THE ALLIANC QUARTERLY

Greater Chicago Pest

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Happy New Year's Valued Members!

I think it's only right to tell everyone a little about myself. My name is Arthur White. I was born and raised in the city of Chicago. In 1987, thirty-five years ago, I started my pest control career with a small family owned pest control company for 8 years. After that I furthered my career with the largest pest control company at that time for 17 years. And now I'm with a family owned pest control company that I'm very happy with for 10 plus years.

Over 5 years ago, Jeff Beallis, my branch manager at the time, brought me to a GCPMA (Greater Chicago Pest Management Alliance) meeting. That meeting was intriguing and sparked my interest instantly. I had no hesitation in joining this board of directors and officers. In my own words these were people of various pest control companies with promising ideals, compassion and open arms. I wouldn't have ever guessed PCO's, Pest Control Companies and Vendors had a voice out there and strong representation or I would have joined a lot sooner. It also amazed me that this board also has a voice in Springfield. **Wow, what a group!**

I would like to throw a shout out to Gary Pietrucha, Jeff Beallis, Don Kaufman, Bill Dyra, Jane Peifer, Rick Aardema, Dave Tumminello, Greg Strohl, Kurt Spurgeon and Jim Anderson. And to our newest members Keith Henley, Ben Dahlstrom, Chris Magnuson and Andrew Callaghan. Can't forget about our Web Consultant Chris Ravesloot (a web genius). Also past members who served their terms and moved on. All you guys rock... Thanks for your friendship, guidance and most of all mentoring me. And last, to all of you valued members. We are always looking for new board members to join this Alliance. You all are welcome to sit in on our meetings and events to see what this board is all about.

ART WHITE, 2022 GCPMA President

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Management Alliance

Spring Edition

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'RABBITS'

What's up, Doc? The catchphrase of the most famous rabbit, Bugs Bunny.



Although rabbits are cute, they can be a nuisance and there are plenty of people who look at rabbits pretty much the same way Elmer Fudd looks at Bugs Bunny; some 60,000 Illinois residents hunt rabbits.

Whether you value them as food, objects of affection, or something in between, rabbits are fascinating creatures. They're among the wild mammals we are most likely to encounter on a regular basis. That's because they thrive in the sort of habitats we create for ourselves like lawns, gardens, flower beds, etc.



Eastern cottontails are the most common in Illinois. They belong to the Leporidae family (rabbit and hare family). Cottontails are easy to identify by their long ears, large back feet,

and small tails that are white on the underside. They have buff to brownish gray fur with white undersides. Cottontails typically weigh two to four pounds and are fully grown by six months of age.

Cottontails are sexually mature at just six months of age, and they really do breed like . . . well, you know the phrase! They are polygamous (mating with several individuals). Female cottontails give birth as often as three times a year and have four to six young per

litter with the gestation period of 28 to 30 days. A baby rabbit is called a kit, a female is called a doe and a male is called a buck. The average lifespan of cottontails is 12 to 15 months.



In the words of the Field Manual of Illinois Mammals, "A *rabbit's life is full of danger.*" The list of animals that eat them include coyotes, foxes, weasels, dogs and cats, as well as hawks, owls, crows and snakes. In addition, many rabbits are killed by cars, mowing and other

human activity. Sometimes, when young are still in the nest, they will be injured or killed by lawnmowers or weed trimmers. When rabbit populations are reduced, predator populations also decline.

Female rabbits will leave their young alone in the nest on purpose, so as to not attract the attention of predators. That means if you happen to find unattended baby rabbits it is important to leave them where they are and resist the urge to rescue them.

When frightened, cottontails sit very still, trying not to be noticed. If a predator gives chase the cottontail will run quickly in a zig-zag pattern to the nearest patch of cover.

During the winter months, cottontails usually feed after dark. At other times of the year, they feed from sunrise until early morning and again around sunset. If the weather is mild and they have adequate cover, they may feed during the day.

