

COCKROACH CONTROL GUIDE SUMMARY

WHY GET RID OF COCKROACHES?

COCKROACHES AND ASTHMA

Many people with asthma are allergic to roach dust. Roach dust is a strong asthma trigger.

WHAT IS "ROACH DUST"?

Roach body parts and droppings make roach dust.

WHAT IS A TRIGGER?

Triggers cause breathing problems for people with asthma. They cause asthma attacks.

GETTING RID OF COCKROACHES HELPS PEOPLE WITH ASTHMA HAVE FEWER ASTHMA ATTACKS.

GET RID OF ROACHES = BREATHE EASIER!

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO GET RID OF ROACHES?

USE IPM*

- **Do NOT use roach bug sprays, foggers or bombs.**
- **Deny roaches food, water, shelter and entry.**
 - Clean up spills and crumbs.
 - Take out trash every day.
 - Clean up standing water all over the house.
 - Get rid of roach hiding places: clean up clutter.
 - Seal cracks where roaches may enter.
- **Use borate powders.**
 - Apply lightly in cracks and open spaces where roaches are active.
 - Seal the borate powder with caulk or other sealer.
- **Use roach baits.**
 - Do NOT use bug spray because baits will not work if you use bug spray.
 - Apply small dots in roach hiding places, and near food and water sources.

KEEP YOUR HOUSE CLEAN – CLEAN UP ROACH DUST

- **Clean hard surfaces and floors – see tips in this guide.**
- **Clean rugs and vacuum carpets often.**
- **Keep dust out of your home.**

See Clean Up Roach Dust section for good ways to clean.

TENANTS AND LANDLORDS MUST WORK TOGETHER TO DENY ROACHES FOOD, WATER, SHELTER AND ENTRY.

Tenants must:

- Report roaches they see. Report leaks for repair.
- Use IPM methods listed in this guide.
- Work with the pest control company.

Landlords must:

- Do repairs.
- Use pest control services that use safe IPM methods.

See Tenant-Landlord Cooperation section for more information.

Place borate powder and roach baits in a safe place out of the reach of children and pets.



COCKROACH CONTROL GUIDE

GET RID OF ROACHES – BREATHE EASIER!

Tenants for Healthy Housing – Environmental Health Watch & Cleveland Tenants Organization

COCKROACHES AND ASTHMA

Many homes have problems with cockroaches. Many people with asthma are allergic to “roach dust.” Roach dust is made up of roach body parts and droppings. Roach dust is a very strong asthma “trigger.” Triggers cause asthma attacks.

For years, cockroaches have defeated our best efforts to get rid of them. We sprayed and sprayed, but they always came back. Now we understand that there is a better method to get rid of roaches.

The new method is called IPM*. Products used in IPM are safer than the roach bug sprays that were used in the past. Pest control companies, landlords, homeowners and tenants can use IPM.

Roach dust is still around even after you get rid of the roaches, and that dust can trigger asthma. A good cleaning is important to get rid of all roach dust.

IPM* METHODS:

- Do NOT use roach bug sprays, foggers or bombs.

INSTEAD:

- Deny roaches food, water, shelter and entry.
- Use borate powders, as needed.
- Use roach baits, as needed.



THE OLD METHODS OF ROACH CONTROL DO NOT WORK AND ARE NOT HEALTHY

Roach bug sprays, foggers and bombs have been used for years, but they do not work. They drive the roaches away for a while. Then the roaches come back.

The old method uses chemicals that are not healthy. Some can even trigger asthma attacks. The old methods put too much bug spray poison into the air, and on surfaces that people touch.

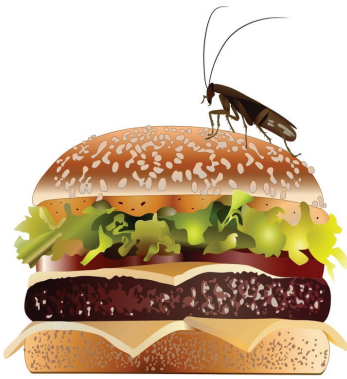
IPM METHODS WORK BETTER AND ARE SAFER

IPM works better than bug sprays at keeping roaches away. IPM is safer because it reduces exposure to bug spray poison. The best pest control companies now use IPM.

*IPM - Integrated Pest Management

DENY COCKROACHES FOOD

Try to remove all roach food sources. Roaches look for food at night. The best time to make sure that things are cleaned up is before you go to bed.



- Clean all surfaces where food is prepared, stored, eaten or spilled. Clean up food scraps from floors, tables, chairs, counters, around appliances and anywhere food spills. Be sure to

check the living room and bedroom areas where people eat.

