# Restaurant Pest Control

By DoMyOwn staff

**A well managed restaurant pest control program starts with three basic steps:**

1. Inspection. This step will lead you to have basic idea of where the pests are harboring, traveling, so that can decide where to concentrate pesticide applications.
    - Inspect possible harborages or hiding spots for live pests, feces, cast skins and egg cases. Rodents, roaches and flies usually leave behind some evidence of active infestations.
    - Inspect trash bins, sinks, floor drains, kitchen equipment, wall voids, electrical outlets, electrical boxes, any hollow tubing on appliance legs and any other crack, crevice or void where a rodent or insect may have taken up residence.
    - Place glue boards near suspected infestations. This will help monitor suspected problem areas, and let you what type of pest you have and where to apply treatments.
2. Proper sanitation is one of the key elements in pest control. Trash bins, sinks, floors and kitchen equipment should be cleaned as often as possible, and especially before leaving overnight. Any one of these areas could potentially lead to a pest infestation if left unchecked.
3. Exclusion means keeping the pests out before they become a problem. Make sure there are tight weather seals around doors and windows; caulk any openings leading to wall voids and never leave doors or unscreened windows open. Treating for pests outside may also stop them from invading indoors.

The three pests that seem to be a problem in almost every food service company are roaches, flies and rodents. When the three steps above are followed consistently over time, in conjunction with proper pesticide application, pest problems *can* be reduced and controlled.

**How to treat for roaches in a restaurant:**

When dealing with roaches, treatments should be limited to cracks, crevices and wall voids as this is where roaches spend most of their time. Using a combination of roach bait, insecticide, and an insect growth regulator will usually be needed.

- Apply roach baits such as **Avert Dry Flowable** or **MaxForce FC** in cracks or crevices where roach feces have been found.
- Apply an insecticide dust such as **Delta Dust** , or an insecticide foam, into wall voids where plumbing pipes exist and in wall voids behind stoves or dishwashers. These walls are most likely to have cockroaches hiding inside because of the humidity provided by the pipes.
- Liquid insecticides combined with insect growth regulators will also offer some control.**Talstar P** and **Gentrol IGR** are labeled to spray in food handling establishments for roach control. **(ALWAYS READ PRODUCT LABELS BEFORE APPLICATION)** Precaution should be used when applications are being performed. Apply in cracks and crevice at low pressure setting, being extremely careful not to splash or allow runoff that could potentially contaminate food prep surfaces. Protective barrier applications of insecticides such as **Talstar P** or **Suspend SC** should be made on a regular basis on the outside of structure to exclude insects from entering.

**How to get rid of flies in a restaurant:**

Fly management in restaurants can be a challenge with because flies just fly right in when deliveries are being made, the trash is taken out, or when customers are entering. Flies, like roaches, are usually associated with poor sanitation procedures. Areas that are not cleaned properly or where standing water is left unchecked are potential problem areas. A thorough inspection should be performed to find fly breeding areas.

- Check garbage cans, loose floor tiles, floor and sink drains, behind and under equipment.
- There are many types of flies that will invade a food service environment such asdrain flies, fruit flies, vinegar flies, phorid flies, blow flies and common house flies. Treatment for each fly is a bit different, but each of the steps listed here should be followed to maintain a proper fly management program.
- Fly control should begin with stopping the flies from entering the facility. Eliminate flies at the trash dumpsters before they move indoors by keeping these areas as clean as possible and closing dumpster lids when not in use. Apply fly baits like **Maxforce Granular Fly Bait** or **Maxforce Spot Fly Bait** to the trash collection areas.

- Indoors, fly light traps like the **Vector Plasma** or the **Vector Classic** can be placed in areas where the public cannot view them.
- In public areas the **Vector Eclipse** or the **Gilbert 2000GT** can be used discreetly. (Please read our Fly Light Trap article for instructions on correct fly light trap placement.)
- Sink and floor drains are major breeding grounds for many types of flies and should be kept extremely clean. An enzyme based cleaner like **DF5000** or **Invade Bio Drain Gel** should be used in the drains at least once a week to eliminate the organic matter that the flies breed in.
- Use **Vector 960 Fruit Fly traps** or **Natural Catch Fruit Fly Traps** in food areas for fast control of fruit flies and to monitor areas for infestations where fruit flies are a concern.

**How to get rid of rodents in a restaurant:**

Rats and mice are notorious for finding their way indoors. They can find even the tiniest crack in a structure and force there way in.

- Try to locate as many entry points as possible and seal them with **Stuf Fit Copper Mesh** or **Pur Black Foam**.
- Keep dumpster areas as clean as possible and keep lids closed when not in use.
- Keep grassy areas mowed to eliminate possible hiding spots.
- Place **rodent bait stations** near dumpster areas and along outdoor structure walls to kill rodents outdoors.
- If a rat or mouse infestation already exists in a commercial kitchen the use of **glue boards and/or snap traps** will be necessary. Place the traps near areas where dropping have been found or near areas where rodents or rodent damage has been found. The use of rodenticides (rat poison or mouse poison) is usually inappropriate in indoor areas. A rodent could succumb to the effects of the bait and die in an area that is inaccessible causing a horrible stench, flies, maggots, roaches, and beetles.

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