



The Alliance Quarterly

Fall 2009

The official publication of GCPMA. Serving the needs of pest management professionals in the Chicago metropolitan area since December 2004.

Updates from Your Alliance

By Gary Pietrucha, GCPMA President

It has been quite an interesting year so far. With the economy trying to make a come back of sorts, and all kinds of political rhetoric hitting us in the face every day, it certainly is difficult to focus on our industry. I again stress that, without us, there would be a lot of serious issues to be added to the high stress level we have. It truly is gratifying to have our industry recognized in the forefront of the battle against the bedbug onslaught and how our new technologies are not only affording us success against this once defeated pest, but achieving this success with levels of safety never before seen!

I am so pleased to see us in a positive light for a change, as a solution, not a problem to issues regarding the environment. GCPMA is continuing to present the finest in educational programs for our valued members, which is rapidly approaching the 200-member mark. Our seminars have produced new and refreshing subjects and all of our speakers have done an excellent job. Our recent Above and Beyond event featured 4 health inspectors from the area, all of which provided us with an informative dialog that simply was a must for anyone in this industry. Over 30 members stayed for the information, not the credit hours, and I think that is so impressive.

Our Meeting of the Minds III is shaping up to be one of the finest yet. The education committee, as always, has outdone themselves with the planning to assure our membership of what we are all about – the finest educational opportunities at an extremely reasonable price. Put together again by Sheri Cunningham, we have a program that will feature great speakers with national recognition, a boatload of exhibitors and manufacturers reps will share their knowledge with our contingency, and a location that fits us perfectly!

I would like to thank the Illinois Pest Control Association again for their continued support at our meetings and we will continue to be as supportive of them!

We are coming into the final stretch of this administration's run for GCPMA. It has been an honor working with this group because they are knowledgeable and tireless in their efforts to support the industry of which we are all a part. We need new blood and I can personally assure you that despite the time put into this organization, it has been worth every minute! I strongly suggest that any of our membership that has ever wanted to be heard but were afraid of politics or put down, you will not find it here, period. We might be competing companies, but there is true friendship and respect present in GCPMA.

I sincerely hope to see all of you at A Meeting of the Minds III in October, even if you do not need the credit hours. Knowledge at this level has never been so reasonable. Take advantage of it while you can.

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newsletter Fall 2009 ■ www.gcpma.com

Upcoming Industry Events

A Meeting of the Minds III

6:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Thursday, October 22, 2009
Tinley Park Holiday Inn &
Convention Center
18501 S. Harlem Ave.
Tinley Park, IL

Speakers and Topics Include:

Richard Cooper, MS, Entomologist,
Cooper Pest Control, "Bed Bugs: Get-
ting Out in Front of the Problem."

Bobby Corrigan PhD, RMC Pest
Management Consulting, "Updates in
Rodent Biology and Control Strategies."

Rick Vetter, BS, MS, Research Associ-
ate, University of California-Riverside,
"Spiders: Mythconceptions,
Mythidentifications, and Mythdiagnosis."

Michael K. Rust, PhD, Professor,
University of California-Riverside,
"Re-Thinking IPM for Ant Control."

Credit hours available:

Illinois 6 CEUs
Indiana 7A 5 CCHs
RT 5 CCHs

Download the full brochure and
registration form at www.gcpma.com,
click on "News". For more information,
call Sheri Cunningham (708) 308-0706
or Jim Anderson (847) 455-0043.

Greater Chicago Pest Management Alliance Annual Board Meeting and Dinner

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Marcello's Restaurant
645 W. North Avenue Chicago, IL

Board Meeting: 4:30 pm
Dinner: 6:00 pm

More information to follow and posted
on www.gcpma.com.

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The Winds Of Change

Jim Anderson, Smithereen Pest Management and GCPMA Education Committee Member

We are living in a climate of change – economical, technological, social and political. I think I even heard a rumor that the climate itself is changing. Sometimes it seems that the only thing we can count on in our life is change and history teaches us it has always been that way.