Cottontails are coprophagous, meaning that they eat their own droppings. A rabbit eats its food quickly and then moves to a sheltered area, where it excretes soft fecal pellets. These pellets are then eaten by the rabbit, allowing it to digest its food in a location that is more protected from potential predators. The reingested pellet is brown (versus black) and lighter in weight, with a straw-like appearance.

Rabbits have five toes on the front feet and four toes on the hind feet. The prints of their hind feet are about

two-and-a-half times as long as the prints of the front feet. When rabbits hop, the prints of the hind feet are side by side in front of the prints from



the front feet. Unless the ground is soft or covered in snow, rabbits will likely not leave any noticeable tracks.

Rabbits can cause homeowners considerable frustration when they damage plants in the garden, orchard, or landscaping. To identify damage caused by rabbits look for a clean 45-degree cut that clip off flower heads, buds, or small stems. There may also be evidence of gnawing on bark or stems of woody plants, particularly during the winter months. How does a person prevent rabbits from damaging plants? There are no easy, surefire answers to the question, but a website maintained by University of Illinois Extension called *"Living with Wildlife"* offers a number of possibilities. One way to reduce the potential for damage caused by rabbits is to remove potential places that rabbits might take cover. Remove brush piles, weed patches, stone piles, and other debris, and keep grass cut short.

You can favor plants they don't normally eat, although in tough circumstances they will eat just about anything or you can protect special plants with commercial repellents or wire mesh.

There are many commercially available repellents to deter rabbits from eating plants. Many of these products contain the fungicide Thiram. The products are taste repellents and are applied directly to the plant. The products will need to be reapplied as the plants develop new growth and after heavy rains wash off the product. Additionally, these products are not approved for use on plants intended for human consumption and should not be used on garden plants or fruit trees. Use of repellents will not guarantee plant safety. If there is a large rabbit population, or if food is scarce, rabbits will eat treated plants if other food sources are not available.

Rabbits are not a public health concern. However, they can be carriers of Tularemia. This bacterial disease is fatal to rabbits. People can become infected with the disease by eating undercooked rabbit meat or by handling dead or sick rabbits that are infected. The livers of infected rabbits will be covered with small white spots. Risk of human infection is low since most infected rabbits die before hunting season begins. When handling dead rabbits, be sure to wear rubber gloves and to wash your hands thoroughly with warm, soapy water.

In Illinois, the eastern cottontail is protected as a small game animal. Rabbits in urban areas that become nuisance animals may be trapped and removed if a

permit is issued by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

In rural areas rabbits may be hunted during November through mid-February by individuals possessing a hunting license. The IDNR has set a daily bag limit of four rabbits, with a possession limit of ten.

I'll close my article with a famous line of Bugs Bunny . . . **"That's All Folks!"**





SCHOLARSHIP MONEY AVAILABLE!

GCPMA is proud to award scholarships to students who are involved in the pest management industry <u>OR</u> whose parents/ guardians are employed by a GCPMA member company. We offer three \$1,000 scholarships to eligible candidates. The GCPMA Scholarship Committee reviews all COMPLETE applications and the winning recipients are notified prior to the fall semester.

The application form and information is on the gcpma.com website under the ABOUT tab, or go to: gcpma.com/scholar/

Deadline for Scholarship Application Submission: June 30, 2022



2022 BOARD MEMBERS

The following Slate was voted in as the 2022 Officers and Board at the General Membership Meeting in December at the Green Street Grill in Bensenville. The dinner was a huge success and we hope to see many more at our next dinner in Decem<u>ber, 2022.</u>

President: Art White Vice President: Greg Strohl Sergeant at Arms: Andrew Callaghan Secretary: Dave Tumminello Treasurer: Rick Aardema Directors: Don Kaufman, Jane Peifer, Keith Henley, Ben Dahlstrom, Chris Magnuson & Joshua Villazana Immediate Past President (non voting): Gary Pietrucha

URGENT ACTION REQUIRED ACCESS TO CRITICAL RODENT CONTROL TOOLS IS UNDER ASSAULT

BACKGROUND

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is considering several changes to its regulation of rodenticides that will jeopardize access to this critical rodent control tool.

