

Cockroaches in food premises

Cockroaches are mechanical vectors for disease as they can carry viruses and contaminate surfaces including food and food contact surfaces.

When food premises have been left unattended for long periods of time, the risk of cockroach activity increases.

Here are some strategies to avoid the likelihood of infestation by cockroaches.



Cleaning and removal of rubbish

Cockroaches are able to eat almost anything. Apart from eating any bits of food left out, they will also eat fabrics, cardboard, glue, hair, flakes of skin and even other cockroaches. If these things are not available, then they are capable of surviving without food for up to a month, provided that water is available. It is therefore important that continuous cleaning and the removal of waste are practiced.

Cardboard attracts cockroaches as the corrugated section provides a great place for them to lay their eggs. Avoid cockroach activity by removing all unused and unwanted cardboard from the food premises.

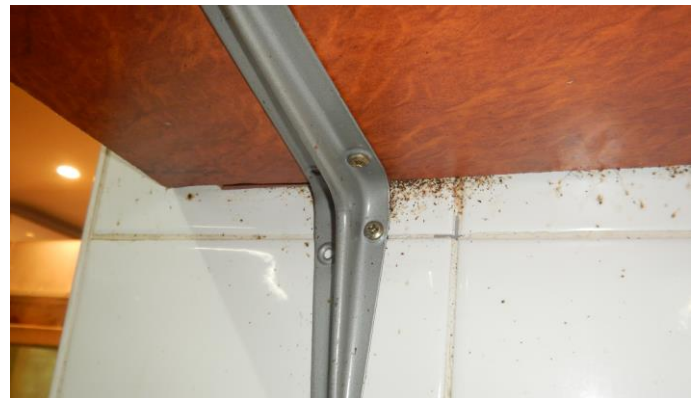
The accumulation of items and cluttering in general also provide areas for cockroaches to hide and breed. Removing of all disused items such as equipment, furniture and containers can

help declutter food premises so it becomes less attractive to cockroaches.

Garbage storage areas are another place that attracts cockroaches. Keep garbage storage areas clean, tidy and free of odour at all times. Ensure all receptacles are regularly emptied and cleaned.

The signs

One way of ensuring food premises are free from cockroach activity is to look for signs such as droppings in a cluster that are brown to black in colour. Unpleasant odour is also a sign of an established cockroach infestation.



Cockroaches shed their skin 5-8 times as they mature into adults. This shed skin is usually found close to where cockroaches are sheltering.

Pest control

Professional pest controllers will be able to perform preventative treatments to ensure long term deterrence of cockroaches within your food premises. Contact your pest controller and decide on a pest control program to protect your food premises from cockroaches. Please note that pest control treatments will only be effective if your premises have first been thoroughly cleaned and properly maintained.

Repair and maintenance

Making sure that food premises are properly maintained is another way of discouraging a cockroach infestation.

Any leaking pipes or blocked drains provide a potential water source for cockroaches; therefore it is important to repair leaking pipes and clear blocked drains.

Exposed wooden shelving provides a great hiding place for cockroaches. It is a requirement that all exposed wood in a food premises must be sealed by painting, or with plastic laminate or be replaced with a water proof material that is easily and effectively cleaned.



Ensure all cracks and crevices are adequately sealed to reduce the likelihood of entry and harbourage of cockroaches. Cockroaches are able to fit through the smallest of gaps as they are able to flatten their exoskeletons and splay their legs to the sides.

Fun facts

Cockroaches can regenerate lost legs during moult stages and over a series of moults can regrow antennae and even eyes.

Cockroaches do not use their mouths to breathe, but rather use small tubes in their body called spiracles.

Cockroaches can travel through plumbing pipes and can hold their breath for up to 30 minutes.

German cockroaches reproduce more rapidly than other common pest cockroaches. One female and her offspring can produce 30000 individuals in a year.

The most commonly seen cockroaches in Australia are the German, American, Australian and Asian Cockroaches.



Further Information

For further information regarding cockroaches, please contact Council's Environmental Health Officer on:

Phone: 9330 6400

E-mail: mail@georgesriver.nsw.gov.au