

COCKROACHES

Description

Cockroaches are insects which range in size from 10-23mm in length. They have long whip-like antennae and two pairs of wings. The two most commonly found species are:

- The Oriental Cockroach
- The German Cockroach

They can be distinguished by their size and colour; the Oriental cockroach being larger and darker brown in colour. The Oriental cockroach, unlike the German variety, is unable to climb smooth vertical surfaces.



Cockroaches: carriers of food poisoning germs and responsible for the spread of dysentery and gastro-enteritis.

Distribution

Cockroaches can be found in premises where food is stored or handled. They are nocturnal insects and will spend most of the day hiding in cracks and around drains and service ducting. Infestations may be introduced into premises in laundry and food deliveries.

Significance

Cockroaches carry food poisoning germs on their bodies and are responsible for the spread of dysentery and gastro-enteritis. They will feed on almost anything, including faecal matter and food for human consumption. Contamination will occur when the insect comes into contact with food or work surfaces or through faecal contamination of foodstuffs.

Life Cycle

The female cockroach produces up to eight purse-like egg cases at monthly intervals. The egg cases are thick walled and are 6-12mm in length and may contain up to 30 eggs. The nymphs of the German cockroach emerge from their eggs in 2-4 weeks and those of the Oriental cockroach in 6-12 weeks. The nymphs are similar appearance to the adult, but smaller. As the nymph develops and grows, it moults. This usually occurs 5-10 times during its development which may take up to two years to complete until the insect reaches maturity. The life cycle is complete in a

further four months for Oriental cockroaches and nine months for the German cockroach.

Control

You will need professional help in treating a cockroach infestation particularly if you run a commercial food premises. You can assist by ensuring that your premises are clean and that there are no food sources and hiding places for cockroaches. Our Pest Control Officers will treat your premises with an insecticidal spray around the boundary of the rooms, at the junction between walls and floor, behind equipment and in vents and ducting. The treated area should be left undisturbed for as long as possible. It will be necessary for us to re-treat your premises to kill any new nymphs as they emerge from their eggs.

Safety

All pesticides are applied by our qualified and experienced staff to ensure the safety of the public and to minimise damage to the environment.