



Minnesota Pest
Management
Association

MPMA

Moth Flies: Easy to Control—Until They're Not!

By Jeffrey Tucker, BCE, Entomology Associates, Inc.
on behalf of BASF Professional & Specialty Solutions

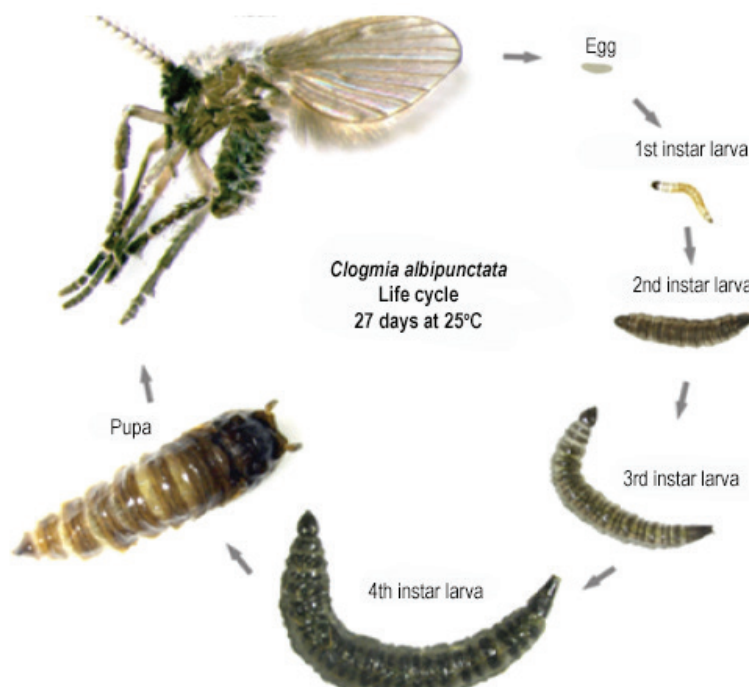
Moth flies are one of the most common small flies encountered in buildings by pest management technicians (PMPs). They are members of the order Diptera (true flies), belong to the family Psychodidae, and are frequently referred to as psychodid. Found throughout the U.S. and most parts of the world, these small, fuzzy-looking flies are also known as drain flies or filter flies.

Adult moth flies' range in color from yellow to brown to gray to black. The most common indoor species are light to dark gray and frequently have areas of their wings and body with black, white or yellow markings. Typically, the wings and body of moth flies are covered in long, dense hair which give them a fuzzy, moth-like appearance. Adults hold their wings roof like over the body. They are not folded over the abdomen as seen in other small flies (such as phorid flies [Phoridae] or small fruit flies [Drosophilidae]).

Female moth flies lay their eggs in a gelatinous film or biolayer typically found in portions of drains or sewer lines above water-filled traps. They also can develop under slabs in pools of foul water resulting from broken/leaking sewer lines. The eggs hatch within 48 hours and larvae typically develop over the next 8-24 days. The pupal stage lasts from 1-2 days. Under ideal conditions the life cycle requires from 7-28 days with the adults surviving for about two weeks after emerging from the pupa. It is often stated that moth fly



Moth fly adult.
Photo: Jeff Tucker



Moth fly life cycle
Credit: imenez-Guri, et al, 2014 PLOS ONE

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larvae develop in the slime layers above the water line in various plumbing traps, but this is not always true. Some structure infesting moth fly larvae and pupae can live freely in foul water similar to mosquito larvae and pupae.

Moth flies are weak fliers and in most indoor situations can be seen resting on walls, ceiling tiles, and other surfaces close to the larval sites. The flies are most active during the evening hours and will usually fly only when disturbed.

Inspection

Moth flies are pests of the penetralia (the innermost parts or recesses of a building) which can make locating their sources extraordinarily difficult.

In most residential and commercial structures such as restaurants, hospitals, and food plants, moth flies are often associated with drains

and sewers. Their presence indoors generally indicates poor drain maintenance or leaking/broken sewer lines. Other than being a nuisance and indicators of neglected drains and sewer systems, drain flies are fairly innocuous. However, when adult drain flies are found in sensitive environments such as operating rooms and food or pharmaceutical production areas, there is zero tolerance. Like many insects if numbers are large enough, they may induce allergic responses in humans that include asthma and/or rhinitis. Outdoors, moth fly breeding sites can include tree holes, filter beds of sewage treatment plants and under plastic liners in flower beds used to retard weed growth.