- Do NOT leave food out on counters after use. Store all food in tightly sealed containers.
- Wash dishes before going to bed or leave them in soapy water in the sink overnight.
- Put pet food dishes away overnight or put the pet dish in a “moat.” Create a moat by placing the pet food dish inside a bigger container with about an inch of soapy water. Roaches will drown in soapy water.
- Keep trash in a closed container. Remove all trash from the house daily. Keep the outside of the garbage container clean.

DENY COCKROACHES WATER

Roaches cannot live without water to drink. Get rid of standing water all over the house.

- Fix leaky faucets and pipes.
- Always drain water from the sink and bath after use.

- Keep drains clear of water and garbage, especially in the basement.
- Keep all areas of the house clean and dry, including the basement, kitchen and bathrooms. Use dehumidifiers in the basement if it is too moist.



DENY ROACHES SHELTER AND ENTRY

Roaches like to hide in very small spaces. A young roach can fit in a space as thin as a dime. An adult male can fit in a space as thin as a quarter. Roaches hate open spaces. Roaches love clutter.

- Clean up clutter such as piles of newspaper and clothing.
- Throw out grocery bags, cartons, boxes and other containers. They may bring roaches and roach eggs in from the outside and provide hiding places.
- Use a caulk gun to seal cracks and holes around baseboards, shelves, cupboards, pipes, sinks and bathtub fixtures.
- Use spray foam to fill holes, openings and electric outlet boxes where roaches like to hide.
- Plaster repairs may be needed where there are large holes or damaged walls.
- Use screening to block entry where there are openings such as vents.
- Knitted copper mesh (for example, Stuf-fit) is a good barrier for holes that are hard to block. It will last longer than steel wool.
- Use weather stripping and door sweeps around doors to create a tight seal.

USE BORATE POWDER

Borate powders are a good chemical treatment for roaches. Examples are Borid™ and Roach Prufe™. Borate powder takes a few days to begin killing roaches, but it can keep working for years. You can find it in many stores and it is not very expensive. It is important to keep borate powder away from areas where children and pets can get to it.

Apply borate powder lightly in areas where roaches are active. As roaches walk through the powder, it sticks on their bodies. When they lick the powder off, it poisons them.

You should apply borate powder with a plastic squeeze bottle with a narrow pointed spout. You must apply it lightly. If you apply borate powder too heavily, it forms a barrier and roaches avoid it. Be sure to mark the bottle BORATE and keep it out of the reach of children.

Apply the borate powder where roaches have been seen. Put it in these places:

- along baseboards
- under stove and refrigerator
- in electric switch boxes
- in holes in hollow doors
- around door frames
- in open spaces under and behind walls
- in open spaces around shelves, sinks and cabinets

After you place the borate powder in cracks and open spaces, seal it in with caulk or other sealer. The powder will keep working for years.

Place borate powder in a safe place out of the reach of children and pets. Do not apply borate powder onto plants — it can kill them.



USE ROACH BAIT

Use roach baits along with borate powders if needed.

Roach baits contain food that attracts roaches. Poison in the bait kills them. After a roach eats the bait, it goes back to its hiding place and dies. Other roaches eat the body of the poisoned roach and they die too.

Each roach that eats the bait can poison many roaches, so you only need a small amount of bait to do the job. Place the baits where people will not be exposed to them.

Baits come in the form of gels, pastes, granules and dusts. Gels and pastes come in a small syringe. This allows you to place tiny amounts exactly where needed. Gels work best in the first three days after you put them out. It may be best to put bait out once, then wait a week and put it out again. Some bait comes in containers called bait stations. The roaches find the bait stations and eat from them.

You can buy roach baits at some hardware, grocery and drug stores. Common brands are Combat™ and Max Roach Bait™.

HOW TO USE ROACH BAITS

Place the bait in a safe place out of reach of children and pets.

- Baits will not work if roach bug sprays are nearby. **DO NOT USE BUG SPRAY.**
- Putting baits in the best place is very important. Roaches will eat the first food they find. The bait has to be closer to the roach hiding place than other sources of food.
- Roaches need to find the bait during their normal activity. Place baits 10-12 inches (or closer) from hiding places, food sources, water sources, and where you see droppings.
- Place baits next to the wall, along baseboards, at edges and in corners. Good spots are under sinks, in cabinets, under appliances and near plumbing fixtures.
- Apply small BB-sized dots of gel bait in many different places. Big blobs of bait do not work.
- Put more bait in the same spot if the bait is completely eaten. Roaches leave behind smells and droppings to mark good food sources.
- Baits will not work if there are strong smells nearby. Cigarette smoke and strong smelling cleaners can keep the roaches away from the bait.



CLEAN UP ROACH DUST – STRONG ASTHMA TRIGGER

Dead roaches, body parts and droppings become part of household dust. Roach dust is a powerful asthma trigger for people who are allergic to it. Cleaning can stir up roach dust into the air. A person with asthma should leave the room when it is being cleaned. If the person with asthma has to do the cleaning, a dust mask may help.

