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PMP

Pest Management Professional



Full Steam Ahead

THE 2027 *PMP* STATE OF THE INDUSTRY REPORT

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Succeeding in the rodent control industry requires forward thinking because of its constantly changing regulatory environment. Even as new rodenticide guidelines appear, pest management professionals (PMPs) must still protect the public from rodent disease and damage.

Bell Laboratories is committed to making sure PMPs have the best tools to do that job. It is not good enough to simply build products for today — we strive to solve future problems so your business and your customers' businesses can thrive, no matter what may come.

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At the forefront of this commitment, Bell is launching two new bromethalin bait formulations: CONTRAC 24 BLOX and CONTRAC 24 Soft Bait. PMPs can trust that the success they have had with CONTRAC brand rodenticides will continue with CONTRAC 24. Bromethalin is an acute active ingredient, whereby first deaths occur within 24 hours after rodents consume a lethal dose. These highly palatable formulations deliver rapid population knockdown.

We developed these products so the PMPs in states with growing restrictions can continue to access high-quality rodenticides, and we are excited to now share these with the rest of the country.



CONTRAC 24 BLOX and CONTRAC 24 Soft Bait



By Steve Levy
PRESIDENT AND CEO
Bell Laboratories

Alongside CONTRAC 24, Bell is proud to release the newest addition to our iQ product line-up, STREAMLINE iQ. This multiple-catch mouse trap, powered by Bell Sensing Technologies, is sleek and durable, and its small profile makes it ideal for any account. With the ability to check each device from up to 100 feet away for rodent activity trend analysis, STREAMLINE iQ minimizes labor and gives PMPs data to make informed decisions, while eliminating checking empty traps.



STREAMLINE iQ

ONWARD, TOGETHER

Looking to 2027 and beyond, we will continue to focus on product innovations that deliver on our promise to provide the best tools for PMPs.

Together, we are building a stronger future for our industry. Thank you to our customers, partners and supporters who share our commitment to quality, innovation and better solutions as we continue to raise the standard, embrace new possibilities and move our industry forward.

Learn more about Bell Laboratories and its products at BellLabs.com.

All aboard

Challenges beyond their control won't prevent PMPs from chugging along

By Diane Sofranec | *PMP* Senior Editor

The journey that lies ahead for pest management professionals (PMPs) looks to be worth taking, according to *Pest Management Professional*'s (*PMP*'s) 2027 State of the Industry survey.

Of the readers who answered our survey, 87 percent have an optimistic outlook on the pest control industry.

One reason is the weather, thanks to a powerful, super El Niño that's expected to have an impact on rainfall and temperatures this autumn and winter.

"Milder, wetter winters delay the first hard frost, which stretches the active season later into the fall," says Raye Chisholm, general manager of Texas' Mosquito Squad & Pest Control of Fort Worth. "So, the 'record rainfall in some areas, heat waves elsewhere' pattern really is the drought-to-El-Niño whiplash. For a mosquito and tick control business, that whiplash is a demand tailwind: more breeding sites, a longer season, and likely more West Nile virus concern driving inbound calls."

Roll with the changes

While the weather may be good for business, tighter rodent control regulations at the local and state levels are cause for concern for many PMPs. There's a chance change could come for every PMP in the country.

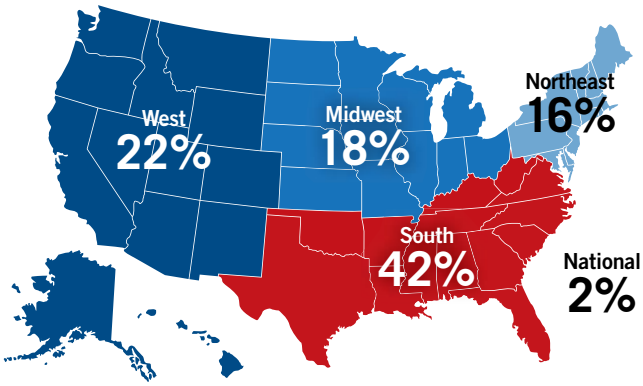
Chris McNall, regional director of operations for Mosquito Squad Plus of the MidAtlantic, Virginia Beach, Va., wonders when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will



ON THE COVER AND AT LEFT, ILLUSTRATION: CHRIS WHETZEL

PMPs at work

In August and September, *Pest Management Professional* readers — primarily company owners and presidents — completed our 32-question State of the Industry survey. Here is some background on their companies:



