cockroach exposed directly to the bait. The slightly slower kill of indoxacarb allows greater transfer of bait via cockroach excretions and into harbourages, where coprophagous nymphs and non-foraging gravid females will feed and then be killed, all of which impacts on thorough control. For example, faster acting baits may kill cockroaches before they are able to return to harbourages and transfer bait.

Which species can I use indoxacarb gel baits against?

Indoxacarb gel baits, depending on the product label, can be effective against garden ants *Lasius niger*, Pharaoh ant *Monomorium pharaonis*, Argentine ant *Linepithema humile* and Ghost ant *Tapinoma melanocephalum*. Other species controlled include: Crazy ant *Paratrechina longicornis*, Big-headed ant *Pheidole megacephala*, Red ant *Myrmica rubra*, Acrobat ant *Crematogaster* spp, Pavement ant *Tetramorium* spp & Carpenter ant *Camponotus* spp. An impressive list of target species!

Don’t forget cockroaches either. The right product will work on the adult and nymphal stages of the Oriental cockroach (*Blatta orientalis*), German cockroach (*Blattella germanica*) and other less common species, such as the American cockroach (*Periplaneta americana*), as well as other cockroach species.

If you are new to gel baits, then you should take note of the following points, which are the key facts to be aware of, regarding gel baiting for ants and cockroaches.

Gel baits are...

- Highly palatable and provide effective control
- Highly effective and thorough due to the ‘cascade effect’ in cockroaches and trophallaxis (sharing of food) in the ant colony
- Lower risk to the environment, as they are a targeted and precise application, whereas broadcast spray treatments could be less so
- Ready-to-use, which avoids the need for any inconvenient mixing of insecticides and also reduces exposure to the pest control operator
- Suitable as a replacement for insecticidal sprays or to be used in conjunction with targeted spray applications as part of an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programme

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The new Outcast® Ant Bait Station is a quick, easy and ready to use bait station, prefilled with proven effective ant gel.

The solution is highly attractive to key ant species and it gives great all round effective colony control.

Contains 0.05% indoxacarb

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- Temperature and humidity are recorded alongside each image
- Set up and monitor multiple clients using the flyDetect® app
- Receive scheduled UV-A tube and sticky board change notifications
- Multiple connectivity options (Wifi, Ethernet and Cellular)
- The flyDetect® app is available on multiple platforms (smartphones and computers)

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New Products



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Take them by Storm®

Efficient, reliable & cost effective rodent control

Storm® Ultra Secure is a new wax-free rodenticide bait that combines the palatability of a soft block with the durability of a hard block. It is at least twice as palatable as leading anticoagulant wax block baits. This single feed 25 ppm flocoumafen bait controls rodent infestations effectively, including rats and mice resistant to anticoagulants. It withstands extreme temperatures and is ideally suited for locations where competing food sources are palatable and readily available. If you need to control rodents, take them by Storm..

- ✓ **Ultra palatable** for rats and mice
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Record visitor numbers at PPC Live 2020

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British Pest Control Association's travelling tradeshow, **PPC Live**, saw record numbers of visitors when it took a trip to Harrogate, Yorkshire this week.

516

people came along to the UK's biggest pest management event of 2020, beating previous attendance figures by 34%.

The pest management industry was treated to a variety of talks and demos from industry experts.

There was a showcase of more than 50 exhibitors, with new product launches from some of the industry's leading manufacturers and distributors.

The brand-new indoor demonstration area proved popular, as visitors were treated to sessions on proofing, face fit testing, catch tray analysis and smart pest control.

And Clive Boase's drop-in insect identification surgery went down a treat, with several

people bringing their own samples and many others getting a crash course in basic insect identification.

Even the wet and windy weather in the afternoon didn't dampen spirits, with outdoor demos from Dave Archer and Dave Mills just as popular as ever.

There was even a timely cameo from some local birds during the PestFix and Height for Hire demonstration!

During the day the winner of the Best Pest Pic 2020 competition was announced, with Mark Horrocks taking the £500 prize for his photo of a wasp sipping honey from a clothes peg.



And the BPCA stand stayed busy throughout the day, with visitors asking about training, BPCA Registered and membership, and kindly donating to the Association's charity of the year: Prostate Cancer UK.

Lauren Day, BPCA Events Manager, said:

"It's been such a positive event; we couldn't have asked for it to go more smoothly and the feedback has been brilliant."

"This industry is packed with hardworking people who are passionate about pest management and want to stay in the loop with the sector."

"Events like PPC Live are the perfect way to do that."

"It's always wonderful to see so many familiar faces and to meet all those who are new to pest management."

"Thank you to all the amazing exhibitors that made the day possible."

"We look forward to seeing everyone again at PestEx in 2021!"

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a person in a dark suit and white shirt. They are holding a silver pen in their right hand and a tablet in their left hand. The tablet displays a form with various fields and text. The background is dark and out of focus.

