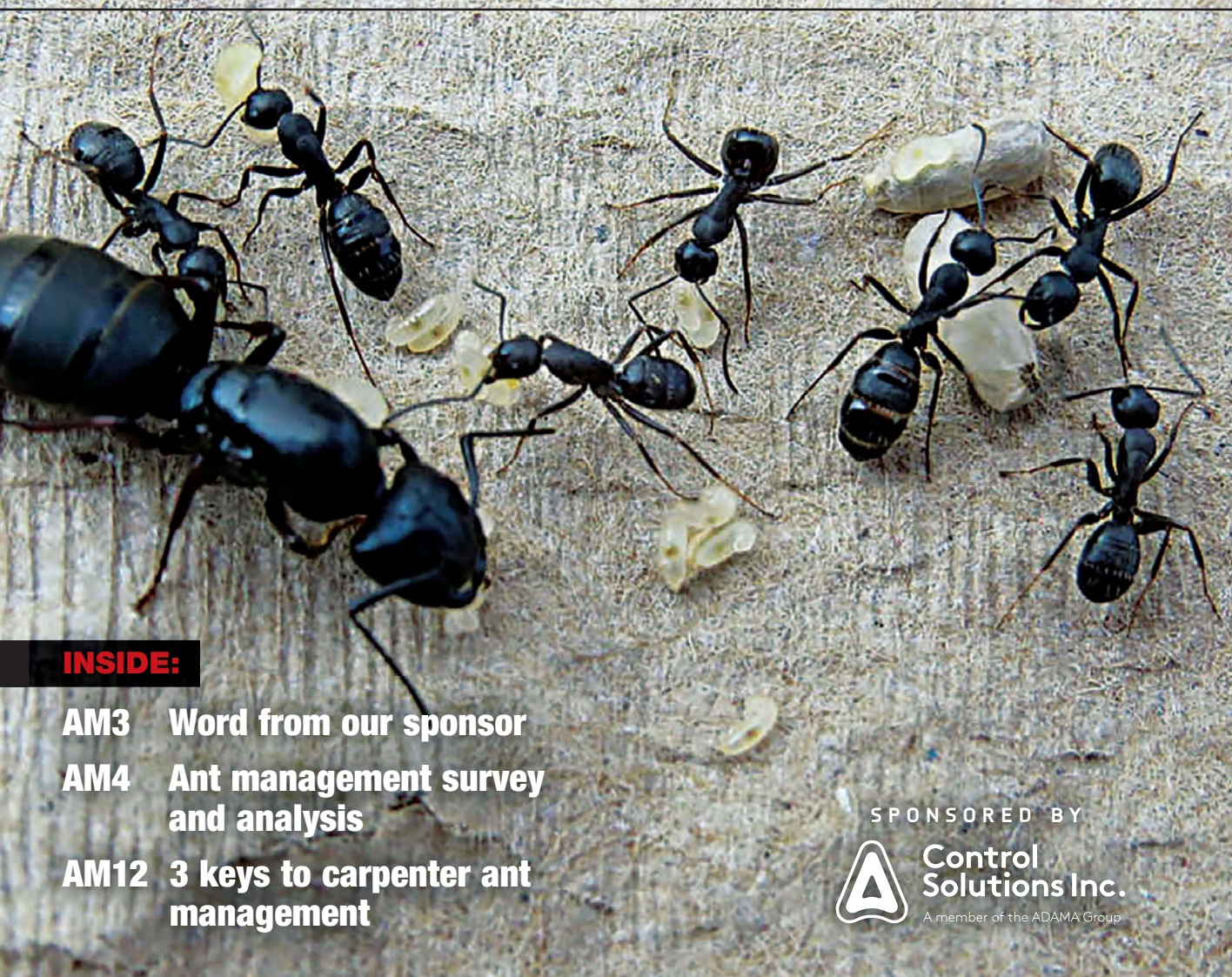


THE INDUSTRY'S LEADING TECHNICAL JOURNAL SINCE 1933

PMP PestManagement PROFESSIONAL

ANTS ACROSS AMERICA

2017 ANT MANAGEMENT SUPPLEMENT



INSIDE:

- AM3 Word from our sponsor
- AM4 Ant management survey and analysis
- AM12 3 keys to carpenter ant management

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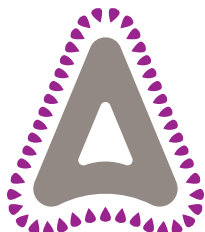
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Set yourself up for **SUCCESS**

By setting expectations with customers before, during and after initial visits, you're on your way to a winning ant season.