Area of Operations

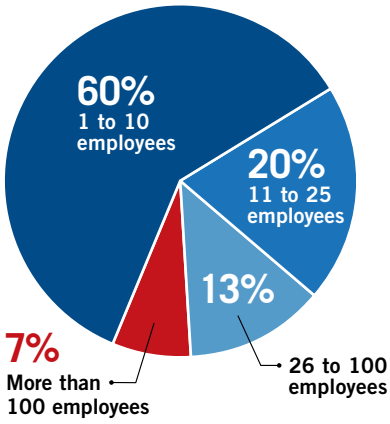
WEST: AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY

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

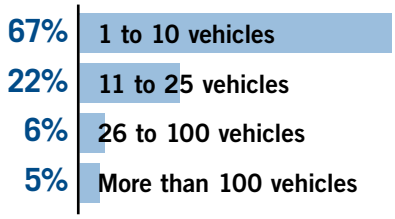
SOUTH: AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV

NORTHEAST: CT, DE, ME, MD, MA, NJ, NH, NY, PA, RI, VT, DC

Number of Employees



Fleet Size



2027 Outlook *4.18 out of 5 stars*



release the results of its years-long rodenticide review. The EPA is required by the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) to review registered pesticides every 15 years to ensure they still do not cause "unreasonable adverse effects on human health or the environment," and time's up for rodenticides.

"Are they or aren't they going to make changes to rodenticide regulations?" McNall asks. Indeed, many PMPs and solution providers are not waiting to find out. Those who expect rules to tighten already have altered their rodent control methods.

Stay flexible

Meanwhile, rising fuel costs are eating into profits, although pest control business owners are finding ways to cope.



Giancarlo Fernandez

"Strategy and flexibility are a must when facing challenges," says Giancarlo Fernandez, ACE, president of Solaris Pest Solutions in Santa Clarita, Calif. "We find a way to turn challenges into opportunities."

Gustavo Hernandez, owner of both H2 Environmental Pest Management and 1-800-Raccoon Pest & Wildlife Control in Astoria, N.Y., agrees. "Even with increasing prices and operation costs, I believe the future for us is bright," he says.

Although weather, inflation and regulations were the potential obstacles most frequently mentioned by survey respondents, most agree that the pest control business is resilient. Overall, the consensus is that 2027 will be a year of growth and opportunity.

"The real obstacle to overcome, as it has always been in this industry, is educating the public," says Chad Highley, ACE, owner and CEO of Environmental Pest Control in Lawton, Okla.



Chad Highley

Read on for more of *PMP*'s projections for 2027. Our exclusive State of the Industry supplement, sponsored by Bell Laboratories, includes benchmarking data, infographics and analyses that highlight key pest management industry trends and projections. **PMP**

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GETTY IMAGES: KATSUMI TANAKA (HEADER), DENYS (MAP) / ISTOCK / GETTY IMAGES PLUS



Keep the wheels turning

PMPs won't let the fears of inflation or customer and employee retention rates derail their plans in 2027

By Diane Sofranec | *PMP* Senior Editor

Customer service is a critical part of pest control, so it's no wonder the pest management professionals (PMPs) who took our SOI survey offered excellent tips for retaining and recruiting employees.

Pest control company owners and managers know a thing or two about hiring, and shared solid advice for staying staffed up. It's interesting to note that ADP, the provider of cloud-based human resources and payroll services to businesses worldwide, offers the same advice for retaining workers. Its recommendations include providing desirable benefits, optimizing onboarding and paying a fair wage.

PMPs are doing something right, as 69 percent of survey respondents report they retain nearly all their employees — an increase over last year's 61 percent. So, *what* are they doing right?

Mike Piekos, owner of Total Home Pest Solutions, Ellis County in Midlothian, Texas, says he only hires competent employees. His company's training method helps make it happen.

"Pest control is a customer retention game," Piekos explains. "Customer service and communication are key. We teach this first before they learn the actual trade. It works."

Matt Chitwood, owner of Critter Wranglers in Powell, Tenn., agrees and says his company hires for character because they can teach pest control-related skills: "Work ethic, integrity, attitude and how someone treats people are harder problems to fix," Chitwood adds.