Risk Assessment in an Uncertain World

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As we currently live in very uncertain times, the NPTA are very keen to ensure that all members of the pest control community remain safe. Now more than any time in the past, the importance of risk assessment cannot be understated. There are organisations that will happily write a risk assessment for you and although these may cover the basic requirements, do these fit into your way of working? Moreover, if you write it, you will be forced to consider the risks and necessary controls to keep you and your staff as safe as possible.

We live in a world where it is difficult to ensure that all risk is removed but if you put sensible precautions in place, then you reduce your risk of becoming ill. This has always been the case with risk assessment. The Government have asked us all to self-isolate wherever possible, but does this completely remove all risk and ensure that you won't contract COVID 19? Of course, it doesn't as you will need to handle food that may be contaminated or encounter someone who is already infected, however, it does limit your chances of contracting the disease.

We are all pest controllers, and most are not health and safety experts, but this is not a necessarily difficult task if you follow a simple and logical thought process. So, what do you need to consider? There are accepted steps to set out to help with the task and as a reminder, these are:

- Identify the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Decide on and implement controls
- Review
- Revise

Hazards

So, what do you need to consider? These will principally be: The chance of you becoming infected; the chance of you infecting someone else; any staff who are exhibiting symptoms; any staff who are high risk or have underlying health issues; the pest risk to your clients; foreign travel; lone working (some sites might be unmanned or have limited staff).

Who and How?

The how and who is relatively simple to determine as this could be any member of your team, your customers and members of the public.

Controls

These need to be carefully thought out, however, many are easy enough to put to paper as the Government and public health agencies have put these in place for you, e.g. hand washing, social distancing etc. But do you need to go further? Consider domestic work. You may implement a control where you ask the potential client if there is anyone in the household suffering COVID symptoms, but how do you know they are telling the truth, after all they may just want a pest problem dealt with? To all intents and purposes, you don't, so you have a choice to make regarding domestic work. Remember that these are likely to be the scenarios where you are more liable to encounter people with symptoms anyway. At the very least, train staff to recognise symptoms and wherever possible carry out work keeping the recommended 2 metre distance

from the members of the household or ideally ask them to vacate the rooms you need to work in.

Wipe down any surfaces you encounter and wear gloves that are specific to that job. Provide personal hand towels and soap to your staff and give them the autonomy to refuse to carry out a specific job without fear of repercussion if they feel the risk is too high. Consider limiting the jobs people do per day as current thinking is that the more people you come into contact with, the greater the chance of contracting the virus (Viral loading). This is considered to be much greater risk than one exposure, assuming that it does not last for longer than 15 minutes.

There is also a great deal of confusion on whether masks are needed. The official advice from the World Health Organisation is that only two types of people should wear masks; those who are sick or have symptoms or those caring for people with COVID 19. There is, however, a suggestion that the WHO are reviewing this advice. Whatever you decide, remember that masks only protect the user, but can give a false sense of security and there is also added risk associated with putting the mask on and taking it off.

Email reports to reduce risk as the virus can live on inanimate surfaces. These are just some of the controls you can put in place that reduce the risk to either yourself or your staff.

At the NPTA we are advising members only to visit clients where there is either a public health threat pest present or where ongoing activity exists and only then if the risk is deemed acceptable. The Government are advising us all to self-isolate wherever possible for a reason and although we cannot tell members what course of action to take, it would seem prudent to limit social interaction at the present time for the good of all. So ultimately the most effective risk assessment control would be to stay at home. However, this is not always possible for the reasons set out above, so sensible controls would be advisable.

Review and Revise

This brings me to the last two steps in risk assessment, i.e. review and revise. Don't just write your risk assessment and think 'my work here is done'. Government guidance and rules are changing almost daily, and it is therefore important that you (a) keep up to date with briefings and (b) include this provision into your assessment.

This just leaves me to say, please stay safe and be careful. This is a very dangerous virus and although we all need to earn money, get this wrong and the consequences could be catastrophic. If you are an NPTA member and require any help or support with this, please don't hesitate to contact us at the office on 01773 717716, office@npta.org.uk, org.uk or technical@npta.org.uk

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COVID-19: how to survive a pandemic

Whoever said that one person alone couldn't change the world clearly never saw one person eat a bat, or for you conspiracy theorists out there – never saw someone mix up pandora's box in a Petri dish and let it escape. Whatever your belief or opinion is, one cannot argue that COVID-19 is wreaking havoc globally. It is neither racist or ageist and indeed the only positive thing one could say about the deadly virus is that it is 100 % non-discriminatory – it attacks anyone and tragically has killed some 137,000, and of that figure at least 12,886 in the UK. It should be noted that those figures (figures accurate at the time of writing) will be extremely conservative.

In economic terms all countries are in the mire with talk of the virus sparking global depression and trade slumping by an incredible 32 %. Yes, read that again – trade slumping by 32 % globally.

