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MPMA

Triatomine Bugs (Kissing Bugs): A growing public health concern in the U.S.

Laura Rosenwald, MS, BCE, Associate Director, Education & Training, NPMA



Disclaimer: Triatomine bugs are not currently known to occur in Minnesota. We are providing the following information because these pests have been moving north. Currently, the furthest north that they have been spotted is Wyoming. While there have not been sightings in Minnesota so

far, it is our goal to help keep our members prepared and informed.

Triatomine bugs are one of the more concerning public health pests on the horizon, thanks to their expanding range due to increases in global temperatures. More commonly known as kissing bugs or conenose bugs, these pests are vectors of *Trypanosoma cruzi* (T. cruzi), a parasite that is the causative agent of Chagas disease. More than 140 described species of triatomine bugs are found around the world, but this subfamily is generally restricted to North and South America, with a few outliers in India and Southeast Asia. In the U.S., as of this

publication, 11 species of triatomines, one of them rare, have been documented in 29 states, but the bugs are most common in the southern parts of the country.

Identification

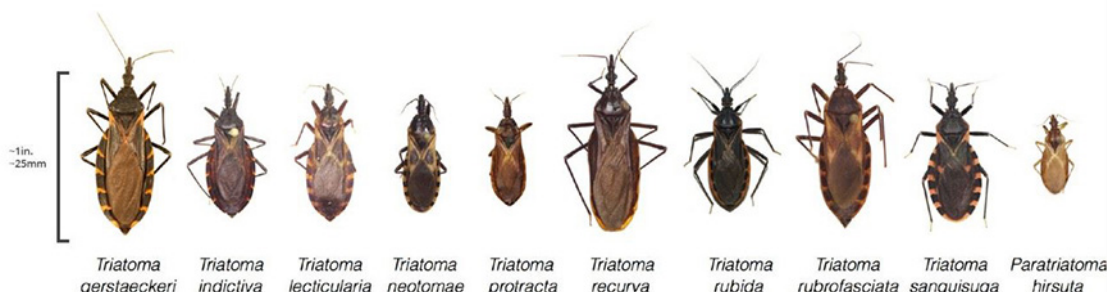
Triatomine bugs generally measure between 12 and 27 millimeters long and are either dark brown or black, with a smooth appearance on their pronotums and heads. They often feature orange or yellow stripes around the edges of their abdomens, extending just past their wings. However, some species may be completely brown. The “cone-nosed” shape of their heads, along with the straight and thin mouthparts, can also be a key feature of identification. All

six legs will appear slender. The forewings are leathery, while the hind wings are more membranous, and the wings will fold on top of each other. Note that many lookalike bugs are commonly found in the U.S., but the above characteristics are key features for triatomine bug identification.

Behavior

These bugs are generally the most active in the summer

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Triatomine Bugs, *continued*

months from May through September but can survive for months without a blood meal. In their search for a food source, triatomine bugs are known to be attracted to light, heat, and carbon dioxide.

A recent study has shown that triatomine bugs are often drawn to an area through pheromones released in the



feces of other triatomine bugs, but that their reaction to the aggregation pheromone may be dictated by whether they are infected with *T. cruzi*.

Management

Management of a triatomine bug population will decrease the transmission potential of *T. cruzi*. Most cases of infection occur because of open opportunities for bugs to access a host. As such, a thorough inspection will be necessary to determine where the triatomine bugs are not only aggregating, but also entering the structure to access their food source. Be sure to wear the proper PPE, such as nitrile gloves and safety glasses, when performing an inspection

for a suspected infestation of triatomine bugs.

The *T. cruzi* parasite is passed on through the bugs' feces, and transmission can occur through a variety of pathways. Minimize direct contact with these insects when possible, and wash your hands after inspections and treatments. Be sure to consult a health care provider for any suspected symptoms of Chagas disease if you have been exposed to triatomine bug feces.

If you have a suspected triatomine bug and would like to submit a sample for testing, visit Texas A&M's community science program [website](#) on triatomine bugs and Chagas disease.

Excerpt republished with permission from the National Pest Management Association (NPMA). Originally published in the January/February 2025 issue of PestWorld magazine. Read the full article [here](#).



