Fire Ant Prevention Guide

How to Prevent Fire Ants

By DoMyOwn staff

OVERVIEW

Total fire ant elimination, in areas that have previously been favorable to fire ants, is an unrealistic goal. You can, however, do things to help prevent fire ants and keep them at manageable levels. Preventing fire ants is an ongoing process. Once you have eliminated the existing colonies, it is quite common to have new fire ant colonies move in and build new mounds. Through some general outdoor sanitation and maintenance, as well as eliminating new mounds as soon as they are spotted, you will be able to control the fire ant population on your property.

STEP 1 Prevent Fire Ants With Sanitation Methods



Fire ants require three essential needs to exist on your property:

1. Food source
2. Water or moisture
3. Harborage or a place to live

By removing or limiting the pests food, water or harborage you will help make your property less attractive to pests. Making sure you maintain good sanitation will help limit Fire Ants from moving in. In regards to Fire ant control, sanitation means altering or eliminating the things that Fire ants need to live.

Sanitation:

- Trim back trees and shrubs so that the branches and foliage do not touch your home to prevent Fire ants from using them to avoid pesticide applications
- Rake back mulch, pine straw or other landscape bedding at least 6 inches from structure to create a "dry zone" that Fire ants are likely to avoid.
- Turn mulch or other bedding material every couple of weeks to keep moisture retention low and discourage nest building.
- Mow lawn as needed to keep growth low.
- Remove grass clippings, leaf piles and stacked wood to eliminate Fire ant harborages.
- Remove ripe fruit from trees and off of the ground around trees.
- Store outdoor trash cans and dumpsters as far away from structure as possible and be sure they have tight fitting lids.
- Thoroughly wash out trash cans and dumpsters with an ammonia solution when needed.

STEP 2 Eliminate Mounds

Eliminate Fire Ant mounds using the baiting or mound drench applications that are outlined in the fire ant treatment guide (method 2) as soon as a new mound is spotted. By eliminating them quickly you will drastically reduce the chance that the colony will split and produce new colonies.