Mike Piekos

Piekos points out that paying well, offering benefits and communicating employees' success are the fundamentals needed to recruit and retain employees. "It is integral to a company's success and vice versa," he says.

Keep them onboard

Company culture is a big reason why workers want to stay or go.

Giancarlo Fernandez, ACE, president of Solaris Pest Solutions in Santa Clarita, Calif., says he believes a company culture that recognizes employees and provides optimal training is key to retention.

"Once the company culture is established, employee referrals

PHOTO: JIMDPHOTO / E+ / GETTY IMAGES

follow," he adds. "It is the best pool for job candidates."

Building a team other people want to be part of helps ensure employees want to stay.

"Good people are looking for more than a paycheck," Chitwood says. "Never hire just to fill an empty seat as quickly as possible. Slow down and find someone who makes your team better."

One simple step that may lead to better employee retention rates is based on common sense.

"When recruiting, listen to what they don't like about the company they are currently working for, and be sure you are not doing the same thing," McNall says.



Shon Vodila

Improve your reputation

In addition, every company should keep in mind that client reviews are excellent recruitment resource.

"This is the company resume that will attract the best talent," Fernandez quips.

Chad Highley, ACE, owner and CEO of Environmental Pest Control in Lawton, Okla., advises pest control companies to always be on the lookout for that next rock star.

"Word of mouth is still huge for recruiting," Highley says. "You don't have to pay the most, but you do have to be a great place to work."

Control runaway costs

While employee retention and recruitment may sometimes pose a challenge, those who answered our SOI survey said fuel costs may be a top obstacle in 2027. Last year, material and equipment costs ranked highest. With that in mind, route optimization was frequently mentioned as a way to combat high fuel costs.

69 percent of survey respondents report they retain nearly all their employees — an increase over last year's 61 percent.

Shon Vodila, president of Accel Pest Control in Virginia Beach, Va., recommends making all jobs worth your time and money.

"Focus on density and quit driving to scarce areas just because someone will give you a check," he advises.

Stephen Giger, general manager of Home Guard Pest Control in Escondido, Calif., agrees that PMPs do all that they can to optimize time and labor in the coming year.



Stephen Giger

"If rising costs of fuel, equipment and products continue due to inflation, tariffs or just the basic cost of manufacturing, it will force PMPs to raise their prices in an industry that already has seen price increases in the past two years," he concludes.

But if our survey respondents' responses are any indication, such obstacles will not stop the industry in its tracks. **PMP**

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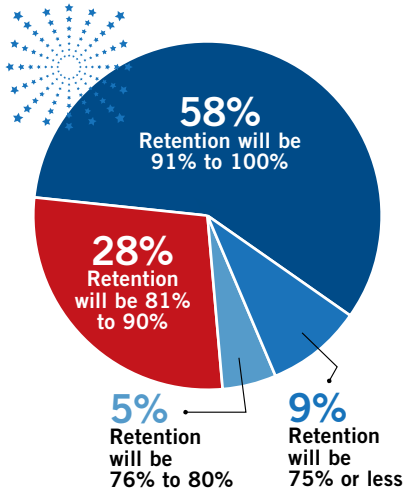
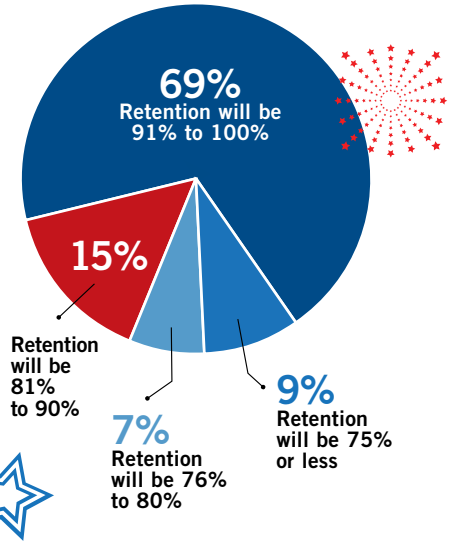
Projected 2027 Customer Retention



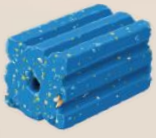
Projected 2027 Employee Retention



ILLUSTRATIONS: MICHELLELWILSON, ANDRE_BR / ISTOCK / GETTY IMAGES PLUS / GETTY IMAGES

PRODUCTS CONNECT THE BETWEEN SERVICE VISIT

DAY 1



BAIT PLACED

DAY 5-12

ACTIVITY DETECTED

DAY 14

ACTIVITY STOPPED

DAY 30+

NO RECENT ACTIV



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Pushing and pulling

Changing weather patterns push pest activity higher, while cost-conscious budgets pull on customer spending

By Heather Gooch
PMP Editor-in-Chief

Pests have been all over the news lately, especially disease-carrying vectors such as ticks, mosquitoes and rodents.