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President's Message



Morgan Manderfield

My heartiest hello to the Minnesota pest management industry! I am excited to say that, as I write this, Minnesota is experiencing its first >70° day of 2025. Of course, that means overwintering insects are beginning to emerge,

yellowjackets and paper wasp foundresses are beginning to build their nests, and insect home invaders of all kinds will be on the rise very shortly. I wish everyone reading this a successful and prosperous spring and summer season!

Speaking of success, the annual recertification conference held at the Heritage Center on March 8th was the definition of it. This year we saw approximately 700 applicators in attendance, each of whom were given the opportunity to network with & learn from seventeen vendor exhibitors and seven expert speakers. I'd like to

personally thank everyone who attended, as well as each of the speakers and vendors, the planning committee, and all other contributors who enabled the success of the conference.

As the busy season ramps up, I'd also like to take this moment to encourage networking and leaning on your neighbors in the industry. Several times recently I have heard the phrase "a rising tide lifts all ships." I could not agree with this concept more and I'm confident this applies to all of us in the Minnesota pest industry. In isolation, we may find ourselves silently struggling through issues

or experiencing something challenging for the first time—but when experiences are readily discussed, everyone benefits. I cannot even begin to quantify what I have learned this past year simply by listening to the stories and challenges of industry peers and by asking for help when needed.

The resources to connect are plenty — from social media groups to official networking groups sponsored by industry organizations (e.g., NPMA).

Again, I wish each reader the very best this season, and I have optimism that all Minnesotan ships will be lifted!

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Do You Really Want Employees?

By Todd Leye, President, Adam's Pest Control



When Adam's was started from nothing in 1971, by Harold Leye and Don Hanson, they didn't have much of a plan. They didn't even know if they wanted employees. Their former employer, Lystad's, sued them. And about nine months into their first year operating in Hennepin County, they lost the court case by planning their new business and taking out advertising while still employed, which was the "act of a disloyal employee." So the judge made them give up all the accounts they signed in Hennepin county, where they both lived, and start over – while staying away from Hennepin County for another year.

This forced them to operate in the surrounding counties. A couple years later, operating in five counties was a real pain. Gas was cheap back then, but those old F150s only got about six miles to the

gallon! Worse was the time driving to accounts scattered throughout five counties, since both men were married and raising young children. So they hired their first employee.

Fast forward 25 years later, after Don had passed away. I joined Adam's and my dad said, "I'm not so sure I want to grow any bigger." I asked why that was and he shared that more revenue means "more employees and more employees means more headaches."

I get it. I think we all get it. You have to be the right type of owner and manager to deal with employees. Often they are great. Sometimes, they disappoint or worse. Accidents. Injuries. One time one of our technicians was buying drugs through the window of one of our marked trucks. I liked the guy and he was a good tech, but you just can't do that.

So if you're a solo company, ask yourself... do you want employees? If so, spend time thinking about what you want in an employee and how you'll keep them trained. Owners typically put their staff before themselves. Hiring that first employee might mean a pay cut for the owner. I've known plenty of one-person companies who

do quite well, but pull their hair out trying to grow to five employees. It isn't for everyone, so think about what you want long-term and then be intentional about it. Sometimes your best move is not to grow, and instead add high-paying accounts and trimming off your furthest or lowest paying accounts. The highest earning solo operators do this when they reach their desired capacity.

When talking with my dad back in 1996, I said, "I'll be the company aspiring. I will deal with the headaches, but I will always keep you informed." Do you have someone who can deal with your headaches, that you trust implicitly? I was that for my dad, and when my dad retired, I made sure I had others here, including my sister, to do the same for me!

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The Importance of Rodent Technology

Provided by Bell Labs

Pest control technicians are the frontline protectors of the world's food supply. It's estimated that rodents contaminate up to 20% of the food supply each year, resulting in significant economic loss for producers. Rodents can also carry over 35 diseases, like salmonella and e. coli, which can infect the general population as well as industry workers. Using technology in pest control helps keep the food supply safer, and pest control technicians can spend less time checking empty traps and more time inspecting other areas of the food facility. Traps contain an integrated Bluetooth sensor that tracks rodent activity. Once a technician arrives at the account, their smartphone connects to each device to see which ones experienced rodent activity and when. That data is then put into automatically generated reports. Technicians can use these reports to identify hotspots and rodent trends while improving biosecurity at their account.