WHAT IS BEING PROPOSED?

To make ALL bulk rodenticides RESTRICTED USE PRODUCTS (RUP)

WHAT WILL THIS MEAN FOR PEST MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS?

• All applications of rodenticides would be required to be applied by a certified applicator or under the direct supervision of a certified applicator.

» Each state has different licensing requirements, making it difficult for existing technicians to get certified and creating excessive barrier to entry for new employees

- Pest control technicians would be required to conduct labor and time intensive carcass removals four days after each application and additionally 1-2 days after that making rodenticide usage almost impossible under the current PMP business model
- Rodents are difficult to control using 'general use', the 'RUP' label will necessarily ensure that rodent infestations will be much worse and rodent control even more costly, time consuming, and difficult

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- Reach out to the EPA contacts below to provide feedback on the ramifications of this misguided regulatory initiative
- Reiterate:

» RUP status creates unworkable requirements on this widely used and critically necessary public health tool

» The financial and labor induced jeopardy this will cause professional pest control operators

» The inability for technicians to apply rodenticide unless licensed by cumbersome individual state requirements

» The inability to protect public health and the food chain from the destruction and the disease caused by rodents

- Food production
- Grocery
- Restaurants
- Hospitals
- Schools
- Hotels
- We recommend that you send communications directly to Steven R. Peterson and copy the other EPA representatives
- We also recommend that you copy your senate and/or congressional representatives as the EPA is very sensitive to their inputs
- It is vital that the EPA hears from other stakeholders and industries against this proposal

KEY EPA CONTACTS

CHEMICAL REVIEW MANAGER

Steven R. Peterson Risk Management and Implementation Branch I Pesticide Re-evaluation Division Office of Pesticide Programs, EPA Email: *Peterson.StevenR@epa.gov*

PESTICIDE RE-EVALUATION DIVISION DIRECTOR

Elissa Reaves, Director Phone: 202-566-1925 Email: *reaves.elissa@epa.gov*

EPA PESTICIDE PROGRAMS DIRECTOR

Edward Messina, Director Phone: 202-566-1245 Email: *messina.edward@epa.gov*





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FACILITATING COLLABORATIVE COCKROACH TREATMENT

CONTRIBUTED BY ZOËCON



Cockroaches are one of the most hated insect invaders, especially when it comes to kitchens, restaurants, and food-handling establishments. Cockroaches secrete a foul odor and can also cause sickness from the diseases they carry. One of the best tools a PMP can use against cockroaches is effective communication with the customer. Making sure your customers know the ins and outs of cockroach treatment and prevention will not only make the process smoother, but it will also reduce callbacks and re-infestations. Read on to learn how collaboration makes for effective cockroach control.

1 SPOTTING THE ENEMY

Cockroaches are creatures of the night, so it isn't always easy for customers to relay the full scope of the cockroach issue to their PMPs. By the time a cockroach is spotted on the counter or a customer notices destroyed paper products, it often means the structure has an infestation. Even so, customer collaboration is crucial to early stage identification. If the customer can describe the invader, or better yet, provide a sample, it will make the PMP's job that much easier.

2 MAKING AN INFORMED COCKROACH ID

A PMP is often able to start identifying the cockroach at hand based on what the customer is able to share. German cockroaches, for example, tend to be tan and a bit small, at about half an inch long, while American cockroaches have a reddish-brown color. The PMP can guide the customer with leading questions about color and size if a sample is unavailable.

3 CUTTING OFF COCKROACH RESOURCES

Cockroaches are often attracted to cluttered spaces that provide the resources they need: food, water, and shelter. Part of any cockroach treatment or prevention plan should include cutting off resources. This means reducing clutter so the roaches have nowhere to hide and removing food and water sources. This has the added benefit of making the PMP's treatment more effective, with no competing hiding places or food sources.