BY **TY FERRARO** | Director of Marketing, Control Solutions Inc. (CSI)

A successful ant account can literally start with the initial phone call. When negotiating an appointment time, make sure the customer understands that your technician will need an appropriate length of time to inspect and determine treatment. Your sales team also should assume the customer is price shopping, so it's worth mentioning why your pricing is fair. You might not be the least-expensive option, but that's because of the quality products you use and service you provide.

Most important, educate the customer up front — if not on the phone, definitely during the initial visit — that it can take time and several visits to completely control an ant problem. Your team also requires the customer's cooperation, whether it's removing moisture sources or allowing access to an attic. Sometimes, this can lead to an add-on service. For example, if customers don't want to climb on their roofs to cut tree branches that are touching their homes, chances are they'll pay your crew to do the job instead.

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Often, ant management requires a multipronged approach. Control Solutions Inc. (CSI) is proud to be your partner, providing you with many of the tools you might need for control. For example, Fuse Termiticide/Insecticide features two nonrepellent active ingredients with two different modes of action: fipronil and imidacloprid. CSI uses Combination Chemistry to fuse these two actives and keep them undetectable

by various ant species. Ants crawl through a treatment zone, unknowingly picking up a lethal dose.

Another CSI product, Cyzmic CS, uses CapVantage technology to provide an evenly dispersed active ingredient (Lambda-cyhalothrin). It provides long-term residual in a low-odor, quick-knockdown formulation. In addition to ants, it's labeled for mosquitoes and other perimeter pests.

Your game plan should focus on setting customer expectations from the onset, then performing quality service — thorough inspection, species identification, appropriate treatment, and follow-up visits. The ant season is in full swing, and CSI is here to help make it a winning one for you and your team.



FERRARO is the director of marketing for Control Solutions Inc. (CSI), a member of the ADAMA Group. He can be reached at ty.ferraro@controlsolutionsinc.com.



Ants across A

Ant management is good business all throughout the country, say respondents to *PMP's* exclusive survey.

BY DIANE SOFRANEC | Managing Editor



Ants are problematic throughout the United States. It doesn't matter whether you're a pest management professional (PMP) working in the South, West or Northeast; you're going to receive calls to manage ants, according to *Pest Management Professional's* (PMP's) 2017 Ant Management Survey.

Most of those jobs are going to be for homeowners, as survey respondents said more than 50 percent of their ant management revenue comes from the residential sector. The commercial and government/municipal sectors account for less than 25 percent of ant management revenue for the majority of those polled.

Callbacks trailing from ant management jobs don't appear to be an issue for most because the majority of those asked said callbacks occur less than 5 percent of the time.

Carpenter ants (*Camponotus* spp.) are the most problematic species. Once again, they earned the top spots on our lists ranking ants that cause the most callbacks and generate the most revenue. (*Editor's Note: For more about carpenter ants, check out Dr. Laurel Hansen's three recommendations for a more effective ant management strategy starting on p. AM12.*) No wonder carpenter ants are at the top of the list: They can be tricky to manage. One key is finding their nests, but that isn't always easy because their nests can be indoors or outdoors.

Doug Foster, president of Burt's Termite & Pest Control in Columbus, Ind., faced a particularly challenging ant management job. At first, Foster figured the carpenter ants that kept appearing in a customer's bathroom were coming from a nearby tree. He treated outside, but that didn't help. Then he treated inside, around the windowsills and shower, but that didn't work either.

"In utter frustration, I sat down on the floor and waited," he says. "After about 10 minutes, I saw a lone ant coming from under the door and thought it must be coming from down the hallway."

But Foster saw nothing in the hallway. It wasn't until he moved the bathroom door that he spotted sawdust on the floor. He removed the door, flipped it over, saw the opening on the underside, and treated for the ants. For Foster, this experience emphasizes the importance of taking one's time, a lesson stressed in his company training meetings.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

With ants, determining the location of the colony is critical. Darin Huffaker, president of Responsible Pest Control in



DOUG FOSTER



DARIN HUFFAKER

PHOTO: ABOVE, ©ISTOCK.COM/METISAK; ON THE COVER, DR. LAUREL HANSEN



merica



Tempe, Ariz., says treating only inside often won't eliminate the ants seen there because ants that enter a home usually come from a colony located outside.

"Effective ant control can be tricky and time-consuming," Huffaker says. "Technicians who fail to eliminate the ant source — meaning the colony — will end up with frustrated customers as ants

come marching one by one right back inside, which is precisely why a thorough inspection is so important when managing ants."

Combating ants can be difficult at times because their nesting sites can be hidden in wall voids and other inaccessible areas. So the best tool PMPs have in their toolbox is a great inspection, says Joe Summers, owner of Coastal Pest Management in Cypress, Texas.