Indoors, the control of moth flies requires locating the gelatinous biofilm covered surfaces or foul water that

attract egg laying females. For most types of buildings, these will be either floor, sink or tub drains. However, moth flies are frequently found breeding in locations where access is limited. Examples include void spaces under floors, ceiling voids, wall voids, unused toilets and in condensate pans and drain lines associated with HVAC systems, refrigeration and sterilization units. The use of thermal imaging units has proven useful in locating plumbing leaks in walls associated with hand/scrub sinks adjacent to operating rooms in hospitals.

Control

The first step in resolving a moth fly infestation is locating the larval development sites. This is not always easy; in fact, it can be one of the most difficult tasks in structural pest control. Some cases have taken years to resolve due to issues with access to ceilings and walls in hospital surgical suites and other sensitive environments. In many cases it is not uncommon to discover leaking plumbing embedded in the structure as the source.

The primary method of control is the cleaning of drains and other larval breeding sites and fixing plumbing leaks. Unfortunately, dumping hot water and detergents or bleach down drains will generally not remove the

gelatinous biolayers that serve as egg laying sites – and this approach is not recommended. Mechanical cleaning/scrubbing of the drain is the best approach. Modern drain cleaners, such as Bio 5 Drain Cleaner from BASF, which are based on bacterial cultures, have proven very effective in maintaining drains free of moth fly production and odors. In situations where adult drain flies require control, they can easily be knocked down with non-residual contact materials such as PT® 565 Plus XLO Pressurized Contact Insecticide or PT P.I.® Pressurized Contact Insecticide. In all cases, when using insecticidal products read and follow all label directions.

Although adult moth flies are weak fliers, they are attracted to insect light traps. Most of the commercial insect light trap units will be effective in removing adult drain flies and serve a dual role as an effective monitoring device for appraisal of drain fly control programs and as a monitor for other flying insects. But remember, when the adult stage of the fly is the only target, only the symptom is removed not the source.

Jeff can be reached at jtucker@entoassoc.com. P.I. and PT are registered trademarks of BASF.



Typical moth fly infested floor drain
Photo: Jeff Tucker



Navigating the Triad of Legality, Morality, and Ethics in the Pest Control Industry

By Todd Leyse, Adam's Pest Control

In the Spring 2024 issue, we talked about values. One value many companies have, and all companies should have, centers on integrity. This issue talks a bit more about that.

In the pest control industry, where public health and environmental stewardship intersect, business owners and managers face a triad of considerations: legality, morality, and ethics. Each dimension, while distinct, is deeply interconnected, influencing decision-making and operational practices. For members of the Minnesota Pest Management Association, understanding these concepts is crucial not only for compliance and competitive advantage but also for fostering trust and long-term success.

Legality: The Groundwork of Operations

Legality refers to the adherence to laws and regulations governing

the pest control industry. These laws, ranging from pesticide use to labor practices, are the minimum standards set by society to ensure safety, fairness, and environmental protection. In Minnesota, the Department of Agriculture provides a regulatory framework that pest control businesses must navigate. Compliance is non-negotiable; it forms the legal foundation upon which companies operate. However, legality is just the starting point. It sets the baseline but doesn't encompass the broader spectrum of doing what's right or ethical.

Morality: Personal and Collective Values

Morality, on the other hand, is grounded in personal and societal values and beliefs about what is right and wrong. It's subjective and varies widely among individuals and cultures. In the context of pest control, moral questions might include considerations about the humane treatment of animals or the responsibility to inform customers about non-chemical alternatives. Moral decisions are often influenced by an individual's upbringing, experiences, and societal norms. For business owners and managers, aligning company practices

with personal and collective moral standards can enhance reputation and customer loyalty. Yet, morality's subjective nature can lead to debates and differences within an organization, underscoring the need for a clear, shared set of values.

environmental impact of pest control methods.