Clean and clear spaces are great first steps for treatment, but just because a restaurant, house, or establishment is clean, that doesn't stop a cockroach invasion. In establishments that receive frequent shipments, packaging material could be carrying extra cockroach cargo. Any boxes, packages, or luggage that come into the customer's space should be fully examined for signs of cockroach contamination. These items could be carrying full-grown roaches or even egg capsules. Make sure customers know that sharing information about incoming packaging could be helpful to identifying the infestation source. As in every step of the process, clear communication between customer and PMP is key.

4 COMMUNICATE WITH KINDNESS

Even in the most well-kept kitchens and food-handling establishments, reducing food, water, and clutter is a tall order. Customers who are experiencing a roach problem are aware of the negative stigma that comes with an infestation and could very well be on edge or defensive in their initial communication. PMPs should have this awareness going into the conversation, emphasizing that cockroach problems can happen anywhere and that effective treatment hinges on collaboration.

5 A SENSITIVE SOLUTION

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WHAT HAVE WE BECOME?

BY GARY PIETRUCHA, President of Envirosafe Pest Mgmt, GCPMA Past President

hen I look back at my career in this field (and I do have to look quite a distance), I have noticed the metamorphic changes we have gone through. When I started, the EPA registrations had started just 6 year prior, so for many of the people I was working with, it was a whole new ball game. Still, there were about 9 categories of chemicals that we were dealing with. About 1/3 of them were restricted use, many had warning labels, others had caution labels, but a lot had Poison Labels with the well known Skull and Cross Bones on the package. It also was a time with no internet, and it was a time when having certification meant that YOU were capable of using these materials safely in all settings. Some of the chemicals that we used could be purchased at your local hardware store, like Chlordane, Lindane, and the first generation of rodenticides. It was a time when everyone needed to know the phone number to the Poison Control Center and treatments of customers had many consequences if not done properly. There was no do it yourself pest control or Amazon or any of the online trading

companies. Simply put, as a pest control operator, you were pretty much "it". One may say liability issues were high, but the quality of the technician, the service manager, and the servicing companies were usually very good. I worked under 4 State of Illinois directors. The first one was Harvey Dominic. He was a licensed PCO and an extremely difficult person to work with. There was no room for error, there was no exceptions, and most of all, companies were constantly held accountable for their day to day operations. I really enjoyed Mr. Dominic because he was old school before I even knew what that term meant. He had worked in an industry that had NO EPA rules, and, for the most part, abided by the Department of Agriculture rules. It was Harvey that decided that pest control in the State of Illinois would be governed by the Illinois Department of Public Health. We are the ONLY State to be so. I think that Mr. Dominic really felt that pest control was a health related industry and that being a part of that department would give us credibility for our clients.



After Mr Dominic retired, his understudy Fred Riecks took over the position. Fred was NOT a pest control person, but was well qualified to fill some very big shoes left behind. Fred continued the strict and often confusing requirements to perform work in our industry. And that industry was changing dramatically. Companies like Whitmire introduced a delivery system that premixed everything into a pressurized can and put a crack and crevice straw on it. And then the industry took a hard look and rodenticides and decided to start eliminating the 1st generation with more buffered, safe baits that would be able to do the same acute kills but protect domestic animals in case of accidental ingestion. The industry eliminated a lot of really good materials mostly because of label requirements, and we needed to adjust accordingly. Then came tamper resistant stations that took the place of the Galvanized Steel boxes and the cardboard stations. Slowly the industry made moves to be completely safe. This meant a lot of science going into the manufacturing of chemicals, making them slow release, non residual, no vapor pressure that would put chemicals into the air, and baits with the actives having a variety of pest elimination factors. It was a time of change - everyone would eventually have computers. And because of this, people could become more informed as to what we were using and could make conclusions based on the authors opinions in a lot of cases. This made our jobs more difficult. Then came the total elimination of pesticides that have been around for decades. DDT was obviously the 1st to go because of its adverse effect on wildlife. Never was the misuse by the general public considered, and THAT is why DDT got the reputation it did. The pest control industry lost a lot of extremely effective products because of misuse by the public. We were victims of having these products available to everyone.