"Taking your time with a detailed inspection of the interior and exterior of a structure, followed by a targeted treatment to the trailing ants and nesting sites, will give you the best chance of success when battling any ant species," Summers says.

Brian Smith, ACE, owner of Smith's Environmental Service in Tyler, Texas, knows this advice from experience. A longtime customer called complaining of ants after a

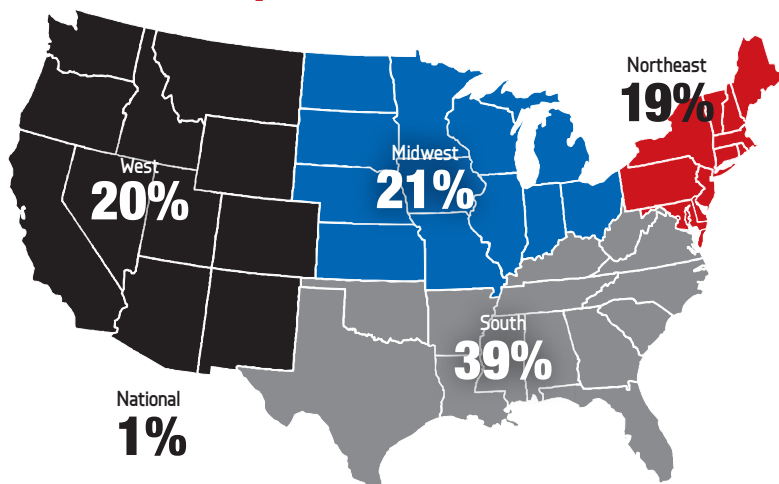


JOE SUMMERS



BRIAN SMITH

Area of Operations

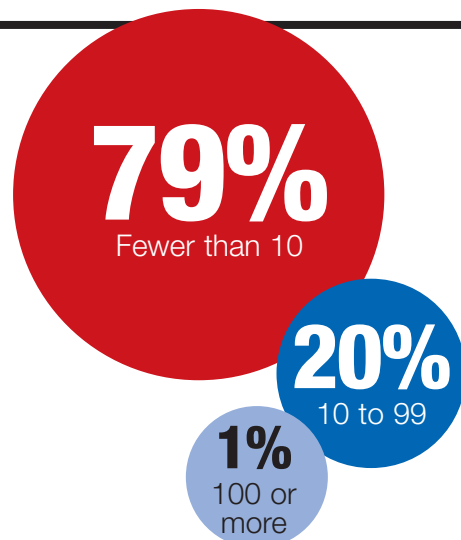


WEST: AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY

MIDWEST: OH, IN, IL, MI, WI, MN, MO, IA, ND, SD, NE, KS

SOUTH: AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV

NORTHEAST: CT, DE, ME, MD, MA, NJ, NH, NY, PA, RI, VT, D.C.



Number of Technicians

shipment of St. Augustine grass was delivered to her home. Smith carefully identified the species as pyramid ants (*Dorymyrmex* spp.) and treated the structure and newly sodded yard. What he failed to treat, however, were the client's concrete pots that contained perennials and annuals. Sure enough, a week later, the customer called to say the ants were still in the sod and driveway.

"The technician didn't move the pots to spray underneath them because they were so heavy," Smith says. "Upon reinspection, I moved several of the large pots and discovered colonies in the soil underneath them."

PERSISTENCE PAYS OFF

Experienced PMPs know tracking down ants requires persistence. In San Antonio, Texas, Warren Remmey, ACE, president of Spider Man Pest Control, was faced with an ant infestation in the fifth-floor break room of an eight-story building. When a perimeter inspection revealed nothing, he spoke with all the employees to learn where and when the ant sightings occurred. An inspection of the desk of a worker who snacked on candy led nowhere, as did inspections of the basement, pipe chase and elevator shaft. But once Remmey headed back outside, he spotted a trail of tawny crazy ants (*Nylanderia fulva*) heading up and down a wall, across the sidewalk and disappearing into a crack in the curb. A few steps away, they reappeared, crossed back over the sidewalk and trailed to a dumpster.

"Now, all the pieces of this puzzle were coming together," he says. "I had building maintenance step up sanitation; we performed the proper treatments; and the customer became a great, longtime account."



WARREN REMMEY

LEARN BY READING, DOING

Education goes a long way when managing ants. Charles Osborne, ACE, owner of Osborne Pest Management in Colorado Springs, Colo., taught himself how to identify and treat ants when he started in the pest management industry. Osborne studied by reading books and expert advice in magazines such



CHARLES OSBORNE

"Callbacks were at 250 units per weekly visit when we took over the complex," he says. "By the end of the first month, it was down to 75. By the end of the second month, it was down to 45. By the end of the first quarter of service, it was reduced to 12 calls monthly, not weekly." — ROGER BURGESS



as *PMP*. He also collected ants from the accounts he serviced so he could study them under a microscope and compare their differences.

