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How to Destroy Bees in the Home

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Insect Control

Use Pesticides Safely

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HOW TO DESTROY BEES IN THE HOME

Honey bees often establish nests in the walls or other parts of a home. This may occur between the studs, between ceiling joists, inside the attic, between the roof and walls, in hollow pillars of a porch, within the overhang that shelters an entrance door, and within or between flues of a brick chimney. Bumble bees build nests under steps, in rock terraces, in a garage, inside old mattresses, and elsewhere that suitable conditions are found.

It is easier and more practical to destroy a colony of bees soon after they have entered a building than after they have obtained a large quantity of honey and brood material. If the bees in an established colony are killed with an insecticide, the deteriorating brood may produce a disagreeable odor for some time. In addition, honey may seep out through interior walls or drip from the top of a door frame. Do not kill bees in a wall unless there is some way to get the brood and honey out afterwards. Colonies which have occupied a building for a year or more are best destroyed in early spring when their supply of honey is low.

The choice of control methods and materials will depend upon the size and position of entrances into the building and the availability of chemicals. Bumble bees, wasps and hornets can be destroyed with the same chemicals used against bees. Wasps more frequently locate close to a house rather than in it, and can be more readily killed with a spray or dust gun. Open nests of wasps and hornets hanging from eaves can often be eliminated by squirting the nest with a strong stream of water from a garden hose. There is less danger of being stung when control is carried out at night.

While bees are flying, locate all their entrances into the house. If it is necessary to use a ladder to reach the entrances, put the ladder in place while the bees are still flying. Apply control treatments in the evening when bees are in the nest. Many persons prefer to wear a beekeepers' veil, heavy jacket and gloves during control operations. Even then it is important to apply the treatment carefully without unduly disturbing the bees.

Take a small bottle of chlordane concentrate, some rags and a screw driver, stuff as much treated cloth as possible into each entrance. If the entrance is very small, it may be well to inject the chlordane solution into the opening with a small syringe, then quickly stuff the opening with treated rags to prevent the bees' escape.

Another method is to use benzene hexachloride, two paper or plastic sacks, some adhesive tape, and some small wooden cleats.

First place one sack inside the other. Then put several tablespoonfuls of benzene hexachloride powder in the inside sack. Tie a string tightly around the sacks just above the chemicals. This prevents fumes from escaping until the sacks are fastened in position.

Roll the open ends of the sacks outward an inch or two. Tape the rolled edges to the building without jarring, in such a manner that the bees cannot escape. The small wooden cleats should be of dimensions which permit the sacks to be fastened tightly around any overlapping boards. As soon as the sacks are securely fastened down, remove the string so the sacks open, allowing the fumes to penetrate the entrance.

After several days, when there no longer is a sign of living bees, remove the saturated rags and/or the paper bags. Next plug the holes permanently with caulking compound, or by some other effective means.

Use due caution to avoid getting stung by bees or wasps. If you should get stung by a honey bee, scrape out the stinger, don't pull it out. Grasping the stinger will force more venom into the flesh and cause greater irritation.

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