I marvel at the ability of cockroaches to adapt to all of the changes that have taken place on earth over millions of years. They have survived the Ice Age, DDT, Dursban and some very effective bait. They even survived while the dinosaurs became extinct. Our industry has killed countless millions of cockroaches just in the Chicago area alone, but we have not even come close to putting them on the endangered species list and we probably never will.

We face many changes in our industry today that challenge our abilities. Bed bugs and fleas are back and there has been a resurgence of cockroaches. Regulators and activists are continuing to seek ways to eliminate the shrinking number of chemical tools we still have available. Money is tight and our customers expect to get more service for every dollar, while at the same time our costs of doing business seem to increase daily.

Customers are more educated (and sometimes more misinformed) about pests as a result of their online research and they scrutinize our work like never before. Public demand for “green” pest management continues to grow, with no consideration for how labor intensive that can sometimes be. How can we survive all of this?

The good news is that cockroaches aren't the only ones who are able to adapt and overcome (a phrase familiar to U.S. Marines). Not only are we capable of changing, but Ben

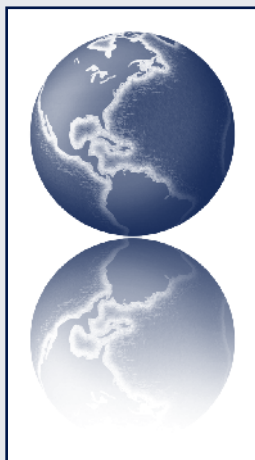
Franklin once wrote, “When you are finished changing – you are finished.” The key is to make sure the changes you make are for the good. To make good choices you need to learn all of your options. The GCPMA conference, A Meeting of the Minds III is a great place to start, whether you need state credits or not.

This year you can learn the latest information about bed bugs, cockroaches, rodents and spiders presented by some of the brightest minds in our industry. They will help you stay ahead of your customers and provide valuable service for which they will gladly pay you. You can learn about new and improved products and solutions available from numerous manufacturers, suppliers and innovators in the exhibition hall. But even more important,

you can learn how to solve some of your daily business concerns by networking with other Chicago area pest management professionals in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere. You will discover that GCPMA members are all in the same boat and we can help each other navigate through these choppy waters by sharing ideas.

The winds of change are blowing. Nothing makes your service more valuable to your customers than your knowledge and your experience. Use those assets as your ballast and rudder to keep your vessel steady and on course in the midst of this storm. Those winds may cause havoc and destruction for some, but they will fill your sails and carry you even faster to your hopes and dreams if you are fully prepared to meet their challenge.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the Holiday Inn and Convention Center in Tinley Park, Illinois, on October 22nd for education, prizes, food and fellowship. The price is so reasonable you can't afford not to attend.



Entomologist's Corner: Case Studies to Benefit Your Business

Sara Kantarovich, M.S. Entomology, Smithereen Pest Management

Fall is upon us and with decreased temperatures and food sources PCOs should anticipate increased rodent activity. Because we learn best by example, here are two case studies dealing with rats that might give you some ideas in your own rodent control programs.

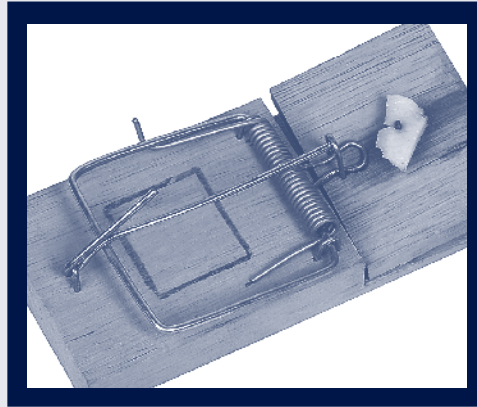
Rats in the Mall

We encountered a mall that had an established and rampant rat population. We started our service by investigating the details of the infestation: what is the infestation level, where are the rats nesting, what is the rats' food and water source, possible populations nearby, is this a breeding population, are the rats entering the buildings.