"I'd put into practice what I read," he says. "I'd find out what worked and what didn't work in my area," he says. "With this information, I was able to provide a better service for the customer by eliminating the colony, instead of using the wrong treatment and making them spread."

FOLLOW-UP MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

Knowing ant species and the proper way to treat them is only half the battle. Roger Burgess, owner of Atlanta-based Burco Services, says follow-up is imperative when treating pests. While battling Argentine ants (*Linepithema humile*) in a multibuilding housing complex, Burgess realized the structures looked the same but weren't built the same. Ants were entering some of the structures through cracked expansion joints in the slab homes. Because not all the buildings in the complex had structural problems, many buildings showed no sign of ants. Looking at the construction of the building from all angles allowed for effective management.

Because the entry points were hidden, follow-up was a must. Burgess and his technicians returned twice a week after first treating the infested areas.

"Callbacks were at 250 units per weekly visit when we took over the complex," he says. "By the end of

CONTINUED ON PAGE AM10



Projected 2017 Total Revenue

\$499,999 or less

58%

\$500,000 to \$999,999

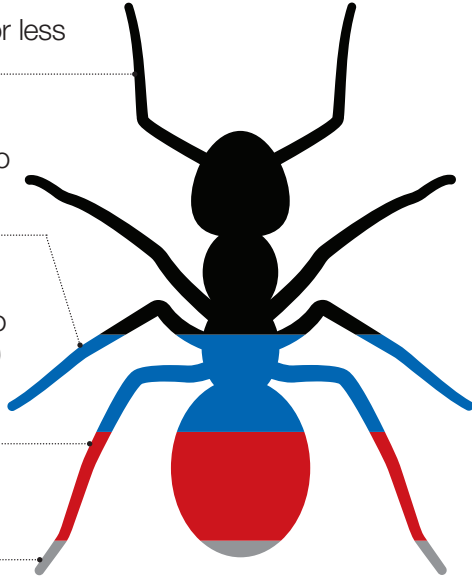
17%

\$1 million to \$4,999,999

19%

\$5 million or more

6%



Projected 2017 Ant Management Revenue

\$49,999 or less

51%

\$50,000 to \$99,999

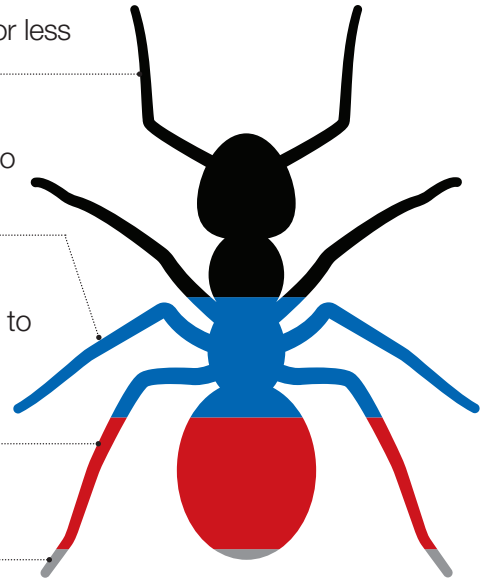
21%

\$100,000 to \$999,999

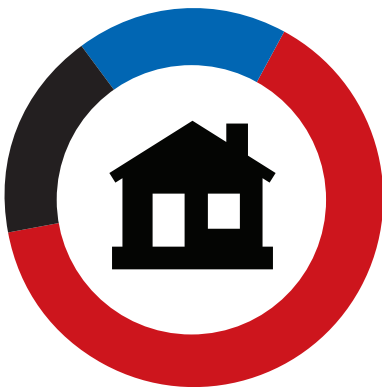
23%

\$1 million or more

5%



ANT MANAGEMENT REVENUE BY STRUCTURE TYPE

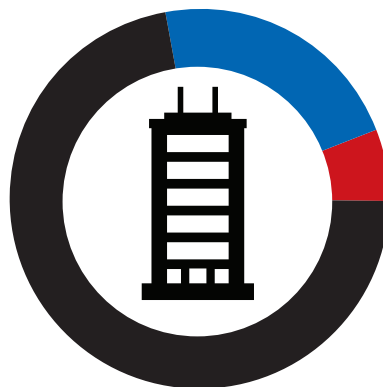


Residential

25% or less of ant mgmt. revenue **18%**

26% to 50% of ant mgmt. revenue **18%**

51% or more of ant mgmt. revenue **64%**

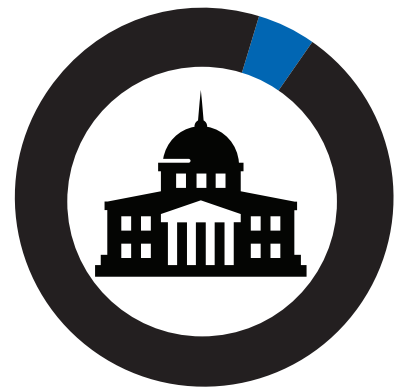


Commercial

25% or less of ant mgmt. revenue **72%**

26% to 50% of ant mgmt. revenue **22%**

51% or more of ant mgmt. revenue **6%**

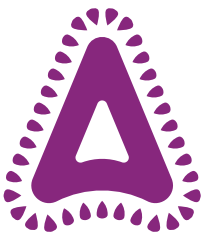


Government/ Municipal

25% or less of ant mgmt. revenue **95%**

26% to 50% of ant mgmt. revenue **5%**

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- Bifen L/P Insecticide Granule
- Cyzmic® CS Controlled Release Insecticide
- Dominion® 2L Termiticide/Insecticide
- Taurus® SC Termiticide/Insecticide

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE AM6

the first month, it was down to 75. By the end of the second month, it was down to 45. By the end of the first quarter of service, it was reduced to 12 calls monthly, not weekly.”