The Interplay: Balancing Legality, Morality, & Ethics

The interplay between legality, morality, and ethics is complex. Legal compliance is essential, but

Business owners and managers face a triad of considerations... Each dimension, while distinct, is deeply interconnected, influencing decision-making and operational practices.

Ethics: Professional Standards and Practices

Ethics, while related to morality, focuses on the standards and principles that govern professional behavior. In the pest control industry, ethics involves the fair treatment of employees, honesty with customers, and integrity in business practices. Professional organizations like MPMA often provide ethical guidelines to help members navigate complex situations, emphasizing the importance of ethics in building trust and credibility in the market. Ethical considerations might include transparency about service effectiveness, privacy concerns, and the

it's the floor, not the ceiling, of responsible business conduct. Moral values, while personally derived, play a crucial role in defining a company's character and guiding its interactions with customers, employees, and the community. Ethical standards, particularly those set forth by professional associations, offer a roadmap for navigating the industry with integrity.

For pest control businesses, navigating this triad demands continuous reflection and dialogue. It means making tough choices, such as opting for environmentally sustainable methods even

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Legality, Morality, and Ethics, *continued*

when not legally required or going beyond compliance to ensure the well-being of employees and customers. It involves setting clear policies, training staff, and engaging in open communication with stakeholders.

Conclusion: Leading with Integrity

While the legal, moral, and ethical dimensions of running a pest control business in Minnesota present challenges, they also offer opportunities—to lead with integrity, build a loyal customer base, and contribute positively

to public health and the environment.

The journey towards balancing legality, morality, and ethics is not just about avoiding pitfalls but striving for excellence and setting a standard in the industry. By fostering an organizational culture that values ethical decision-making and moral leadership, pest control companies can navigate the complexities of the modern business landscape with confidence and success.

To bring this back to values, if you have a good set of

values and are faced with making a tough decision, pull out your values. Your employees should be encouraged to do the same. What if a customer asks for bait stations for their cabin that you don't service? Or their sister's house? What if an employee steals from a customer? What if an employee gets verbally or physically abusive? What do you value? What do you want me and my company to value? You should give them the same as you expect, which is hopefully integrity-based. We depend on each others' reputations.

PUTTING PESTS UNDER PRESSURE

NEW

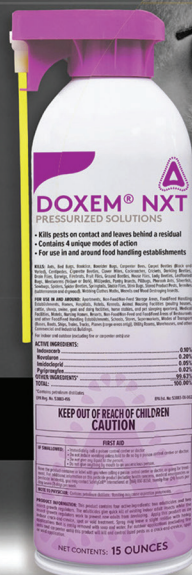
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Polish Your Silverfish Skills

Now is a good time to refamiliarize yourself with understanding, preventing, and managing this common indoor nuisance

Dr. Mohammed El Damir, B.C.E

Silverfish, distinguished by their silvery-gray appearance and rapid, wiggly movements, are prevalent indoor pests.



Check hairbrushes at your silverfish accounts. This pest likes to eat hair and dandruff.

Wygodzinsky's 1972 research indicates that only three silverfish species are native to the U.S., whereas six are endemic to the Caribbean, hinting at potential human-induced introductions. Arnett's 2000 taxonomy study identified thirteen silverfish species in the U.S., highlighting notable indoor varieties such as the common silverfish (*Lepisma saccharina*) and the gray silverfish (*Ctenolepisma longicaudata*). The common silverfish is frequently found in urban areas, per Robinson (2005), while the gray, or longtailed, silverfish

is recognized as a household pest, according to Pest Management Professional Hall of Famer Arnold Mallis (Class of 2007) in a 1941 journal article. These two species are our focus for the scope of this article.

Biology and behavior

The common silverfish develops and reproduces best at temperatures of 71.6 degrees Fahrenheit to 80 degrees Fahrenheit, and relative humidity of 75 percent to 97 percent (Sweetman, 1939). Meanwhile, Heeg (1967) found the optimum temperature range for gray silverfish to be 46.4 degrees Fahrenheit to 77 degrees Fahrenheit. Similarly, Lindsay (1940) found this species' ideal relative humidity to be between 70 percent and 85 percent.

