



Fire Ants: Prevention Tips

Fire ants can pose all sorts of risks for businesses such as contaminating food and sterile areas. However, the larger concern is their ability to sting. Fire ant attacks can happen quickly and be life-threatening. Prevent fire ants from invading your business with these helpful tips from our experts.

Where you might see them

- Fire ants have diverse nesting locations: open lawn areas, utility boxes, wall voids, mulch, electronics, underneath objects, and more.
- Fire ants forage for food at a range of about 50 - 100 feet away from the nest.

Tips for prevention

- Remove food sources by cleaning up spills in both interior and exterior areas.
- Trim trees and shrubs away from the structure to prevent fire ants from accessing it via limbs and vegetation.
- Avoid using organic mulch and opt for stone, gravel, lava, or egg rock. If organic mulch is necessary, limit it to 2 inches deep and ensure that it is at least 18 inches away from the structure.
- Clean garbage receptacles on a regular basis with a bleach and water solution.
- Use caution when mowing. Advise landscapers not to mow over fire ant mounds as this may disperse the ants into the air, creating a danger for anyone in the area.
- Debris, firewood, and used equipment should be moved away from the exterior of the structure, as fire ants will often nest next to or under these items.
- Fire ants leave pheromone trails for other ants to follow. If you see ants inside your facility, wipe down areas of activity with soap and water to eliminate the trail.
- If your property is prone to fire ants, talk with your Rentokil Technician about instituting a proactive fire ant prevention program to reduce exterior activity and nesting, as well as potential indoor introduction.



ID and biology

- Fire ants vary in size from $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. They have a reddish-brown head and a darker abdomen.
- If their nest is disturbed, fire ants will swarm. Their painful stings can produce welts and allergic reactions, possibly requiring medical attention. Children and the elderly are particularly susceptible.
- Fire ants often build a “mound” above their nest. These mounds tend to be larger than typical ant hills.
- Fire ants are most active when temperatures are above 65 °F.

Experience pest-free. Call 866.483.5166 for a FREE consultation or contact us online at rentokil.com/us

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