Make Time for the Important Things

Technology's biggest benefit is that it respects technicians' time. To service a traditional trap, a technician needs to walk to it, move anything in the way, bend over, then open it. This effort is wasted if the trap is empty. When this process is scaled up for a 200,000-square-foot production facility with traps every 20 to 40 feet, 30 seconds to service each quickly adds up to hours.

A time study conducted by Bell Labs has shown that a facility set with technology in the traps can be serviced approximately 80% faster than one using traditional traps. A technician using these types of devices can check each trap within 50 to 100 feet with their phone, allowing them to concentrate on the devices rodents actually visited. This means no more wasting time on empty traps. Embracing this technology can also keep technicians out of harm's way because they won't have to crawl up ladders or access hard-to-reach places to service a trap that may be empty. Because

technicians are spared unnecessary work, they have time and energy for the rest of their integrated pest management strategy. One thing they'll have more time for is performing a quality inspection, which is the basis for all rodent control. Doing an inspection lets technicians know what species of rodents they're dealing with, hot spots, and areas where exclusion work needs to be done. It also helps them identify why the account is attractive to rodents in the first place. With food facilities, that reason is obvious: the building is a food-rich environment out of the elements. There are many ways to make it less hospitable to rodent intruders.

For example, a technician may see pallets and trash stacked in a corner, which makes excellent rodent harborage. Similarly, if grain is scattered on the floor near a production line, it's a potential food source for rodents. Both of these areas can easily be cleaned, giving rodents fewer reasons to make the facility their home.

The information gathered also helps technicians do better exclusion work. For example, if a particular device is being visited frequently, it may be near a rodent entry point. After inspecting the area, the technician may find a door sweep that needs to be replaced.

Taking Advantage of Tech

The custom reports show how much and what kind of bait is being used, the number of rodent activity events, and more. While these tools don't tell a technician how they should do their job, they can inform the strategy. Another benefit of the reports is they show the impact the pest control service is making at an account. The reports allow a customer to clearly see the technician's value as infestations are eliminated. Stay in the know and protect the food supply by taking advantage of everything technology has to offer.

For more information on Bell Sensing Technology or the entire iQ product line-up, contact your local Bell representative or visit their [website](#).

Spring Brings Bugs – What Can You Do?

Dr. Mohammed El Damir, BCE

As temperatures rise, so does pest activity. Are you prepared to keep spring-invading pests out? Warmer weather and longer daylight hours trigger movement in various pests, including boxelder bugs, lady beetles, cluster flies, ticks, fleas, swallow bugs, wasps, ground-nesting bees, and mosquitoes. While treatments for some spring pests may be unnecessary, proactive prevention is key to avoiding infestations.

Mosquitoes: Stop Them Before They Multiply

Mosquito eggs hatch early in the season, and adults begin biting within a week. Effective mosquito control involves two key steps:

- **Eliminate breeding sites**

Encourage customers to remove standing water from puddles, buckets, birdbaths, clogged gutters, and other water-collecting areas. In cases where standing water cannot be drained, the use of larvicides may be necessary.

- **Apply mosquito barriers**

Residual treatments on vegetation can reduce mosquito activity by up to 95%. These should be applied with a power mister at 3- to 4-week intervals, following label directions for maximum effectiveness.

Ants: Early Activity Signals a Nearby Nest

Ant activity between late winter and early spring often reveals colony locations. The presence of winged ants indoors—especially in large numbers—indicates an

established nest nearby. You can:

- Identify the ant species to determine if they pose a structural threat (e.g., carpenter ants).
- Inspect for moisture-damaged wood, which often attracts carpenter ants.
- Apply targeted treatments promptly before colonies expand.