We began by surveying the exterior of the building, and mapping the area and documenting all burrows. We then did a thorough inspection within the building to establish whether any rats were nesting in the interior. Once we concluded that this was in fact a breeding population with juveniles and adults on the exterior of the structure we started our management program. Our first step was a regimented system of burrow pelleted baiting every day; there were over 130 burrows surrounding the building. We used a long funnel to distribute the pellets because this reduced the likelihood of being kicked out by pellets being deep in the burrow and increasing acceptance.

Returning to a rodent problem almost every day is vital when a population is being eradicated and it helps eliminate the chance of a population rebound. In addition to burrow baiting we simultaneously installed snap traps

within bait station (kill stations) around the entire structure. We choose kill stations for several reasons; the first being to reduce the number of sightings by our customer's customers as well as protect the structure from infestation.



Kill stations provide relief but must be checked often to be successful. The only rats we caught in these kill stations were juveniles, but the strategy proved to be an effective asset to our control program.

In addition to trapping and baiting, we knew that altering the habitat was important in reducing its habitability to current and future rats. Once the management saw the positive results of our baiting and trapping strategy they were more open to accepting our IPM recommendations.

Because the population was burrowing on the exterior, we began installing a new type of rodent proofing material that was landscaper friendly but would not allow rodents to burrow. We installed the proofing in the highest burrow areas since those were the most conducive to rat population establishment. Using a variety of IPM techniques — baiting and trapping, monitoring, habitat alteration, and providing constant service — allowed us to reduce the number of burrows from 130 to less than 5 within 12 months. To prevent future re-establishment of the rat population, an important aspect of this program was to maintain constant monitoring and service. Such a strategy was required because the surrounding environment had rat populations that could easily migrate.

Rodents in Restaurants

We started a new service in a sensitive restaurant account with a rat problem. The restaurant

was located near numerous water, food, and nesting sites. This structure was also located next to various other food establishments and dumpster areas with a high level of consumer foot traffic.

Just as in the mall, our first step was to map the area, document sightings, and determine the dynamics of the population we were dealing with. We frequented the area before the sun came up and into the night to witness the behavior of the rats foraging and to establish how they were moving in the environment. We realized quickly that the problem was deeper than initially thought.

Communication with your customer is important in any aspect of pest control and rodent issues are no different. After interviewing our customer we learned that the block of restaurants were located on top of a crawl space that had not been accessed in many years. Knowing that rats are burrowing animals and often nest underground, we knew that having access to that area was essential in our management program.

The crawl space turned out to be the perfect environment for a rat population to establish and flourish. The floor was composed of dirt and sand, there were pipes leading into gapped walls that rats were running in and out of to gain access to the exterior, and there was a large pool of water from aged leaking pipes. The crawl space was riddled with rat burrows and rats that seemed to not have any fear when it came to human interaction. The floor of the crawl space had almost a decade worth of rat droppings to illustrate the magnitude of the infestation.

Our next step was to work with our customer to fix all leaking pipes and to start drying up the



water source. We knew that without getting rid of this easily accessible water as well decreasing the humidity in the crawl space, eradicating the rats would be extremely difficult. As the water was removed we started a similar baiting program as in the mall. We entered the crawl space almost daily to pellet bait every burrow. We also used liquid anticoagulant to diversify our chemical strategy. We installed kill stations in the crawl space as well as around the area of the structure including all the decorative planters that had burrows. We chose kill stations on the exterior locations because we had to keep in mind our customer's customers. Using a bait system would have led to dead and conspicuously dying rats for people to see. Just like burrow baiting daily, we continually check our kill stations almost daily to maintain their effectiveness.