For example, the Atlanta, Ga.-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports record-high emergency room visits for tick bites across the United States, driven by warmer weather and expanding habitats. Lyme disease is still the most common tick-borne illness, but instances of Powassan virus, anaplasmosis, babesiosis and Rocky Mountain spotted fever also are being reported.

Alpha-gal syndrome, meanwhile, has been around since at least the late 1980s, and the link between a bite from a lone star tick (*Amblyomma americanum*) and a somewhat-serious, sometimes-permanent allergy to red meat was confirmed in 2007 by a team at the University of Virginia. Still, much of the public was unaware of the syndrome until this year, when several state representatives in Congress began introducing legislation to make it easier to test, report and track the illness in their respective states.

This year also has been unusually high for mosquito-borne illness nationwide, with the CDC reporting cases of West Nile virus, dengue fever and, to a lesser degree, Eastern equine encephalitis and other viruses.

In May, an international outbreak of the Andes virus strain of hantavirus on a cruise ship alerted the world to first, cruise ships are capable of carrying rodents (although this particular



ILLUSTRATION: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/IYANALFIZHAR

outbreak was traced to rodents in the wild that Patient Zero was interacting with on an excursion), and second, that humans can be exposed to hantavirus without coming in contact with an infected rodent. Domestically, there also have been isolated cases of rodent-borne Sin Nombre virus and plague reported.

The usual suspects

Year-over-year, our respondents held fast to the Top 5 rodent species ranking, as well as the wood-destroying insect (WDI) ranking — although Formosans gained a little ground over the Western subterranean species, rather than tying for fourth place as they did in last year's report.



Dennis Mastrolia

Dennis Mastrolia, owner of Dennis the Mennis Pest Experts in Merrimack, N.H., speaks for many survey respondents when he says there seems to have been an increase in termite swarmers, "as well as all pests being noticed" a little more than usual. Although customers are watching their spending more these days, they also are noticing pest pressure earlier than before. They want to get ahead of things before populations become a nuisance or destructive to property — and more expensive to treat.

Carpenter ants, while remaining No. 2 among WDIs, slipped from No. 1 to No. 2 for top ant species from last year. Last year's runner-up, the odorous house ant, stole the crown. Unsurprisingly, the Top 3 cockroach species are the usual suspects, but the smoky brown and brown-banded swapped places in the Top 5 this year over last year.



Bobby Leon

Last winter was mild but cold for much of the U.S., and Bobby Leon notes pest populations, particularly those of stinging insects, seemed to be later and smaller in his market as a result. Leon, president of Lancaster, Pa.-based Akita Pest Control, predicts 2027 "will see a warmer, wetter winter and lead to more pests." **PMP**

Gooch can be reached at hgooch@northcoastmedia.net or 330-321-9754.

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Top 5
Revenue-Generating Species

Rodents & Insectivores

1. House mice (*Mus musculus*)
2. Norway rats (*Rattus norvegicus*)
3. Roof rats (*R. rattus*)
4. Deer mice (*Peromyscus maniculatus*)
5. Moles (Talpidae)



Ants

1. Odorous house (*Tapinoma sessile*)
2. Carpenter (*Camponotus* spp.)
3. Pavement (*Tetramorium caespitum*)
4. Fire (*Solenopsis* spp.)
5. Argentine (*Linepithema humile*)



Cockroaches

1. German (*Blattella germanica*)
2. American (*Periplaneta americana*)
3. Oriental (*Blatta orientalis*)
4. Smoky brown (*P. fuliginosa*)
5. Brown-banded (*Supella longipalpa*)



Termites & Other WDI/WDO

1. Eastern subterranean termites (*Reticulitermes flavipes*)
2. Carpenter ants (*Camponotus* spp.)
3. Carpenter bees (*Xylocopa* spp.)
4. Drywood termites (Kalotermitidae)
5. Formosan termites (*Coptotermes formosanus*)



