

Have you seen cockroaches in your home or food premises?

Cockroaches crawl through dirty areas and then cross contaminate clean surfaces tracking in lots of bacteria and germs. They can contaminate food and utensils by shedding their skins. Their cast off skin and waste by products are allergens that can trigger allergic reactions, asthma and other illnesses, especially in children.

The most common types of cockroaches found in **New South Wales** are;
German cockroach (*blattella germanica*)



The German cockroach is the most common type of cockroach found in kitchens, food preparation areas and food storage areas. They particularly like starch, sugary foods, grease and meats.



Where there is a shortage of foodstuffs, they may eat household items such as soap, glue and toothpaste or they may even turn cannibalistic, often chewing on the wings and legs of each other.

American cockroach (*periplaneta americana*)



American cockroaches generally live in moist areas. They prefer warm temperatures and do not tolerate cold temperatures. In residential areas, these cockroaches live in basements, sewers and may move outdoors into yards during warm weather. They feed on a wide variety of plant and animal material.

Smoky Brown cockroach (*periplaneta fuliginosa*)

The Smoky Brown cockroach is a relative of the American cockroach and resembles it in shape, size and characteristics.



Cockroach habits

- Cockroaches may become pests in your food premises or home after being introduced in cardboard boxes, grocery bags and deliveries.
- Cockroaches prefer warm, undisturbed areas with high humidity and nearby food and water.
- Cockroaches are active at night, however in large numbers they are seen during the day and hide in dark areas such as under refrigerators and stoves, in kitchen cupboards and in cracks and crevices in walls.
- Their oval, flattened body shape allows them to enter cracks and crevices easily.
- They are extremely resilient and can survive long periods without food or water.

Cockroach prevention methods

- Good housekeeping minimises food and water sources as well as breeding sites, reducing the possibility of cockroach infestations.
- Do not leave uncovered food and dirty dishes out overnight. Store all food in vermin proof containers with close fitting lids.
- Ensure rubbish bins and recycling bins have tight fitting lids, are regularly emptied and not overflowing.
- Prevent cockroaches from entering your premises by sealing around air conditioning units, windows, doors, pipes, or other openings. Eliminate all possible indoor hiding and breeding areas by repairing plumbing leaks, cracks, and crevices. Insulate pipes to prevent condensation.
- Regularly clean and sanitise behind cooking equipment, appliances, in cupboards, cracks and crevices to eliminate food scraps, hiding cockroaches and egg capsules. Thoroughly clean cooking equipment, floors and walls to avoid any accumulation of grease and food scraps.



Cockroach control methods

The main methods used in pest control can be summarised as follows:



1. Build them out

Make sure that kitchens are properly constructed and maintained so as to prevent access and harbourage of pests.

2. Be on the lookout

Check places that are not often disturbed. Look for droppings and egg capsules.

3. Starve them out

Correct storage of foods, effective cleansing and suitable refuse and storage minimises the quantity of food available to attract and feed pests.

4. Chase them out

Regular treatment by a licensed pest control operator is recommended in controlling pests.

WARNING: Pesticides are poisonous. Read and follow directions and safety precautions on labels. Handle pesticides carefully and store in original labelled containers out of the reach of children.

For more information please contact the Environmental Health Officers at:

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