Another topic of concern was the management of garbage in the area, which was highly conducive to sustaining a rat population. We brought the garbage removal company into our meetings so we could work with them on a better system of pick-up to decrease the available food source. By using multiple IPM

strategies and involving our customer we eliminated the rat population in the crawl space and greatly reduced the rat population on the exterior. Although we have made tremendous progress on this account, an important fact that we keep in perspective is this: although it took

time to eradicate the problem, it can return instantly because there are neighboring areas with high rat activity. To ensure control we visit this sensitive account nearly every day.

Understanding the behavior and habits of the pest as well as the conducive conditions in an environment will be knowledge that can only help a PCO develop a rodent control program that will be effective and successful.

Is Social Networking Right for Your Pest Control Business?

Mark L. Hendrickson, Wingra Group

The microblogging network Twitter grew 1,448% year-over-year, from 1.2 million visitors in May 2008 to 18.2 million in May of 2009.

Facebook is growing by more than 500,000 users per day, and has more than 250 million members worldwide.

Business networking site LinkedIn has surpassed Facebook in its rate of growth, and now boasts more than 16 million visitors per month.

If you search for “pest control” on YouTube, you’ll have a choice of nearly 10,000 videos ranging from ant elimination, to principles of vertebrate pest control, and jobs in the pest control industry.

With these numbers, it is no wonder that savvy business owners are tapping social media as another way to get the word out about their businesses. That these services are free just adds to their charm. But — and here’s the clincher — is social media right for your pest control business? Could social media be a free substitute for

traditional advertising? How much time should you devote to creating and updating all those profiles or creating a YouTube video?

Most observers feel that traditional advertising and marketing is still vital. The best

approach is to integrate social media into your more traditional marketing mix. Here are a few words about each.

Blogs

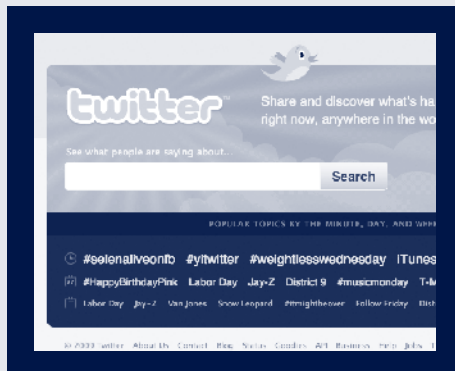
Blogging is a good way to build customer loyalty. Take a look

at Tumblr (www.tumblr.com), a free, easy, and customizable site that currently has 1.5 million users. You can use a blog to describe new services, and it’s where your customers can describe their user experiences with your company. With it, you can invite an unlimited number of people to contribute to your blog and submit posts for your approval. But don’t

just create a blog and let it alone. Blogs that are refreshed regularly get a boost in search engine rankings.

Twitter

Twitter is a service that gives users 140 char-



acters to share information with their followers, who are other Twitter users who track them. These messages are called tweets, and 140 characters force you to be focused and direct. You might be able to use Twitter to announce a new pest control service with a link back to details on your company web site. You can use Tweets to drive traffic to articles, web sites, videos, and much more. To get started, visit the Twitter web site and sign up for free. Start slow and follow a few people until you become familiar with the flow of the service, then expand at a pace that feels right for you. As you start to use it more, you may find it easier to use a desktop application such as Tweet Deck or any of the other Twitter apps and widgets.

YouTube

Another way to capitalize on free social media is to post videos on YouTube. Let's say you've developed a novel way to get a raccoon out of a chimney. Video tape the procedure with accompanying narration explaining what you are doing. Make certain that the video includes your company name, logo, phone and web address. Producing such a video doesn't have to cost a lot. Flip video cameras cost \$150 – 400 and they make it easy to capture and share low-resolution video via email and the web. Many models also feature

one-touch uploading to YouTube and AOL Video.

