
Detoxify Cockroaches

Controlling cockroaches in homes is an important health issue. Roaches transfer germs while crawling over counters, dishes, silverware and foods stored in the open. Roach activity is associated with food poisoning, allergy reactions, and can be a vector for diseases. There are four roach species found in Nebraska.

Oriental cockroaches are often called water bugs. They are most often found in basements and on the first floor and tend to like moist areas around drains. They are poor fliers. They are fairly easy to eliminate with good and regular cleaning practices. They most often enter the home through eggs laid in beer or cardboard cartons for poorly cleaned warehouses.

American cockroaches are often found outside the home along the foundation. In the house they are likely to be in and under furniture in the living areas. They are strong fliers. They are quite easy to get out with cleaning and use of a fly swatter at night after turning the lights on in a dark room.

German and Brown banded cockroaches are the more difficult problem. I once entered a college dormitory restroom in Serbia where we were to stay the night and the walls and floors were brown. It was hard to close our eyes and sleep that night. These cockroach species require a diligent and multi-faceted control plan.

Start with complete cleaning effort and repeat it weekly with daily spot cleaning and dish washing. Make sure all pet food and stored food is in tightly sealed containers. Garbage and recyclables should be removed from the home daily and stored in sealed bags and sealed cans. Cleanup all stored sacks, bags, boxes, etc. In particular cleanup kitchen and bathroom areas where feed and moisture many attract roaches. Make sure none are stored under the kitchen sink.

Repair wall cracks and seal opening gaps where pipes come through the wall. Replace missing or damaged baseboards and sills.

Control materials available for safe nontoxic control of roaches have increased in the marketplace. In particular bait station products are improved both in safety and in control. Be sure to read and follow all label instructions, including the remove of depleted stations. The roach war isn't over with one battle. Combine control methods. An example would be to combine use of bait stations with a cleaning effort and the use of roach powders under appliances and counters.

Commercial exterminators can play a valuable role in control, if they are helping you to understand, control, and eliminate the problem. Be demanding of their professional skills. If they aren't explaining things you can and should do to help besides paying the fee something is probably less professional than you want.

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