On the right track

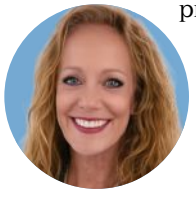
More companies are cruising toward a growth bracket of 25 percent plus

By Heather Gooch | *PMP* Editor-in-Chief

For the third year in a row, the percentage of SOI survey respondents who report revenue up more than 25 percent year-over-year has increased: 20 percent for 2026 vs. 2025; 17 percent for 2025 vs. 2024; and 16 percent for 2024 vs. 2023. For that matter, it was a mere 13 percent for 2023 vs. 2022 — and that was after the World Health Organization declared the global COVID-19 pandemic was officially over on May 5, 2023.

Fewer respondents are reporting flat revenue year-over-year: 13 percent for 2026 vs. 20 percent in 2025. While 3 percent report that revenue was down in 2026 over 2025, it seems that respondents are hopeful in their projected 1 percent for 2027.

The middle tier of 10-percent-to-25 percent increases remains the backbone of industry revenue, with 35 percent of respondents reporting that level in 2026. In 2025, it was 39 percent and in 2024, 38 percent. Thankfully, it seems more of those percentage points kicked up to the 26-percent-and-above category vs. the 9-percent-and-below category.



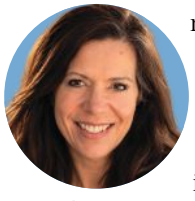
Raye Chisholm

Forecasting the future, though, shows that keeping that pace of 10 percent or more growth might be tricky.

Raye Chisholm, general manager of Mosquito Squad Plus of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, Texas, keeps an eye on economic forecasts from Deloitte, the Tax Foundation and others. She says that, as of this fall, many experts are predicting the growth rate of U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will cool from about 2 percent to 1.8 percent, while inflation is running at about 3 percent.

There's a domino effect occurring where fuel costs impact the cost of living, forcing consumers to reevaluate spending and forcing business owners to raise prices to stay profitable.

"Pest control pricing is not keeping pace with the rising costs. Meanwhile, the same squeezed consumers are the ones we're asking to pay more for a discretionary barrier spray or misting contract," Chisholm says. "This is the tension many of us have to manage on both sides of the profit-and-loss statement."

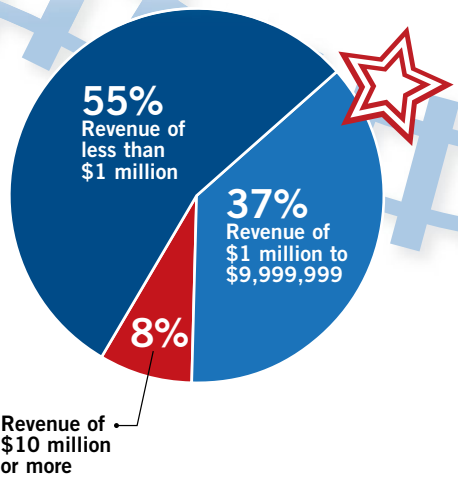


Camille Landry

Camille Landry, owner of Fullscope Pest & Lawn in Cleveland, Texas, agrees but remains steadfast in her strategies. "In every business, there are highs and lows," she adds. "My goal is to not be so volatile in the business that any outside factors destabilize the business itself." **PMP**

Gooch can be reached at hgooch@northcoastmedia.net or 330-321-9754.

Projected 2027 Revenue



Projected Revenue Change
2027 vs. 2026

16%	Revenue will be up more than 25%
38%	Revenue will be up 10% to 25%
30%	Revenue will be up 9% or less
15%	Revenue will be flat
1%	Revenue will be down

Total Revenue Change
2026 vs. 2025

20%	Revenue was up more than 26%
35%	Revenue was up 10% to 25%
29%	Revenue was up 9% or less
13%	Revenue was flat
3%	Revenue was down

GETTY IMAGES: KATSUMI TANAKA (TOP), MICHELLELWILSON (STARS) / ISTOCK / GETTY IMAGES PLUS

Adding new stops

High-volume service lines continue to keep the wheels turning, but branching into additional services can fund future growth

By Heather Gooch | *PMP* Editor-in-Chief

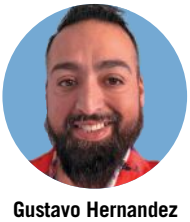
According to this year's SOI survey, the "big three" of ants, rodents and cockroaches continue to offer steady income. But it's high-margin specialty services like termites, mosquitoes, bed bugs and wildlife that will likely drive growth for many companies in 2027. In fact, 44 percent plan to add some type of service to their offerings next year.

