

Carpenter Ants

During the year, unusually large numbers of carpenter ants could be noticed around gardens and homes. These large, black ants (6 to 10 mm) can become a nuisance in homes in their search for food. They can also cause structural damage to woodwork by excavating galleries for nesting.

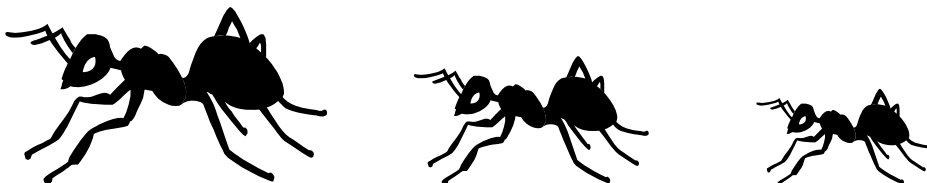
Habits

Outdoors, carpenter ants are found in dead tree trunks, logs, and fence posts. They prefer moist, decaying wood, and their presence in a home can be a sign of a moisture problem or of wood suffering from decay. On the exterior of buildings, nests can be found in wooden steps and sills and around porches. The appearance of sawdust-like shavings and large numbers of winged adults inside a home usually indicate the existence of a nest.

Carpenter ants are omnivorous insects, eating both plant and animal matter. They enter houses through windows, holes in foundations, along power and telephone cables and tree branches; or via firewood brought inside.

Control Measures

1. Remove decaying or infested wood from around buildings and store firewood away from the sides of buildings.
2. Eliminate high moisture conditions inside buildings.
3. Remove potential food sources by implementing good sanitation practices such as regularly removing food debris off floors.
4. Apply insecticides (baits, sprays or dusts) to nest and nest areas. Ensure label directions and precautions are followed. Chemical control is only effective when used together with physical control methods. With major infestations, the homeowner should hire the services of a licensed pest control applicator.



For more information, please contact your nearest Environmental Public Health Services office.

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