Burgess explained the importance of integrated pest management (IPM) to the managers of the complex, who, in turn, required tenants to comply with the pest management service protocol.

CUSTOMER COOPERATION, COMMUNICATION

Cooperative customers make a big difference in effective treatment. Derby Schafer, owner of A Access Denied Pest Control in Las Vegas, says PMPs can't perform service correctly or effectively when customers are filthy and refuse to change housekeeping habits.

“We personally show homeowners what needs to be done in terms of the cleaning and preparation work that will ensure a legal and safe treatment,” he says.

Typically, Schafer won't provide service to customers who don't follow through.

“If they insist on service, we make sure to document that future callbacks due to lack of cooperation aren't covered for free,” he says.

When servicing multifamily structures, sometimes written documentation isn't enough, especially if a problem becomes a legal issue. Photographs and the help of a property management representative might be needed in these situations. Honest communication with customers often fosters a long-lasting relationship. Joe Carrillo, owner of Hill Country Pest Control in Dripping Springs, Texas, makes a point to answer a customer's questions about identification, biology and treatment methods.

“Being able to communicate and educate the client is a must if your company is going to survive,” Carrillo says. “It's important to let the client know about and understand the procedures being done in their home.”

PMPs should let their customers know they're there to help them understand their pest problems.



JOE CARRILLO

BUSINESS BASICS

The key to ant management is simple, says Steve Fisher, president of Fisher Pest Management in Veneta, Ore.

“Don't make excuses, keep a smile on your face, and work your (expletive) off until you've solved the problem,” Fisher says. “Then thank your customers for the opportunity to serve them.”

PMPs must have strong ethics, as well as a commitment to themselves, their companies and their customers, says Fisher. They must be well trained, licensed, motivated and supported by their employers. Standards like these apply no matter where ant management is needed. PMP

You can reach SOFRANEC at dsofranec@northcoastmedia.net or 216-706-3793.



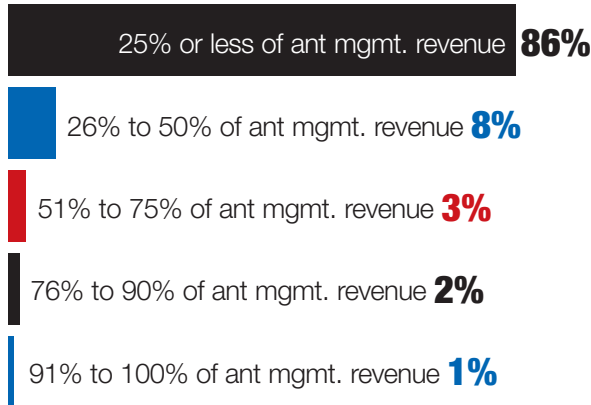
STEVE FISHER



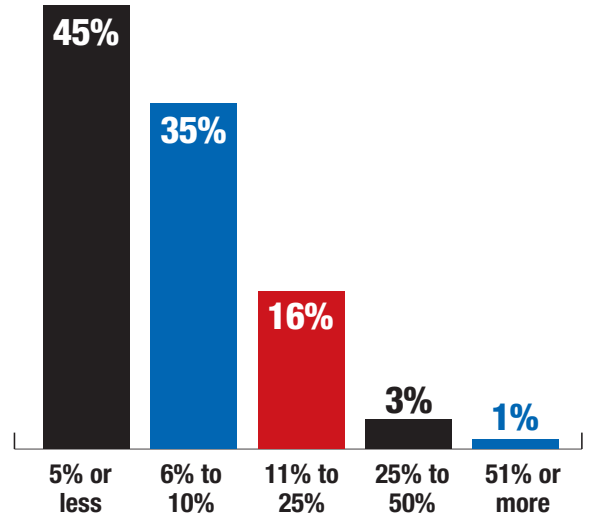
54% of PMPs generate more than half of their ant management revenue from liquid treatments.