Fall-Invading Pests: Why Spring Treatments Are Ineffective

Treating fall-invading pests in spring offers no long-term benefits. Boxelder bugs, cluster flies, multicolored Asian lady beetles, and brown marmorated stink bugs are emerging from their overwintering sites and moving away from buildings. They do not reproduce indoors. Still, you have options for spring.

- **Physical removal**
Use vacuums to eliminate accidental indoor invaders and discard the contents outside.
- **Commercial solutions**
Insect Light Traps (ILTs) effectively capture flying

pests in commercial settings.

- **Set expectations**

Explain to customers that treating these pests now will not reduce populations in the fall.

Preventative Strategies: The Key to Pest Control Success

To stop spring-invading pests from entering structures, a comprehensive perimeter treatment should be combined with integrated pest management (IPM) strategies.

- **Seal entry points**

Replace worn-out door sweeps, seal cracks, and tighten screens.

- **Modify habitats**

Trim vegetation, manage outdoor lighting, and reduce harborage areas.

- **Use residual treatments**

Apply perimeter treatments before pests become active.

Plan Treatments Based on Weather Conditions

Weather plays a crucial role in treatment success. Extended winter conditions or heavy spring rains can reduce the effectiveness of



initial applications. Monitor forecasts and schedule treatments accordingly to maximize results.

A Case Study: Prevention in Action

In a recent commercial account, a facility experiencing repeated springtime ant infestations implemented a proactive approach: sealing cracks, adjusting moisture levels, and applying early targeted treatments. Within a season, ant activity was significantly reduced, demonstrating the importance of timing and integrated control measures.

Final Thoughts

Understanding the biology, behavior, and habits of spring-invading pests is essential for effective management. Taking the right steps at the right time can prevent infestations before they start, leading to fewer customer complaints and more successful pest control programs.



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Understanding Cockroach Biology, Behavior and Treatment Practices

Chris Keefer, Technical Services Representative, Syngenta Professional Pest Management



German cockroaches pose a threat to public health, causing allergies when large populations go untreated. To provide customers peace of mind from cockroaches, it's important to understand their biology, ecology, and then plan best practices for long-term control.

German Cockroach Life Cycle and Reproduction

Cockroaches undergo incomplete metamorphosis, which includes egg, nymph and adult stages. The average German cockroach life cycle is around 90 days depending on temperature, relative humidity and resources. After mating and feeding, female cockroaches develop an egg case, containing up to 30 individual eggs. They carry the case and then drop it in a hidden location close to resources to ensure access for nymphs.

Insect Growth Regulators for Long-Term Control

Insect growth regulators (IGRs) are an effective tool for controlling cockroach populations and can cause:

- A decline in production of egg cases
- Fewer viable eggs and egg cases
- Increased nymph mortality
- An increase in aborted egg cases

Since they inhibit the development of immature insect life stages, IGRs are an excellent companion product to use with cockroach baits to suppress populations for a longer time. Use these tips for successful control:

- Inspect thoroughly
- Treat all suspected harborage areas (under sinks, behind appliances, pipe chases, etc.)
- Select the appropriate products
- IGRs come in two forms: as a liquid (such as Archer® IGR) and formulated in a bait with an adulticide (such as Advion® Trio cockroach gel bait)

- Use IGRs if the cockroach population is substantial and you don't know which active ingredients have been used in the past to control cockroaches in the structure
- If using a liquid IGR, it's important to use it with other active ingredients to maximize control

Understanding Cockroach Behavior

Baits with IGRs use the behavior of German cockroaches against them through the transfer of active ingredients, providing more thorough control of populations. Here's how it works:

- Early-instar nymphs and gravid females don't forage away from the primary harborage, but instead rely on adult males, non-gravid females and late-instar nymphs to forage and come back to harborage to provide them with resources as they feed on the feces, secretions and remains of dead cockroaches

- Cockroaches that feed on these shared resources will pick up a dose of the IGR
- This indirect transfer not only transfers the active ingredient in the bait, it also transfers the IGRs, which impact reproduction to help manage and control populations

By understanding German cockroach behavior and implementing proper treatment methods, you can help ensure successful, residual treatments and prevent callbacks.

For more information, visit the [Syngenta website](https://www.syngenta.com/pestmanagement).