As we jump ahead, Pest Control is now in the hands of the Mega-Companies. It is suffering because of low prices it charges, thus not being able to pay for guality technicians. We are the ONLY major industry whose prices are substantially lower than they were 2 decades ago. During a job fair once that I participated in at a High School, I asked the question from a group of about 200 Sophomores. I asked if anyone had considered a career in the field of pest management. There was not ONE hand raised. There was response from my suggestion of HVAC, Plumbers, Flight Attendants, Electricians, Carpenters, Engineers, and Nurses. But nobody considered Pest Control. They asked how much money they could earn? I pulled up numbers provided by Zip Recruiter and the reason why nobody considered our industry was obvious. There are those who made money in our industry, but not at the level that provides the revenue for companies the technician. The certification has lost its

validation because all we are is a convenience, given the fact that most of the things we use are available on line. It is frustrating and sad that with the disappearance of so many small companies, our industry has suffered. The mega company is a shame, and I am glad I am close to retirement because the only people that are making a decent wage is the very upper management of the corporations. I had been doing a major drug store chain for over 30 years. My pricing in 1996 was \$90.00 a location. They received excellent service, and I could afford to have the best techs performing that service in a very difficult environment. During the last bid, I lost this to a company that under bid me by \$42.00 per month. They could have matched my pricing and got the account because they were national (which was one of the considerations). and that is exactly what is happening to our industry. Take a hard look at what is going on. Take a look at turnover rates at the mega companies they are staggering. Welcome to 2022 and a pandemic environment which adds to the misery because nobody wants to work. It is a tough reality that we are in. I wish you all the best of luck in the future.



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THE TALE OF FSS, INC.'S EMERGENCY FUMIGATION

BY JOSHUA VILLAZANA, M.Sc., Dynamic IPM Specialist, GCPMA Board Member

It is speculated that the world's largest structural fumigation was performed in summer 2021 with a 14-man crew and a one a half boom lift by FSS, Inc.

An alarming spike in pest activity in a nearly 40 million cubic foot warehouse caused for FSS to receive a phone call at 10:00 AM on a Thursday to discuss matters for an emergency fumigation. Two hours later and after many pots of coffee, a decision was made to move forward with conducting a structural fumigation. Around 3:00 PM a thorough walkthrough of the warehouses was proceeded to measure the cubic feet, ambient temperature, and sealing strategy. Soon after, the entirety of FSS dropped what they were doing to conduct this emergency fumigation. All regional offices spanning from Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio were called into duty to assist. This brought fourteen available team members to help with sealing the building among other tasks.

After a panicked nights "rest", FSS began sealing doors and vents early Friday morning at 7:00 AM. A boom lift was rented to reach high spots for sealing vents, however, after two hours and only four out of sixteen vents later, the lift stopped working and another was called in to finish the job. Unfortunately, the nearest boom lift rental company was about two hours away from the site. At this point the worst thing that could happen was receiving another malfunctioning boom lift or running out of sealing tape.

A total of 39k pounds of fumigant, which is equivalent to six adult elephants and a baby, was required to resolve any pest issues to accommodate for two building that totaled to 39,255,000 cubic feet: equal to six Chicago Illinois Shedd Aquariums! Around 12:00 PM the first load of fumigant rolled out and at 1:00 PM the second. The nonfunctional boom lift ended up not being the worst of their troubles. An hour later FSS was called about a delay of the first load of fumigant with an unknown arrival time. After several hours of sealing, the sun was slowly setting, and the toads had begun to croak in the nearby retention ponds; five hours later the first load of fumigant arrived. Shortly after, FSS was informed that contact could not be made with the driver of the second load. The loss of fumigant is no laughing matter and could lead to potential danger if not located hastily. Multiple truck driving offices, the fumigant company, and the FBI were called to help locate the no longer delayed but, missing truck with thousands of pounds of fumigant.

It is 9:00 PM now and FSS began fumigating the first warehouse with a disconcerting feeling in their guts since there was still no contact with driver and the second load. As a last resort, other suppliers were contacted to obtain more fumigant. The ability to obtain fumigant last minute was not an easy feat. Most companies require a notice weeks ahead.