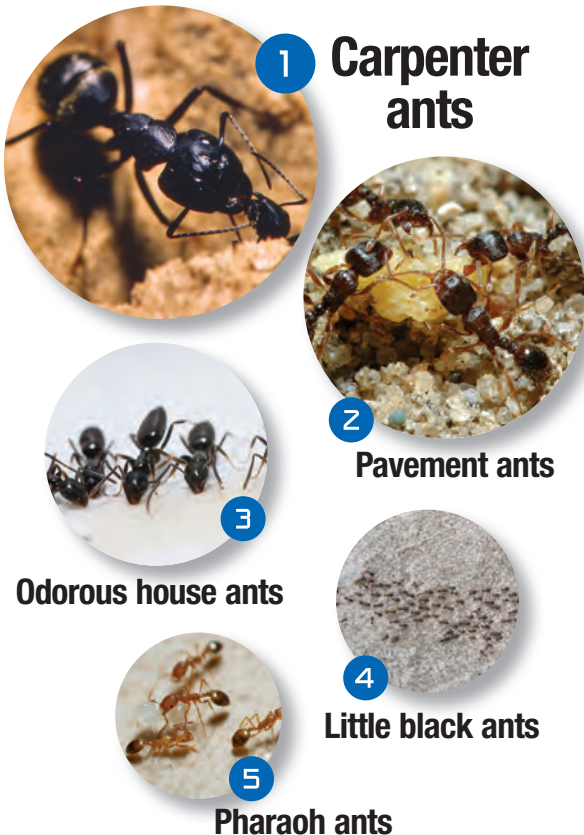
Projected 2017 Ant Management Revenue: Percent from Exclusion Products and Services



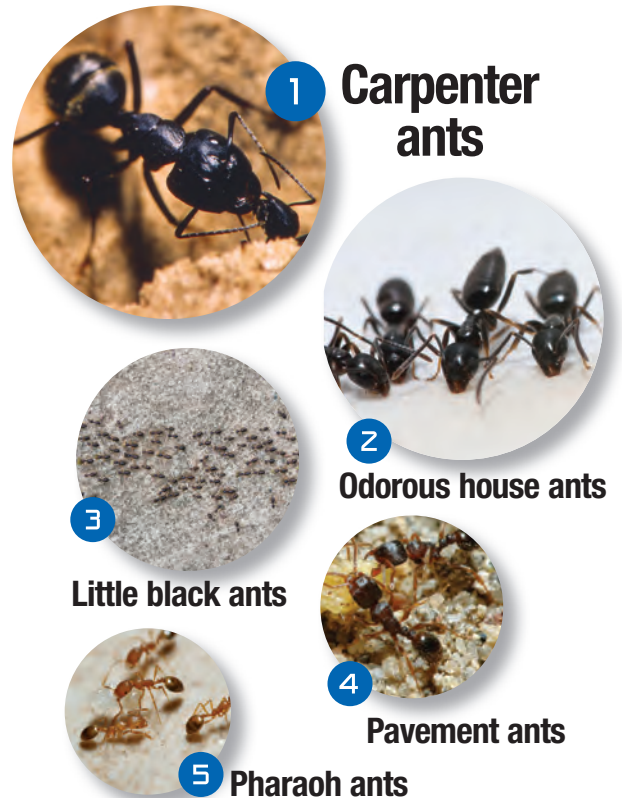
Callback Percentage on New Ant Treatments in 2016



Top 5 Pest Ants by Number of Jobs Generated



Top 5 Pest Ants by Number of Callbacks Generated



PHOTOS COURTESY OF, AND COPYRIGHTED BY, GENE WHITE; ©ISTOCK.COM



The **z**'s have it

Successful carpenter ant management comes down to **i**nterview, **i**dentify and **i**nspect.

BY DR. LAUREL HANSEN | Contributor

Yes, those big black ants come every spring, but then they disappear! This homeowner comment is common — and should alert the technician that there is a problem with carpenter ants (*Camponotus* spp.) at the account. The main nest may be on the outside of the structure, and satellite nests may be established within the structure. Both nest types will excavate wood in constructing nesting sites for brood. A perimeter spray may provide immediate results, but a comprehensive management strategy for carpenter ants includes a three-step process to enhance the application of chemicals.