NPMA PRO Certified Applications Now Open for Pest Management Professionals

Amanda Joerndt, PCT Digital Editor



The National Pest Management Association (NPMA) announced that applications are now being accepted for NPMA PRO Certified, a new credential designed to recognize excellence in pest management. The certification exam is administered by the

Foundation for Professional Pest Management. This comprehensive certification program validates the expertise of pest management professionals who protect public health and property. NPMA PRO Certified emphasizes practical knowledge across key areas including safety protocols, regulatory compliance, customer service and treatment methods.

“We’re excited to open applications for NPMA PRO Certified,” said Dominique Stumpf, CAE, CEO of NPMA. “This program represents our industry’s commitment to

excellence and provides pest management professionals with the opportunity to demonstrate their comprehensive expertise.”

To help candidates prepare, NPMA has developed extensive study resources, including practice questions, study guides and comprehensive review materials. These resources ensure candidates are fully prepared to demonstrate their expertise on the exam.

To earn NPMA PRO Certified status, candidates must have at least one year of experience at a pest management company

and pass a comprehensive examination. The certification is available to all qualified individuals, regardless of their company’s NPMA membership status or QualityPro accreditation.

Once approved, candidates have a 90-day window to schedule and complete the two-hour exam through the Foundation for Professional Pest Management.

Pest management professionals can learn more about the certification process and begin their applications at: www.npmapro.org.

Seasonal Tips

Are You Prepared for Tick Season?

Tick populations are increasing. Customers may have more concerns about safeguarding their homes, families, and pets. Effective pest management begins with proper identification, and NPMA has the tools to help you succeed.

- [NPMA Field Guide PRO](#): An essential app for OS and Android that equips you to identify over 200 pest species with high-resolution photos and details at your fingertips.
- [NPMA Field Guide to Structural Pests \(2nd Edition\)](#): This comprehensive manual, in a handy binder, includes tabs and a built-in ruler to measure common structural pests easily.
- [Tick Poster](#): Our 24” x 36” wall poster highlights eight common tick species, critical control strategies, and identification tips.
- [Customizable Tick Brochures](#): Promote your business while informing your customers with educational brochures featuring your logo and contact information (*right*).



Proper Employee Onboarding is Crucial

Foster Brusca, The Pest Posse



As a seasoned pest management professional, you understand that the success of your business relies heavily on the expertise and dedication of your team. Hiring and retaining skilled employees is essential in competitive industries like pest control. However, it's equally important to recognize the significance of proper onboarding for your new employees. In this blog, we'll delve into why onboarding new employees is crucial, backed by legal facts, statistics, and effective strategies to ensure a smooth and successful integration into your team.

The Legal Imperative

Before we dive into the benefits of onboarding, let's address the legal aspect. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) mandates employers to provide proper training

and orientation to all new employees. Neglecting this can lead to legal repercussions, including hefty fines and penalties.

The Benefits of Onboarding

- **Reduced Turnover**

The National Association of Colleges and Employers reports that companies with a structured onboarding program experience 58% more new hire retention. In a field where expertise is paramount, retaining talent is a cost-effective strategy.

- **Enhanced Productivity**

Effective onboarding sets clear expectations and empowers new hires with the knowledge and tools they need to excel in their roles. This, in turn, boosts productivity and ensures consistent service quality.

- **Improved Safety**

In pest management, safety is non-negotiable. Proper onboarding ensures that your employees are aware of safety protocols, reducing the risk of accidents or mishaps.

Effective Onboarding Strategies

- **Structured Training**

Develop a comprehensive training program that

covers pest identification, treatment techniques, safety procedures, and customer service. Make sure it aligns with industry standards and best practices.

- **Mentorship**

Assign experienced team members as mentors to new hires. This fosters a supportive learning environment and helps them integrate into the team more smoothly.

- **Clear Documentation**

Provide new employees with written materials, such as handbooks and safety manuals, that they can refer to during their initial period.

- **Feedback and Evaluation**

Regularly assess their progress and provide constructive feedback. This ensures that they are on track and gives them a sense of continuous improvement.