With mayflies drifting in the air around the warehouse flood lights, two hours later the new supply of fumigant was loaded into a truck and on its way. Most of the FSS team had left and only the night security team had remained to ensure no one enters the buildings and observe appropriate fumigant levels. With no delay, the truck arrived at 3:00 AM and the treatment at the second warehouse began an hour later.

Overall, it was a monumental challenge for FSS to be able to coordinate its efforts and resources in less than 24 hours and accomplish treating a nearly 40 million cubic foot warehouse within 72 hours. The shear ability to wrangle 39k pounds of fumigant, manpower, and gain the trust from a customer for a job well done was an achievement that requires great courage, skill, and strength. Astonishingly, from start to finish including ventilation of the warehouses and removal of sealing tape, it took a total of 440-man hours.

Fumigation Service & Supply, Inc.

For a quick comparison, two companies described in their newsletters their largest fumigations: in 2018, Gregory Pest Solutions in South Carolina fumigated a 21 million cubic foot food plant and in 2020, Kamaaina pest control in Hawaii tent fumigated a 7 million cubic foot beach hotel at over a span of 12 days.

Typically, a fumigation is thought of as a last resort. Fumigations can be very successful in protecting products, consumers, facilities, and brands where other methods simply are not. Rather than operate with a high level of risk to product, consumers, facilities, brand and employees, fumigations can offer an opportunity to realign and regain control. FSS origins are rooted in fumigations, and they work diligently to continue to protect this valuable and viable pest management option. They offer safe and effective fumigation service solutions for many commercial clients. FSS, Inc. is a growing regional company offering high quality innovative pest management, fumigation, and decontamination solutions across the Midwest. To learn more about who makes FSS, Inc. so great, visit their website, www.fsszone.com or give them a call (800) 992-1991.

'EXTERMINATOR' NAMED TO U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT 'BEST JOBS' LIST

ARTICLE FROM PCT MAGAZINE: *pctonline.com* By Brad Harbison • Published January 18, 2022

This ranking demonstrates the industry and our (Workforce Development) program is gaining momentum in shifting public perception and working seamlessly with our other marketing efforts at play, said NPMA's Cindy Mannes.

WASHINGTON – U.S. News & World Report, a global authority in rankings and consumer advice, on Jan. 11 announced its 2022 Best Jobs list, and for the first time in recent memory, the list includes "exterminator." The magazine says the rankings offer a look at the best jobs across 17 categories to help job seekers at every level achieve their career goals. U.S. News says it takes into account the most important aspects of a job, including growth potential, work-life balance and salary.

"Exterminator" was listed in the category of "Best Maintenance and Repair Jobs." The article says, "Workers in these occupations are vastly knowledgeable about their trade and are very skilled at what they do. They can get a car up and running again, rid a home of termites, or fix an MRI scanner."

"We're extremely pleased to see exterminator, or pest control technician, listed among the top ten best maintenance and repair jobs by U.S. News & World Report," said Cindy Mannes, senior vice president of public affairs for the National Pest Management Association. "Two years ago, a job in pest control still carried a negative connotation and was not considered a meaningful and rewarding career path. This ranking demonstrates the industry and our program is gaining momentum in shifting public perception and working seamlessly with our other marketing efforts at play."

While nearly 4 in 10 jobs of the 100 Best Jobs are health care or health-care support roles, a technology job – information security analyst – captured the No. 1 spot this year.

The 2022 Best Jobs rankings offer job seekers detailed information on training and education requirements, median salary, and job satisfaction across diverse sectors, including social services, education, construction, and creative and media. For individuals interested in pursuing science, technology, engineering and math, also known as the STEM fields, U.S. News compiles the Best STEM Jobs. Best Jobs Without a College Degree and Highest Paying Jobs Without a Degree are also offered for those who did not attend or finish college.

Read the entire list here: money.usnews.com/ careers/best-jobs/rankings

SOURCE: www.pctonline.com/article/us-newsworld-report-exerminator-best-jobs-list/

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