

Pest Connection

*Tips for a
Pest-Free
Home*

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Ants, insects—even mice,
only need an opening the
size of a dime.

If They Can't Get In, They Can't Become a Pest

Pest Control Exclusion Makes a Difference

There isn't a pest in Wisconsin that can't be controlled by implementing exclusion tactics. The practice of sealing entryway points and therefore keeping pests outside is a simple premise, and an eco-friendly one too since it results in lower chemical use. Exclusion is a cornerstone of Integrated Pest Management (IPM), the pest control philosophy followed by Batzner Pest Control.

Find the Entryway

The idea behind exclusion techniques is simple. Find an opening and seal it up. The trick is finding the opening. Given that some pests can slip through openings barely discernable to the naked eye – ants, crawling insects, even mice only need an opening the size of a dime – it is a time-consuming task, and one that benefits from a professional since they are trained on where to look and what to look for. But with the proper materials and diligence, homeowners can successfully implement some exclusionary solutions on their own.

Check for Wildlife Before Blocking Openings

Before starting the exclusion process, identify if issues are caused by animals that may make a bigger mess trying to get back in once they are excluded from their 'home'. For example, if wildlife such as squirrels or raccoons are getting into an attic, and their

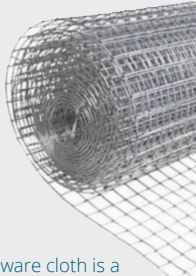
entrance is blocked, they may cause greater damage creating a new entrance. In this case, trapping should take place to remove the offenders before sealing up the entryway.

Pest Entryways to Look For:


- Gaps between wood trim and eaves allow bats entry into attics
- Foundation cracks, including garages inside and out with careful inspection along shared inside walls
- Openings around vents, utility lines and drain pipes
- Window and door casements, door sweeps
- Loose shingles and sheathing, screen and louvered in-wall vents

What to Use:

- Hardware cloth (1/4" wire mesh)
- Caulk, foam, spackle
- Sheet metal
- Concrete
- Copper mesh or **stainless** steel wool – do not use regular steel wool; it rusts and breaks down over time



Hardware cloth is a wire mesh that is used to keep animals and birds out of openings.



Got gaps? Stuff them with stainless steel wool for a long lasting barrier.

[Read full story inside]

Avoid A Clothes Moth Invasion

It's time to haul out winter clothing if you haven't already. Notice holes in your sweaters that you don't recall being there last winter? The culprit are most likely clothes moths.

These moths are approximately ½ inch long and their coloration ranges from tan to dark brown. They are active year-round and can survive in frigid temperatures, but they cherish warm houses throughout the cold season.



1 female = 50 larvae

- A female clothes moth will lay 40-50 eggs at a time
- Larvae emerge in 4-10 days
- They feed for 2-30 months

The moth itself does not eat the clothing. It is the larvae stage that is the most harmful. They will consume anything made from animal-based fibers, such as fur, wool, cashmere, feathers, alpaca, and even dead animals. These are the very same fibers that are often found in rugs, chairs, curtains, blankets, socks, gloves, sweaters, scarves, coats, taxidermy collections, hairballs from a pet, lint, tapestry, vintage clothing, teddy bears, and knitting yarn.

Securing your clothing in a tightly zippered bag, inserting cedar linings in closets, deep freezing clothes, and mothballs are the most common prevention tips. If you

are seeing moths, you may want to contact a professional to investigate for the source and implement pest control specific to clothes moths.



Woodpeckers

Controlling Damage from a Woodpecker's Peck

Fun to watch as they hammer away, usually gripping sideways on a tree trunk, woodpeckers sometimes become a nuisance. They peck at wood to establish territory, find a mate, excavate a nesting hole or to find insects, and sometimes that wood is attached to a building. They can cause substantial damage if not deterred.

Protected Species

Woodpeckers are protected by the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, so it is illegal to intentionally capture, kill or disrupt these migratory birds or their nests and eggs.

Wisconsin's Most Common Woodpeckers



Downy

5.5 to 7.1" long
Smallest in U.S



Hairy

7.1-10.2" long
Medium sized



Pileated

16 to 19" long
Second largest in U.S.