Let's talk core services first. Survey respondents are once again reporting that ants are No. 1 with a bullet: 90 percent of companies offer ant services; 81 percent claim ants are their top revenue generators; and 63 percent said ants are their top profit generators. This is very similar to our 2025 report, with ants in the lead for two of the three categories (the top revenue generator last year was rodent accounts).

Rodents continue to be a big driver in all three categories, with cockroaches close behind. Termites and wood-destroying insects/organisms (WDI/WDO), however, represent an interesting dynamic for our respondents: They are in 10th place in services offered, but shoot to third place in top profitable pest and fourth place in revenue generation.

The flea and tick management category is up from our 2026 survey, and chances are good it's more the ticks than the fleas — thanks to heavy media coverage of ticks as vector carriers. But public awareness aside, the milder weather also has given rise to larger tick populations.

While a variety of factors discussed throughout this report are affecting the industry in different ways, many respondents agree that keeping the core services solid and adding services as appropriate is a strong strategy heading into 2027.



Gustavo Hernandez

Gustavo Hernandez is the Astoria, N.Y.-based owner of both the company his late father began, H2 Environmental Pest Management, as well as 1-800-Raccoon Pest & Wildlife Control. His advice for choosing service offerings is to "keep growing and expanding the higher-margin work." In his case, he adds, implementing both attic cleanup and disinfecting services seems to be showing potential.

Current Services

90%	Ant management
89%	Rodent management
87%	Cockroach management
86%	Spider management
85%	Flea & tick management

Top Revenue-Generating Services

81%	Ant management
74%	Rodent management
64%	Cockroach management
56%	WDI/WDO management
32%	Spider management

Top Profit-Generating Services

63%	Ant management
57%	Rodent management
55%	WDI/WDO management
44%	Cockroach management
38%	Mosquito management

Matt Chitwood is a similar proponent of nothing ventured, nothing gained. "The companies that win won't be the ones that predict every change," advises Chitwood, CEO of Critter Wranglers in Powell, Tenn. "They'll be the ones with strong margins, cash reserves, recurring revenue and the discipline to adapt quickly." **PMP**



Matt Chitwood

Gooch can be reached at hgooch@northcoastmedia.net or 330-321-9754.

Ticket to ride



Bigger budgets for workforce additions, fleets — and yes, artificial intelligence — are gaining ground

By Heather Gooch | *PMP* Editor-in-Chief

Eighty-one percent of survey respondents plan to increase their budgets in 2027. Nearly half of the respondents (47 percent) are boosting budgets by more than 10 percent. And what they are budgeting for the most is little surprise for those who have been following our reports for a while.

Consumable products dominate the most-wanted list, with the Top 10 featuring baits, insecticides, glue boards and traps. Common integrated pest management components, such as insect growth regulators and monitors, also rank high. Green pest control products continue to gain ground, with 45 percent of respondents noting it's an official budget-line item in 2027. This is up slightly from the 43 percent of respondents forecasting their 2026 budget last year.

At 73 percent, staff expansion is the single largest planned investment. Most respondents are in agreement that competitive wages are a must to attract and keep employees.

Raye Chisholm, general manager of Mosquito Squad Plus of Fort Worth, Texas, advises treating labor productivity as your main inflation offset. "Recruit like you're competing with the trades, not with other pest control companies," she advises, referring to electricians, plumbers and other service professionals. That also means employees won't respond to paycheck levels alone: "Pay and schedule predictability beat a raw wage rate," Chisholm says.

Stephen Giger, general manager of Escondido, Calif.-based Home Guard Pest Control, agrees. With current inflation rates hovering around 3 percent or more, his advice while creating the 2027 budget is to look for ways to control costs, improve efficiencies and lower the turnover rate of both customers and employees. While that ostensibly should be the goals every year, it's all the more important in an increasingly belt-tightening economy, he says.