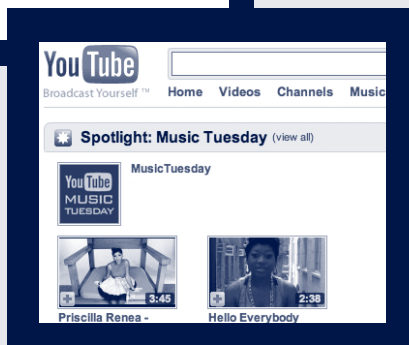
LinkedIn

This site is used for professional networking. With LinkedIn you create an online profile that represents your professional experiences, education/certifications, and recommendations. If you've achieved QualityPro designation from NPMA, that's the type of detail to include in your LinkedIn profile. Recommendations are particularly important on LinkedIn. Obtaining a favorable recommendation about your services from a former customer may help influence a potential residential or commercial account.

In some cases on these sites you may need to sign up for a free account. If you do, it is a good idea to have a consistent identity and user name. For example, signing up as maximumpestcontrol on one network, and using maxpest35

on another may confuse potential customers. To ease the task of user name registration, I suggest visiting www.knowem.com. A search here will tell you whether your brand/username is available on 120 different social media sites.

Should you be using social media? Absolutely, because your competitors are and your customers have been for a long time.



A Meeting

WHEN:
Thursday, October 22, 2009

WHERE:
Tinley Park Holiday Inn & Convention Center
18501 S. Harlem
Tinley Park, Illinois

Of The MINDS III

Sponsored by the Greater Chicago Pest Management Alliance
The nation's foremost speakers in pest management featured at this one-day educational and recertification conference.

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Structural Pest Control Act Signed Into Law

On August 14, 2009, Governor Pat Quinn signed into law HB 3995, the 10-year extension of the Structural Pest Control Act. The signing of this bill insures our industry that the act will not sunset again until December 31, 2019. The Greater Chicago Pest Management Alliance extends their appreciation to the bill sponsors, Representative Beth Coulson and Senator Heather Steans, for their dedication in getting it passed and also to Governor Quinn for his support. Additionally, we want to thank the Illinois Pest Control Association for their efforts in moving this bill forward.

DEPENDABILITY EXPERTISE [INITIATIVE] PARTNERSHIP STRENGTH SUPPORT

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John Bolanos, Vice President, Univar USA PP&S



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Safe Driving Is No Accident

Kevin J. Connelly, MASH Services of Illinois

To the lay person, pest control is an industry filled with risks. After all, those exterminators work around really hazardous materials every day. The reality, as you know, is that when used in accordance with the label directions and with a little good common sense, the risk from the chemicals we use is not great.

When one studies the insurance claims from our industry a clear pattern emerges: you are most likely to get hurt in your company vehicle than in all other situations combined. This is one area that each of us can improve upon and by doing so you will save yourself money, directly and indirectly.

Do you have a driver testing and driver supervision program? Does that program include initial training and testing along with continuing education and supervision? Do you have a driver responsibility program? Do you have a driving standards policy? Do you have a cell phone use policy, for work related communication devices and personal devices?

What is your initial driver's training? Driving on a service route is much different than driving for other purposes. There are multiple traffic situations, with distractions, such as client communications, and time pressures. Are your technicians ready to handle the pressure and aggravation of driving between clients? And do it safely?

Do you know your drivers before they get behind the wheel of your vehicle? Have you seen a current copy of their driving record? How else do you judge the driving ability of

a technician? Do you ride with them? If you will not sit in a car they are driving should they have the keys to your vehicle? Do you have supervisors follow the technicians in the performance of their driving? The driver may be very safe when the boss is in the car but do they drive the same when they think no one is watching?

Does the initial training period include training sessions and discussions on driving safety? Do you include in those discussions the types of situations they will encounter in an urban driving environment (how to deal with a road raging driver as an example)?