Investing time and resources in onboarding new employees is not just a best practice; it's a legal requirement and a strategic move for the long-term success of your pest management business. Reduced turnover, enhanced productivity, and improved

safety are just a few of the many benefits you can reap. By following structured onboarding strategies, you'll not only comply with the law but also build a stronger, more proficient team that can better serve your clients and uphold your reputation in the industry. Remember, in pest control, your team is your greatest asset, so nurture it from day one for lasting success.

Do You Have the Proper Written Safety Training Policies and Procedures?

Having an up-to-date, well-built training compliance manual should demonstrate an understanding of pest control regulatory compliance obligations. This is a vital piece of the onboarding process for new service technicians and for the regular annual training for the seasoned service technicians within a company.

Foster Brusca is co-owner of The Pest Posse. He can be reached online at info@thepestposse.net. For additional education resources check out [The Pest Posse Academy](#) or [Pest Posse TV](#), a pest control forum.

Why Strong Customer Service and Sales Processes Are Key

Seth Garber, CEO, Pest Daily



Minnesotans are resilient. We endure brutal winters, unpredictable springs, and summer pest invasions that can drive even the most patient among us a little crazy. For pest control businesses, spring is go time. The phones will ring, the service calls will pile up, and you'll have one shot to maximize this season's potential. The difference between a chaotic, stressful season and a smooth, growth-filled one comes down to two things: Your customer service team and your sales process. If both are ready to handle the surge, your business won't just survive the season, it'll thrive.

Build an All-Star Customer Service Team

In Minnesota, where "Minnesota nice" is more than a catchphrase, customer service can be your biggest advantage. It's the first

experience your customers will have with your business, and you want it to be a great one.

- **Be Fast, Friendly, and Efficient:**

Train your team to answer calls quickly, but don't sacrifice quality for speed. A warm, friendly tone paired with confident answers makes all the difference.

- **Know the Seasonal Pests:**

In the Twin Cities, ants and wasps might dominate spring calls, while up north, mice and carpenter ants can be the main concern. Make sure your team knows the common pests and how to recommend the right solutions.

- **Solve Problems, Don't Just Take Orders:**

Empower your customer service team to act as problem-solvers. When a customer calls with an ant problem, don't just schedule an appointment, talk about preventative options and educate them on what to expect next.

Optimize Your Sales Process for Maximum Impact

Your sales process should feel seamless, both for your team and for your customers. If it's clunky or inconsistent, you'll lose opportunities. Spring is a time to refine, not reinvent your process.

- **Follow Up Like a Pro:**

Minnesotans are thoughtful decision-makers. Many customers will want time to consider their options. Don't leave it to chance, schedule follow-ups and provide helpful information to nudge them toward a decision.

- **Make It Easy to Say Yes:**

When offering services, keep it simple. Focus on solving their immediate problem and show the long-term benefits of ongoing services.

- **Track Your Progress:**

Every call, every follow-up, every sale, it all matters. Use data to track your team's performance and identify where you're winning (and where you can improve).

Foster a Culture of Continuous Improvement

The best teams don't rely on their past successes. Weekly training sessions, feedback loops, and role-playing exercises can help your team stay sharp. Keep them engaged and growing, and they'll deliver better results every time.

Grow Your Business, Not Just Your Call Volume

This isn't just about answering more calls, it's about turning those calls into opportunities. Build a stronger customer service foundation, improve your sales follow-up process, and you'll find that each season builds on the last.

At Pest Daily, they're passionate about helping pest control companies grow and thrive through an industry-leading online learning platform and personalized coaching and consulting services. They're ready to help you have your best season yet. Check out their website: www.PestDaily.com. To talk directly with them, email Hello@PestDaily.com for personalized advice and guidance.

"The best teams don't rely on past successes"

Why Customer Reviews Matter and How Automation Can Help You Get More of Them

John Lonsbury, Lonsbury Consulting and Adam's Pest Control



In the pest control industry, trust is everything. Homeowners are letting you into their homes to solve a personal and often urgent problem. Before they choose a provider, they look for reassurance. And that reassurance comes largely from customer reviews.

