
THE PESTICIDE REVIEW

Volume 1, Issue 8

Santa Clara County Division of Agriculture

November 2002



Registration Season

Renewal letters will be mailed out soon.

Santa Clara County has nearly 400 pest control companies that register with us each year. Each company will receive a registration reminder and an application for a restricted material permit at the end of this month. We will begin accepting 2003 registrations starting on **December 9, 2002.**

Before you register, make sure your licenses have been renewed by the State. If you register in person, please arrive during office hours! Our Morgan Hill office hours are from 8 a.m.-12 p.m. and the San Jose office hours are from 1 p.m.- 5 p.m.

If you have not received your license from DPR, we will be still able to process your registration if it has been updated on the DPR website. To find out if DPR has processed your license, go to this website: <http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/license/currlic.htm>

If you have not received your original license from DPR at the time of registration, bring in a printout from DPR's website. - It will help speed things along during this busy time of year.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Pest Control Registration
- 2 Fumigating Homes with Safes
- 3 Wild Pigs
- 4 West Nile Virus
- 5 Morgan Hill Office Has New Phone Numbers
- 6 Pesticides in the Home

Fumigating Homes with Safes

Can they stay closed during a fumigation?

We were recently asked about fumigating homes with locked safes or roll-up desks. What if the homeowner has secured these items and there is no way to open them for a fumigation?

We spoke to Dow Agro Sciences about this issue and they agreed that if there is a small locked safe in the home, the fumigation can continue. Our definition of "small" would be something that a young child would not be able to crawl into. If the homeowner wants a large safe or a locking roll-up desk secured during a fumigation, they will need to be present for both the introduction of the fumigant and at the certification. The homeowner will have to open the locked item to show the licensee it is clear of food, etc, before the company can introduce the fumigant. Once the home is undergoing the certification process, the licensee should first check to make sure the level of Vikane in the home is below 5ppm, and then have the homeowner open these items so the licensee can certify the levels of Vikane are safe.

Wild Pigs

*What control options are there?
What licenses are needed?*



As the urban sprawl has continued to encroach upon our open space areas, there has been an increase in wildlife encounters. One wild animal that makes its presence known is the wild pig. When wild pigs venture into nicely manicured landscapes bordering their territory, property owners are shocked with the amount of damage these animals can inflict upon landscapes. These animals cause so much damage they have even been covered in the news. Just last month, the Mercury News published an article about wild pigs destroying an apartment complex's landscape in south San Jose.

Continued on page 3

West Nile virus

Moving westward...



West Nile virus is commonly found in humans and other vertebrates in Africa, Eastern Europe, West Asia, and the Middle East. Until its detection in New York City in 1999, it had never been detected in the Western Hemisphere. It is not known how the virus reached the United States, but since its introduction it has spread rapidly across the country.

How is West Nile virus transmitted?

According to the Center of Disease Control, the principle transmission cycle of the West Nile virus involves several species of mosquitoes and birds. When mosquitoes feed on birds that are infected with the virus, the mosquitoes become carriers of the disease and can then pass it along to other hosts. Although some people may become ill when infected with the West Nile virus, the Center of Disease Control believes that humans are an incidental host to the virus because we are unable to pass the virus on to other humans or animals.

What are the symptoms of West Nile virus?

Most people that are bitten by an infected mosquito will not develop any symptoms of illness. Some people will develop a mild fever, headache, body aches, and sometimes a skin rash. On rare occasions, West Nile virus results in a severe illness known as West Nile encephalitis. Encephalitis is an inflammation of the brain and a number of these cases have been fatal.

Prevention

Try and avoid being outside during peak mosquito activity at dawn and dusk. If you must go outside at these times, wear long sleeves and pants, and apply insect repellent to clothing and exposed skin. The Center of Disease Control recommends products that contain DEET. Be aware that there are a number of different products with different concentrations of DEET. Apply and use the most appropriate material for the duration of time you will be exposed to mosquitoes. A higher concentration of DEET does not afford you better protection, but it will give you a longer duration of protection. And, of course, read the label and use caution when using these products, especially on children.

Is the county monitoring for the West Nile virus?