Once your driver is on his service route how do you monitor his driving? Is there a tracking device in the vehicle that will indicate speed traveled? Is there an ongoing policy of presenting a copy of the driving record by the technician on a regular

basis? Is there an ongoing driver supervision program in place? Are there ongoing driver training sessions? Does the company discuss the need for changing driving habits created by the change of season? Are these sessions documented in case of situations in the future?

In the event of an accident is the accident investigated? I know it is hard to believe but I have not met a technician yet who was at fault in any accident. Does their version of the events match the damage on the vehicle? Do you have policies and procedures in place for recording all the evidence associated with the accident? Do you use the information gained and educate the driver, and his fellow employees to avoid repetition

of the circumstances of the accident? Please remember that even when you are not at fault in an accident, the accident most likely was avoidable. Is there a vehicle maintenance program in place to avoid mechanical issues that could lead to accidents?

Do you have a ticket notification policy with your employees? How do you handle "Red Light Tickets"? I know how much I enjoy getting those red trimmed notes from the City of Chicago and a number of suburbs; do you feel the same way? Do you make the offending technician, if they still have a job, view the video that is available on line of their actions? It is amazing how the story changes from "I did not run the red light!" to "Those (bleep) politicians!" How do you handle the employee who gets his picture taken while speeding in a work zone by the State Police when that \$350.00 ticket arrives at the plate holder's door?

You are probably thinking, "He said I would save money, it sounds like I am spending money. There is a cost to training people. Everybody knows how to drive. Why do I have to spend money on that? It costs money to have a supervisor drive behind a technician, it takes time to analyze an accident when the supervisor or I could be selling a new account. He's talking about tracking devices; do you know how much they cost? So where are the savings?"

How does an accident affect your business? When the vehicle is down because of an accident, do you tie up a spare vehicle to replace the vehicle damaged in the accident? If so then is one of your technicians, instead

of servicing clients, reading old magazines and watching Judge Judy at the shop waiting for the car repair to be finished on his vehicle instead of using the spare vehicle because the technician with the accident is using it instead? What does that cost you? Do you have to rent a car to allow the technician to work while the accident is repaired? What is that cost to you? What if the technician is injured during the accident? What does that cost? Who will service his clients? Do you pay overtime rates to other employees, what does that cost you? What if there is a lawsuit filed and it turns out that your employee had been convicted of DWI two years previously and you never checked? What will that cost

you? How about insurance rates? Will you save money if you are proactive with driver training, exercise caution with whom you let drive your vehicles, and reduce the number of accidents your company has? You know you will save money on your insurance. What does all this save you?

Only you can answer all of these questions and then determine if your vehicles

are being driven safely or if you need to take some actions to make sure they are driven safely in the future. You will protect your employees from injuries, protect your vehicles from damage and relieve the stress you experience now whenever an accident occurs.

One last thought: if safety is our business, then doesn't that include getting to the client safely not just safety when making applications? As you can see, safe driving is no accident!





Greater Chicago Pest Management Alliance
 Post Office Box 8022,
 Westchester, IL 60154



2009 Application for Membership and Renewal

We are growing and have become a voice for our industry but we need your membership and participation to continue being a viable alliance for our profession.

___ Full membership \$35.00 ___ Associated Membership \$100.00 Lapel Pin ___ @ \$5.00 each

NOTE: Please make the check payable to *Greater Chicago Pest Management Alliance* or *GCPMA*. Mail to: Greater Chicago Pest Management Alliance, Post Office Box 8022 Westchester, IL 60154

Company Name: _____ License # 051- _____

Location Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____ Web Page: _____

Contact Person: _____

Years in Business: _____ IPCA Member: _____ NPMA Member: _____

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Types of Services Performed:

- General Pest Control ()
- Sales of Products ()
- Fumigation ()
- Ornamental ()
- Weed Control ()
- Termite Control ()
- Rodent Control ()
- Bird Control ()
- Mold Control ()
- Nuisance Wildlife Control ()
- Other: _____