FAST FACTS

Diet	Feeds on a variety of insects, especially beetles, ants, caterpillars, and more. They are also fond of black oil sunflower seeds, millet, peanuts, and chunky peanut butter. Occasionally, downy woodpeckers will drink from oriole and hummingbird feeders as well.
Habitat	Woodpeckers usually peck at dead or diseased trees/limbs, but they have also been known to peck at buildings, siding, metal and air conditioners. They peck in order to find food, excavate areas for nesting, or create room for food storage. They are found mostly in or on the edge of wooded areas due to food prevalence and preference for living in or near trees. They can nest in structures, fences, poles, and sign posts. A cavity is created by the male and female to make a nest in dead limb or dead tree, usually 12-30' above ground. The cavity entrance is often surrounded by fungus or lichen, helping to camouflage site.
Prevention	Woodpecker prevention is based upon physical barriers and scare techniques. Physical barriers created in pecking areas will help get rid of woodpeckers by preventing entry. Commonly these are made of steel mesh. Noise scare techniques are also effective in some cases.

Ask the Experts

Dan Stawicki, Operations Manager



Featuring advice from our Associate Certified Entomologists

Have a question? Reach out to us on Facebook, Twitter, or at Batzner.com

Q: I have a mass of approximately 200 flies congregating on a windowsill. What are these flies and how can you help?

A: The flies are most likely cluster flies. They are overwintering pests, with clusters ranging from as little as four flies to thousands. They are attracted to extreme ultraviolet light, so beginning in fall, these flies are seeking to live somewhere warm. Cluster flies tend to migrate towards the cracks and crevices of your home. Often they are found in the attic or exterior, it is also not uncommon for the flies to be found in the interior of your home.



Cluster flies lay their eggs in the soil. Once the larva hatches, they seek their way towards earthworms and feed off them until the larva is ready to leave the worm. It takes approximately two weeks to develop into an adult.

Cluster flies do not carry diseases that are harmful to humans. They are just a nuisance to us due to their long lifespan - most flies do not live to be more than three months. However, cluster flies are known to live up to two or more years. After they die off, beetles and other larger insects feed off of the cluster flies. This may cause a secondary infestation if the flies die off inside.

PREVENTION

A simple way to help prevent these flies from hibernating in your home is to schedule a professional pesticide treatment. To prevent overwintering, the treatment must take place before fall. An experienced service specialist will apply treatment to the cracks and crevices on the building's exterior as well as the interior, focusing on the south, east, and west sides of the building because they tend to get the most sun. Homeowners should also caulk all of the visible interior and exterior cracks and crevices.

Sincerely,

What if pest issues persist after exclusion is completed?

Exclusion has been applied to every crack and crevice, yet a restaurant still has roaches, or ants still make their way into a home. What's going on? Exclusion tactics come close to being the ideal pest control solution, but they can't solve every problem.

Deliveries, on-person, luggage, carryalls – pests such as cockroaches are known to hitch a ride in boxes, vehicles, bags of laundered linens, etc. In the case of commercial businesses that still see pest activity after thorough exclusion techniques have been applied, along with routine pest control, the answer may be hidden in deliveries such as parts, food supplies, and linens. Homeowners can experience pest invasions from delivered items; in purses, bags and luggage, and on bodies both human and pet – pests can be hitchhikers we are unknowingly transporting.

Garage and entryway doors, windows left open - It only takes moments for mice to dart into a garage via an open overhead door, or creepy crawlies to slither in through windows not evenly closed or entry doors left slightly ajar. Shut doors and windows tightly and minimize the amount of time they are left open. Ensure doors are properly installed with sweeps and window screens free of gaps and holes.

Persistent issues may require professional pest control

There is a lot that can be done by a homeowner in terms of exclusion. But sometimes it isn't enough, and requires the trained eye of a professional to spot a well-hidden entrance point. Batzner offers some exclusion services that can be added to your general pest control service.

Don't underestimate the inclusion of exclusion in your pest control program.

Community Outreach

Event in Your Community? Sign Us Up!

We are always open to opportunities to meet with residents and business owners, and answer their pest control questions. Email us at marketing@batzner.com.



Kids at Wehr Nature Center Bug Day meet a Batzner bed bug dog.



Dennis Olijnyk, Batzner Operations Manager, presents at the City of West Allis Homeowner Resource Fair.

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