The Santa Clara County Vector Control District has 15 mosquito light traps and 3 sentinel chicken flocks dispersed through out Santa Clara County to monitor for specific diseases. They collect mosquitoes from the light traps on a weekly basis and the chickens have blood drawn every two weeks to monitor for Saint Louis encephalitis, western encephalitis, and now West Nile virus. Evidently, the laboratory analysis for the viruses that cause Saint Louis and West Nile cross-react, so if the lab were to get a positive for the Saint Louis virus, they now automatically test for West Nile. Fortunately, the West Nile virus has not been detected in this area, but Vector Control would not be surprised if they find it this coming spring.

What can Pest Control Companies do?

Crows, ravens, and jays are extremely susceptible to the West Nile virus and populations of these birds have been decimated in the areas were the disease has struck. One of the things you can do is report dead or dying birds to Vector Control. They are especially interested in crows, jays, and raptors that show no signs of disease or trauma. Sample birds must be submitted within 48 hours of their death (The viruses start to degrade). If you should come across a bird that shows no obvious cause of death, please call Vector Control at (408) 792-5010.

The key to keeping down the infection rate of West Nile virus is to control the number of mosquitoes in the area. Pest control and landscaping companies can be a great help in detecting mosquito-breeding sites. If you see a client that is harboring mosquitoes, educate them about what they can do to prevent this problem. They should eliminate mosquito breeding sites by draining items that hold standing water, such as flower pots, clogged rain gutters, discarded tires, buckets, cans, and plastic swimming pools. If you should find a potential mosquito-breeding site such as an abandoned property with standing water, or public areas where you notice a problem with mosquito larvae, please contact Vector Control and they can help rectify the problem.

Background on wild pigs

Wild pigs did not exist in California before the early 1700's. Domestic swine were brought into the state when Spanish and Russian settlers arrived here several hundred years ago. Some of these pigs escaped and started a feral pig population. Compounding this problem was the introduction of the European wild boar in the 1920's. The wild boar bred with the established feral pig population resulting in the wild hybrid pig we have today.

Pigs are considered a game animal, so unless they are in the act of destroying crops, property, or harassing livestock, they cannot be destroyed or trapped without a permit from Fish and Game. If a pig is taken while in the act of destroying property, the Department of Fish and Game must be notified no later than the next business working day.

Who can legally take a pig that is in the act of damaging property?

The owner of the land, property, crop, or livestock; the owner's agent, lessee, or employee; or by an agent or government entity when acting in their official capacity.

If the pigs have already damaged a landscaped area and you expect them to return, a depredation permit is REQUIRED from Fish and Game. These permits are free and depending on the situation, the person being issued the permit may need to be a licensed hunter. Call the Department of Fish and Game at (831) 649-2870.

Is an agricultural pest control license required to trap and dispatch pigs?

Food and Agricultural Code Section 11531 gives an exemption to the licensing requirement for the live capture and removal or exclusion of vertebrate pests. (Does not apply to mice, rats, or pigeons)

In the case of wild pigs, if an animal is dispatched on site, an agricultural business license is required. If a pig were trapped alive and taken off site, an agricultural business license would not be required. (Although you should contact Fish and Game and consult with them about moving a live wild animal.)

Due to Registration Season, our next issue of the Pesticide Review will be mailed the beginning of January.
Have a Happy Holiday Season!

Our Morgan Hill Office Has New Phone Numbers!



**605 Tennant Avenue, Suite G
Morgan Hill, CA 95037**

General Phone Line: (408) 465-2900
On Duty Biologist
Office Hours: 8 a.m. - 12 noon

District Biologists:

Nancy Barrera (408) 465-2906
Joshua Fairbanks (408) 465-2905
Keith Meyer (408) 465-2904
Lori Oleson (408) 465-2903

Pesticides in the Home

Storage of pesticides around the home

Many of you deal with pesticides on a daily basis at work, but have you ever thought about the many pesticides you have at home? Or, at the homes of people you or your children visit?

A 1992 nationwide survey by the U.S. Environmental Agency revealed that 47% of all households with children under five years of age had at least one pesticide stored within reach of the children. Most people don't realize that common household products like bleach, laundry detergent, and cleaning solvents can be pesticides.

In 1999, an estimated 79,000 children were involved in common household pesticide related poisonings or exposures, 13% of which occurred in homes other than the child's. Being in an industry that routinely uses pesticides, you are well aware of the requirements of keeping pesticides in non-food containers and having all pesticides locked and secured. These standards should also be followed at home for common household chemicals and pesticides.