1. The **INTERVIEW** is usually the first contact with the customer. A telephone conversation or comment on a general pest inspection should trigger additional questions, such as:

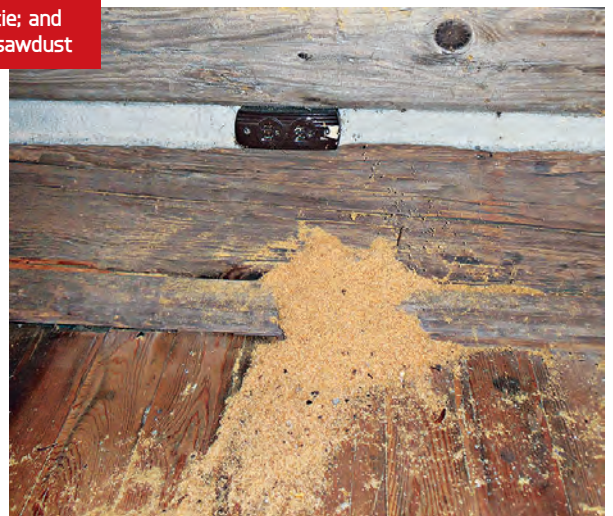
- “Did you see the ants last year, and/or in previous years?”
- “Do trees in your yard touch the roof or side of the structure?”
- “Have you had any recent roof or gutter repairs, or plumbing leaks?”
- “Have you recently had trees removed?”
- “Have you had wind damage to the structure or to trees?”

One answer may lead to additional questions, and the scope of the problem may be initially determined in preparation for management.

2. Next, **IDENTIFY** the specific ant problem. There are a number of ants that will invade structures for food, water and/or nesting sites. While carpenter ants vary in size, color, and nesting requirements, all workers have a single node and a terminal, circular anal orifice fringed with hairs. All workers are easily recognized by the evenly convex thoracic dorsum in profile. There are 24 species of carpenter ants in the United States and Canada (Hansen and Klotz, 2005). Dependent on species, nesting sites vary from sound wood to decayed wood, from attic areas to crawlspace areas. Color will vary from all black to red-and-black to



Clockwise from left:
 Carpenter ant nest
 in firewood; nest
 in railroad tie; and
 excavated sawdust



orange-and-brown, depending on species. Workers will range in size within a colony from the large major, or soldier, with the large head to the small minors with narrower heads.

Depending on the species, carpenter ant workers vary in size from the larger species at 0.25 to 0.5 in. to the small species at 0.14 to 0.3 in. in length. Technicians should be familiar with the species that are common in their areas, and also determine whether other ant species are involved in an infestation.

3. Performing a detailed **INSPECTION** of the structure and surrounding area will determine management strategies. Knowledge of the biology and behavior of carpenter ants will facilitate the inspection. Carpenter ants do not eat wood, but they excavate areas *in* wood to expand their nesting sites and interior trails. This can lead to structural damage with the growth of a colony.

Carpenter ants will forage on a variety of food — including insects in the vegetation around the structure. During early spring in infested structures, the ants also may be attracted to moist areas around kitchens, laundry rooms and bathrooms for water. They may feed on sweets such as syrup, fruit or candy before food is available outside the structure.

One of their more common food sources is honeydew from aphids during the foraging season. Vegetation should be inspected for the location of carpenter ant foraging arenas. Ants trail to these sites along fences, wires, foundations, landscaping timbers, and irrigation equipment such as garden hoses. Ants also will create their own trails through lawns, landscaping materials and underground roots. Although ants will forage throughout the day, foraging activity peaks at sunset and extends into the twilight hours.

With the knowledge of carpenter ant biology and behavior (see “Ants aren’t *always* evil,” p. AM15), an inspection will provide suggestions and tools for management. Inspection of the structure and surrounding area can provide information regarding possible nesting sites for a parent, and satellite nests.

On the exterior, look for conducive conditions such as vegetation in contact with the structure, wood in contact with the soil, firewood stacked next to the structure, and inadequate foundation clearance below

the siding. On the interior of the structure, close inspection should include ventilation problems in the crawlspace or attic, evidence of former plumbing or moisture leaks, and extruded sawdust. Carpenter ant excavations of wood may be present in protected areas such as closets, unfinished basements or attic areas. Carpenter ants will follow guidelines within the structure such as pipes for plumbing or electrical wires through wall voids. Excavated material may be present at these sites under sinks, behind electrical wall outlet coverings, or light fixtures.