So how do you beat this unseen killer as a business? I have spoken to all my team about their experiences with clients and contacts and business leaders from the Pesticide, technology, and supply markets and here are the central themes emerging which may help. In no particular order –

Stay ahead of the curve – yesterday's way of business is now dead and gone and it is essential that you change and act decisively. Cash flow is king and therefore financial

planning for different scenarios is crucial. Safeguard what cash you have in the business and go through line by line everything you spend money on, cutting all non-essential expenditure. Seek to defer all loans and monies owed to institutions like the HMRC or VAT. Delay as much expense as is possible and be determined to get results.

Leadership – fear and panic are contagious, but so is strong, calm leadership and if ever your company needed a strong leader, that time is upon us. Regular catch up with all staff members if possible by face to face video conferences has proved very successful giving immediate reassurance and providing a framework of expectations going forward. Get in the play to win mindset as opposed to playing not to lose.

Use what's available – if you have staff that can be furloughed- do so. But do not be discriminatory, always acting in a fair and reasonable manner. Keep abreast of all government actions and if you need to apply for one of the government backed loans, do so, again getting well ahead of the queue.

Communication – the buzz word of the moment is adaptability and flexibility. If you are like myself and basically a Luddite, you need to brush up on your IT skills and embrace Zoom or Lifesize video conferencing. Work out other ways of communicating with your teams and clients other than e-mail or telephone. We conducted our first ever virtual mediation

the other week which was a great success and indeed having now done one and seen it work first hand, I doubt we will be going back to the old fashioned model of all meeting at someone's office.

Re-connect – there are undoubtedly going to be winners and losers here, but make sure in your down time that you contact your key clients, even if it's just to shoot the breeze with them. They will remember who contacted them and who didn't and it costs nothing.

Business Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPA) – this allows you to nominate and authorise a person of your choice to make and implement business decisions in the event you become incapacitated. Well worth considering at the moment and going forward.

And finally relationships – developing further and rekindling relationships now has never been more important both internally and externally. Pick people's brains and see where there are gaps in your business and the market generally. You can bet that those people you reach out to now will not forget you in the long run, you may well spot opportunities or at least more efficient ways of working.

Feel free to call Giles Ward on **07789 401 411**, e-mail on giles.ward@milnerslaw.com or [Linkedin linkedin.com/in/giles-ward-6b318731](https://www.linkedin.com/in/giles-ward-6b318731) to discuss being called as a witness or any other legal issue you are facing or need to discuss.

Your guide to the pest control 2020 TRAINING DATES



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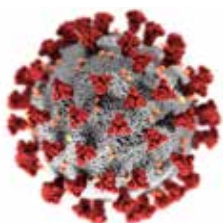
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These training dates were accurate at the time of print but will be subject to the COVID 19 restrictions. We advise that you check any dates directly with the provider.

PCN



To book visit: www.pestsolution.co.uk

June 4, 2020

Practical Wasp Control

RSPH Level 2 Award/Certificate in Pest Management -

Day 1 – 4th June 2020
Day 2 – 5th June 2020
Day 3 – 11th June 2020
Day 4 – 12th June 2020
Day 5 – 18th June 2020
Day 6 – 19th June 2020
Exam – 26th June 2020
June 5, 2020

September 14, 2020

RSPH Level 2 Award in the Safe Use of Rodenticides

RSPH Level 3 Award in Pest Management -
Day 1 - 14th September 2020
Day 2 - 15th September 2020
Day 3 - 19th October 2020

September 24, 2020

RSPH Level 2 Award/Certificate in Pest Management -
Day 1 – 24th September 2020

Day 2 – 25th September 2020

Day 3 – 1st October 2020
Day 4 – 2nd October 2020
Day 5 – 8th October 2020
Day 6 – 9th October 2020
Exam – 16th October 2020

September 25, 2020

RSPH Level 2 Award in the Safe Use of Rodenticides

November 19, 2020

RSPH Level 2 Award/Certificate in Pest Management -

Day 1 – 19th November 2020
Day 2 – 20th November 2020
Day 3 – 26th November 2020
Day 4 – 27th November 2020
Day 5 – 3rd December 2020
Day 6 – 4th December 2020
Exam – 11th December 2020

November 20, 2020

RSPH Level 2 Award in the Safe Use of Rodenticides



To book call: 01773 717 716

NPTA 'ON THE ROAD' TRAINING DAYS

- 2nd September** North East – Durham
Redworth Hall Hotel, Surtees Road, Newton Aycliffe, Durham. DL5 6NL
Details to follow
- 17th September** SOUTH – Farnborough
Holiday Inn, Lynchford Road, Farnborough. GU14 6AZ
Details to follow
- 14th October** East Anglia – Kettering
Kettering Park Hotel & Spa, Kettering. NN15 6XT
Details to follow
- 11th November** PestTech
Marshall Arena, Stadium Way, Milton Keynes. MK1 1ST
Details to follow



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