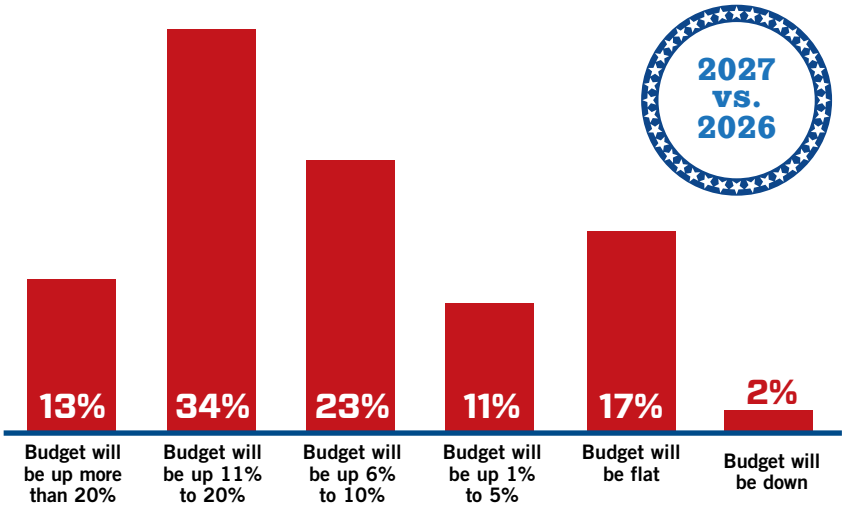
Chris McNall

Chris McNall, regional director of operations of Mosquito Squad Plus of the MidAtlantic, Virginia Beach, Va., advises that when assessing costs, try to look at things from every angle.

"Take advantage of bulk purchasing with reduced rates or rebates," he says. "Work directly with manufacturers whenever possible, and try to keep inventory at optimized levels at all times."

Other factors, including record rainfall and regulatory buzz around pest control and prevention, also can factor

Projected Equipment & Materials Budget



GETTY IMAGES: TU MINH (TOP), VECTARAY / ISTOCK / GETTY IMAGES PLUS



At 73 percent, staff expansion is the single largest planned investment.

into the increased costs of doing business.

To stave off the time and labor lost in replacing employees (and thus potential customer loss as well), Giger says "we have to drive a culture in which employees thrive emotionally and financially. That includes top-tier training and maintaining good benefits packages."

Stacey White, owner of Vintage Pest Management in Peoria, Ariz., suggests that raising prices "across the board" in 2027 is practically a must to afford what you need to be successful. But like Giger, White says people come first, over rising fuel and materials costs: "With all the stress about the economy, we have to make sure we are checking on our people."



Stacey White

The focus on staff mirrors this year's numbers of increasing the wages of hourly employees (47 percent) and salaried employees (41 percent). Nearly one in three (27 percent) of survey respondents plan to extend healthcare benefits to their team, and 20 percent plan to offer a contribution program like profit sharing or a 401(k).

Compliance efforts and worker protection remain solid budget-line items, with personal protective equipment (PPE) and safety equipment weighing in at 67 percent and 65 percent, respectively.

Last but not least: For the first time ever, *Pest Management Professional* added artificial intelligence (AI) as a budget line option in the SOI survey. Nearly one in five respondents (18 percent) indicated that they are adding AI adoption to their budgeting costs for 2027.

We also asked about remote monitoring systems for insects for the first time. Because the technology is fairly new, we weren't expecting a big response, nor did we get one: Only 10 percent of respondents have it as a budget line for 2027. Compare that to the relatively new introduction of rodent monitoring systems, which now stands at 26 percent. In 2025, it was at 24 percent of respondents. It's only two percentage points, but they're going in the right direction.

As the market readies for new product rollouts of all types in the months ahead, only time will tell whether these numbers will increase or decrease this time next year. **PMP**

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2027 Planned Purchases

80%	Bait stations
78%	Ant bait
76%	Cockroach bait
75%	Granule insecticides
73%	Glue boards & trays
72%	Rodent traps
68%	Spray concentrate insecticides
67%	Backpack sprayers
67%	Insect growth regulators
67%	Personal protective equipment
65%	Safety equipment
62%	Termiticides

2027 Planned Investments

73%	Add employees
49%	Expand fleet
47%	Increase hourly pay
41%	Increase salaried pay
27%	Offer healthcare benefits
22%	Purchase leased office
20%	Offer profit-sharing plan
12%	Add one or more branches



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