Whether you're treating ants in the kitchen, bats in the attic, or bed bugs in a hotel room, positive online reviews are among the most powerful tools you have to win new business, rank higher on Google, and keep customers coming back.

Why Reviews Are So Critical in Pest Control

Pest control is a high-trust, high-scrutiny service.

Potential customers want to know:

- **Are you professional?**
- **Did the treatment work?**
- **Were you on time and respectful?**

Reviews answer all these questions before you ever speak to a prospect. And it's not just about reputation.

Google's local ranking algorithm favors businesses that consistently earn fresh, keyword-rich customer reviews. The more reviews you have, and the more recent they are, the more likely you are to show up when someone nearby searches "pest control near me."

But here's the challenge: pest control techs are busy. Office staff are juggling schedules and invoicing. Plus, manually requesting reviews can be a time-consuming and inconsistent process. That's where marketing automation changes the game.

How Marketing Automation Makes It Easy

Automation platforms like Constant Contact or HubSpot allow you to automatically send a personalized review request

after every completed service. You don't need to remember to follow up. It happens consistently and on time, without lifting a finger.

Key Benefits for Pest Control Operators

- **Saves time:**
Your team stays focused on service not manual follow-ups.
- **Maximizes response rate:**
Requests go out within 24 hours of service, when customers are most likely to respond.
- **Provides consistency:**
Every customer is asked, not just the happy ones.
- **Integrates with your CRM:**
Triggered based on service completion, with tracking built in.

Best Practices to Get More Reviews

- **Keep it short:**
Simple messages work best via text or email.
- **Personalize it:**
Mention the customer's name, service, and even the technician if possible.
- **Follow up once or twice:**
A friendly reminder 3–5 days later can boost your response rate.

• Avoid generic templates:

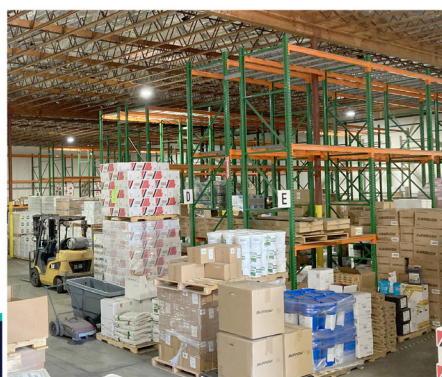
Tailor your message to match your company's voice.

Sample Review Request Message

Subject: Quick favor?
Body: Hi [Customer Name], thanks for choosing [Your Company]! We'd really appreciate it if you'd leave us a quick review. Your feedback helps us improve and helps others choose a pest control provider they can trust.
[Review Link]

By integrating marketing automation strategies into your CRM, you can streamline the entire process, track your success, and continuously improve the customer experience. You don't need to chase down reviews one customer at a time. Let automation do the follow-up for you. You'll build trust, improve visibility, and gain insights to grow your business.

Excerpted with permission. John Lonsbury is owner of Lonsbury Consulting and a pest control professional with Adam's Pest Control. Read the full article [here](#).



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April 15, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

In-Person Attendees:

Morgan Manderfield, Ecolab
Dennis Warf, Envu
Keith Gordon, Vesperis
Nathan Heider, MN Pest Elimination
Brian Elm, Vesperis
Evan Hutchcraft, Neogen
Scott Hornemann, Adam's Pest Control
Todd Leyse, Adam's Pest Control
Stephen Kells, University of Minnesota
Rob Greer, Rove Pest Control
Caroline Kohnert, Plunkett's Pest Control
Lane Zimmerman, Rainbow Pest

Virtual Attendees:

Liz Turner, Forshaw
Rusty Binkley, Rockwell Labs

The meeting was called to order by Morgan Manderfield.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the January Board Meeting minutes.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to change the process so as to authorize the executive board to approve the minutes via email prior to the next meeting. The goal is that any follow-up can be handled immediately, and the final version of the minutes can be included in the newsletter.