FOR SURFACES THAT CAN BE WET-CLEANED:

Use a household cleaner for counters, cabinets, floors and woodwork. Use a paper towel or rag dipped in the cleaning water to clean a small area. Then throw away the towel or rag and use a clean one. **DO NOT** dip the dirty towel or rag back into the cleaning water. This will spread the roach dust around.

Use a cleaning bucket and a rinse bucket for large floor areas. Rinse the mop each time before dipping back in the cleaning bucket. Change the rinse water often.

Cleaning with bleach destroys the chemicals in roach dust that trigger allergic reactions. Use about 3/4 cup of household bleach in a gallon of water. Leave the bleach on the surface for a few minutes so it has time to work. Then rinse the bleach off.

Be careful using bleach: Some people are sensitive to bleach vapors. They should not be in the area when someone is cleaning with bleach. Open a window and use a fan to remove bleach vapors. Bleach is a skin irritant. Wear rubber gloves to protect your hands. Never mix bleach with any other cleaning products. Dangerous vapors can be produced.

FOR RUGS AND CARPETS:

It is best to use area rugs that you can wash often. It is best to use special “HEPA” or “allergen” or “low emission” vacuums and bags when vacuuming. These reduce the amount of roach dust that gets in the air during vacuuming.

If you do not have a special vacuum or bags, use a bag that is already half-full. A new empty bag lets too much dust out. When you put in a new bag, fill it up a little with flour or cornstarch. Pour a cup of flour or cornstarch on the floor and vacuum it up.



Try to vacuum every week. Vacuum very slowly. Take about three times longer than usual. This will help to pick up more of the roach dust.

Listen to some music and take your time. A vacuum with a beater bar or powered brush works best.

Vacuuming stirs up dust. A person with asthma should not do the vacuuming and should stay out of the room when vacuumed until all dust settles. If a person with asthma must use a vacuum, they should wear a dust mask or respirator mask.

If there have been roaches in the house, older carpets and rugs will have roach dust in them. They should be removed if possible. Other asthma triggers and lead dust also build up in carpets.

CARPET REMOVAL CAN RELEASE A LOT OF DUST THAT GOES ALL OVER THE HOUSE. REMOVE CARPETS VERY CAREFULLY.

- A person with asthma should not be in the room when a carpet is removed.
- Seal off the room with plastic sheeting.
- Mist the carpet with water and a little dishwasher powder.
- Cut the carpet into small sections and roll them up.
- Wrap the sections in plastic sheeting and seal with tape.
- Mop the floor as each section is rolled up and again when all the sections have been removed.

KEEP DUST OUT OF YOUR HOME.

Dust and dirt tracked into your house from the outside can contain roach dust and other things that can trigger asthma attacks. It also can have lead dust that can poison children.

- Put a sign at each entry door asking people to take off or wipe their shoes before they come in.
- A chair or stool by the door makes it easier for people to take off their shoes.
- One doormat inside and one outside is best. Wash or vacuum the mats often.



ROACHES CAN COME BACK - STICK TO THE PLAN

Roaches “hitchhike.” They can hide inside bags, soft drink cartons, cardboard boxes, used appliances, furniture, TVs, radios or anything that people bring in from places that have roaches.

- Roaches can appear even in the cleanest of homes.
- It is important to try and get rid of the roaches before they become a bigger problem.
- Do not spray a roach if you see one. Smack it dead. Then check all around the area where you first saw the roach.
- Look through the clutter and anything brought in recently. Look for roach egg sacks.
- Stick with methods for roach removal in this guide even if you think the roaches are gone. New roaches may find their way in.
- Continue doing things to deny roaches entry, shelter, food and water.
- If you live in a building with other families, roaches might get into your apartment from another one in the building. Share this guide with your neighbors. Then everybody can use safe and effective IPM methods to control roaches.

TENANT-LANDLORD COOPERATION

Good roach control requires building owners and renters to work together.

THE TENANT (RENTER) MUST:

- Tell the building manager if roaches are seen.
- Report water leaks and food scraps in common areas.
- Keep living areas free of things roaches like. Clean up food scraps, clutter and water.
- Work with the pest control company. Do NOT disturb pest control measures. Do NOT use bug sprays. Do NOT use cleaners with strong odors near baits.

THE LANDLORD MUST:

- Use a pest control service that uses safer and effective IPM methods.
- Make repairs to deny water to roaches, such as fixing roof and plumbing leaks.
- Caulk and seal entry points to keep roaches out.
- Provide sealed garbage cans and clean the area around garbage cans often.
- Keep common areas clean and free of food and water sources for roaches.



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