TREATMENT STRATEGIES

Ant management ideally would include the location of the parent nest and all the satellite nests. When this is not possible, direct your attention toward eliminating conducive conditions such as moisture problems through proper ventilation, vegetation in contact with the structure, and wood in contact with the soil. Close inspection also will reveal foraging sites for ants in vegetation and trails between parent and satellite nests and foraging arenas.

Bait can be placed in areas on the interior where ants frequent such as under sinks, refrigerators or other appliances where ants have been observed. Dust formulations can be effective in drywall voids where satellite colonies nest or trail.

A carpenter ant trail through vegetation

Perimeter sprays, particularly those materials that feature transfer ability, can be applied to the exterior of structures and to trails where it is permitted on labels. Perimeter sprays should be directed where the foundation meets the soil, away from the foundation by at least 12 in., and under the lower edge of the siding where ants often trail to locate entry points into the structure.

Carpenter ant management can be challenging, but with an *i*nterview from the client, proper *i*dentification, comprehensive *i*nspection of the property, and knowledge of carpenter ant biology and behavior, the tools for management can be applied with a greater measure of success. PMP

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Ants aren't *always* evil

Let's set the record straight: Carpenter ants are not all "evil" or "bad." They play a positive role in forested environments. Carpenter ants nest in both living and dead trees, as well as rotting logs and stumps. In the northern tier of states and in southern Canada, carpenter ants have a significant role in starting the degradation process in dead trees. By tunneling through wood to excavate nest galleries, the dead wood is opened to fungi, bacteria and other wood-destroying organisms (WDO) to begin decomposition and natural recycling of materials.

Carpenter ants use their mandibles to excavate wood and transport the shavings to locations in the nest. They eject the shavings through nest openings called windows. Their galleries and passageways have a smooth, sandpapered appearance, and are constructed continuously to accommodate the growing colony.

The galleries are irregular in shape, and usually follow the grain or softer portion of the wood. Some of the older layers of wood are left as walls that separate the galleries. Carpenter ants use their heads to strike this wood when alarmed by disturbances. When nests occur in structures, homeowners and technicians may be able to determine the location by listening for these sounds.

In natural areas, parent colonies are usually confined to the base of the trees, with galleries extending into the roots and trunks. Nest entrances may be located underground, with ants entering live trees through cracks, scars, knotholes and decayed areas on the trees.

Carpenter ants also are a vital link in the forest food web. They play a key role as predators of forest defoliators and other insects — and in turn, are prey for fish, reptiles and birds such as the pileated woodpecker (*Hylatomus pileatus*).

When homes are built in and near forests or natural areas, carpenter ants may become a threat. In urban environments, landscaping often includes trees that have the potential for a parent nest as the trees age.

Colonies of carpenter ants can be a single unit, or the colony may consist of a main nest and several satellite nests that can be found in a number of locations. Some are contained to small areas such as within wall voids, or in larger areas under subfloor insulation, under attic insulation, in support beams, or within stacks of firewood. Most carpenter ants establish their initial nest in decayed wood, but will extend galleries into sound wood.

The main, or parent nest usually is located exterior to the structure and can be found in trees, stumps,



"Sandpapered"
appearance of
excavated areas

stacks of lumber, landscaping timbers or within retaining walls of wood timbers. Recycled railroad ties used in landscaping provide ideal nesting sites for parent colonies, as the preservative only penetrates a few millimeters into the wood and the timbers often have cracks or openings to allow for moisture and ant entry.

The parent nest requires high humidity for brood development, and conditions outside the structure meet these requirements. Mature brood, pupae of winged reproductives, and workers often are transported during the summer months to warmer, drier conditions in structures, and satellite nests are established that can overwinter.

Ants have complete metamorphosis, which means they pass through the stages of egg, larva, pupa and adult. During the active season (March through October), the egg-to-adult sequence takes about 60 days.

A carpenter ant colony consists of adult forms and brood. The brood consists of the eggs, larvae and pupae that are completely dependent on workers for food and care throughout their development. The adults include a queen, the egg-producing segment of the colony, workers — who care for the brood, excavate wood for nests, forage for food and care for the queen — and winged forms, both male and female. The winged forms are produced in late summer and overwinter in the nest, either satellite or parent, and emerge the following spring (April to June) to mate and start colonies in new locations.

Colonies that are six to 10 years old may produce winged forms. During the first warm days of spring, these reproductives emerge from the nest for their mating flights. After mating, the males die and the inseminated queen selects a nest site, usually in a small cavity in a stump, log, under bark, or in structural timbers with high moisture content. The queen produces her first eggs and nurtures them through development to the first small workers. In successive broods, the workers care for the queen and take over the activities of brood rearing. —LDH

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