Financials

- Todd reported that the financials have been reviewed and cleaned up for 2024 to make sure there weren't any errors. He noted on the balance sheet that the amount labeled "unrestricted net assets" has been on our books for many years but no one is clear what it might be. He and his CFO have chosen to leave it there, understanding that it is likely equity.
- All issues with the IRS from last year have been resolved and our non-profit status is in good standing. Anywhere that Jay's address has been used has either been changed to Todd's or Dana's depending on purpose.
- It was clarified that NPMA collects dues from professional members and transfers money to us once per month via direct deposit. Allied members pay MPMA directly either by credit card using Square or by check.
- The main income categories are professional dues, allied dues, conference exhibitor payments, and newsletter ad revenue
- Todd explained that Jay was an employee and was reflected as "payroll" whereas Dana is "contracted services."

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to accept the financial report.

Conference 2025 Report

- Dr. Kells reported that they are moving through the online portion of the conference.
- Survey results so far are good, with about 71% reporting satisfied or very satisfied. Only 10% were "somewhat dissatisfied." His goal is to get the satisfaction percentage above 80%. Comments indicated that the small group format was preferred by about 2-to-1 over the large group format.
- We were expecting about 500 in-person attendees and actually had close to 700. This caused tight space issues. Comments were made that attendees still preferred the venue rather than the convention center.
- He is considering other sites for next year. No decision has been made yet.

Dr. Kells reported that he is looking for ways to set up internship programs at the university.

- They have about 60 entomology minors in their program and are considering transitioning to a major program.
- He asked board members to consider how they might use interns and inform both undergrad and grad students about availability. This includes how to work within Minnesota law regarding supervision and licensing.

continued on next page

Todd attended Legislative Days, where issues included:

- Passage of national preemption, as there have been problems with each state making its own rules. This may be difficult to pass as some states are much stricter than others (ie. California) and will not accept lower standards. The current ag bill sundowns in 2026 so this will likely be taken up in Fall of 2025 and it is predicted to pass.
- Efforts are being made throughout the country to reduce the amount of microplastics in our environment. We may see that affecting our industry soon.
- Potential effects of restricting use of rodenticides—including increased cases of hantavirus.
- Todd also acknowledged how visible and involved Ecolab has been recently at the national level.

Need for a Centralized, Digital “Home”

- Currently, official documents including bylaws, minutes, financials, etc. exist on a Google Drive that most board members do not have access to. ACTION: Todd will add access for board members.
- Morgan would also like us to have organizational email address that can be accessed by many and used for social media accounts (hypothetical example: president@mpma.org).
- Todd reported that Jay had kept files on his hard drive, which Todd received a copy of and he then provided to Dana. He also reported that the new website will include a document retention section with some parts open to non-members and some member-only access.

Website Update

- Todd reported that the site is about 90% built. NPMA has provided the membership data that we’ve been waiting for. This data is static, however, not dynamically connected to the NPMA database, and members will need to update it manually if their information changes.
- ACTION: Morgan will reach out to NPMA to have our current site updated in the interim.

Newsletter Status

- Morgan shared Dana’s report that we missed two issues last year during the months when there was no executive director. Advertisers have been notified and their advertising contracts extended for two 2025 issues. No one pushed back on this.
- The Spring issue is on track for May 7th distribution, as planned, presuming the minutes are approved in time to be included.

Status of Bylaws Review

- The bylaws were written in 1986 and have not been updated since. ACTION: We are requesting copies from other states as examples.
- A committee consisting of Morgan, Todd, and Dana will make a first pass at new bylaws to present to the board for review and additional edits. Then, in accordance with the current bylaws, we will hold a membership meeting to present the new bylaws and hold a vote.
- The goal is to have a first draft in time for the July board meeting.

Plans for Great Minnsect Show

- The show is an open house sponsored by the university on all things entomological. Last year there were about 2,000 people in attendance.
- It will be held on Saturday, May 3rd from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Morgan is planning to attend and split time between the MPMA and Ecolab booths. She welcomed volunteers as well as any suggestions for handouts or interactive ideas. Dannis offered many.
- Morgan will shop for a prize/giveaway item. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to authorize her to spend up to \$300 on this.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:59 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 15th at Plunkett’s in Fridley, MN

Respectfully submitted by Dana Kader Robb