This inclination of both species toward damp, dark spaces make areas such as bathrooms, basements, and kitchens particularly prone to infestations from either, establishing conditions conducive to their presence and potential damage.

While silverfish are drawn to damp places, what they consume is crucial to their survival. Wall's (1953) observations reveal silverfish are general feeders, showing a particular attraction to viscose rayon—a fabric material made from wood pulp. This preference signifies the potential risk of damage to items such as carpets and upholstery made from the same material. Lindsay's (1940) study says silverfish are active at night, making them hard to spot. Even though they don't harm people, Mallis (1941) warns that silverfish can damage household items—especially clothing, furniture, stored food and books.

To effectively control and prevent silverfish, it's important to use a



combination of chemical and non-chemical methods.

Non-chemical Control

- **Maintain cleanliness.** Regular cleaning, especially in damp areas such as bathrooms, basements, and laundry rooms, is crucial for preventing silverfish. Vacuuming and sweeping regularly will help remove their food sources and reduce the number of pests in the area.
- **Seal entry points.** Because silverfish thrive in moist outdoor environments and may enter homes from outdoors, it's crucial to seal entryways. Use caulking to seal any cracks or holes

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Lepisma saccharina is known as the common silverfish, it likes to snack on starches and glues, among other items.

around pipes, windows, and doors to prevent silverfish from entering the home.

- **Manage moisture.** Repair any leaks or drips in the plumbing to reduce moisture levels in the home.
- **Store food properly.** Ensure your customers keep food in sealed containers and avoid leaving out pet food or crumbs. Even the smallest amounts of food can sustain silverfish.
- **Dehumidify the environment.** If the affected area is particularly humid, consider using a dehumidifier to reduce moisture levels in the air. This makes the environment less hospitable to silverfish.
- **Reduce clutter.** Silverfish thrive in cluttered areas, so it's crucial to keep spaces organized and free of unnecessary items. Store books, magazines, and papers in sealed containers or plastic bags to reduce their attractiveness as a food source.

Chemical Control

- **Indoors:** In cases where non-chemical methods prove inadequate, the use of an approved residual insecticide in cracks and crevices can be effective in controlling silverfish. Read the label thoroughly to



Ctenolepisma longicaudata, known as the gray or longtailed silverfish, is like its common cousin except with longer tails and antennae

prevent any contamination of food surfaces and non-target areas. Apply liquid insecticide to cracks, crevices, and targeted spots where silverfish are present, including clothing and storage spaces. When using dust formulations, apply a thin layer in voids and cracks, being mindful of drift. Ensure proper labeling of the dust, as moisture on treated surfaces may impact its effectiveness.

- **Outdoors:** To prevent most pests, including silverfish, from entering a well-maintained property, consider making a perimeter treatment. Concentrate on areas where pests might enter, paying close attention to entryways and gaps under doors or around windows. This proactive measure can help create a barrier that deters pests, including silverfish, from accessing the account.

Inside and out, you also can use appropriately labeled

commercial baits to target and control silverfish populations effectively (Sims and Appel, 2012).

Regardless of your treatment choices, regular monitoring and reapplication may be necessary for sustained results.

By adopting these preventive and control measures, you can efficiently address silverfish-related concerns, shielding the structures from potential damage and disturbances. It's essential to complement these strategies with pest-proofing techniques, emphasizing the reduction of moisture in and around the structure for optimal effectiveness.

Dr. Mohammed El Damir is the technical and training director for Adam's Pest Control, Medina, MN. In addition to his other duties, he has a passion for training new and experienced pest management technicians. He can be reached at PMPEditor@northcoastmedia.net.

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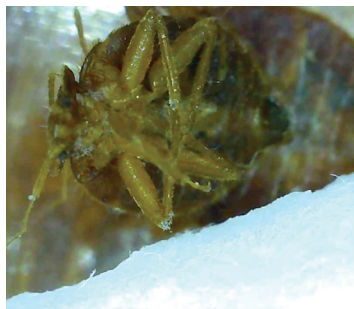
* US Field Trials: Indiana Grain Farm (2017); NC Pig Farm (2016)
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Bed Bug Battle: A Five-Day Fungal Takedown

Rob Greer
COO of Rove Pest Control

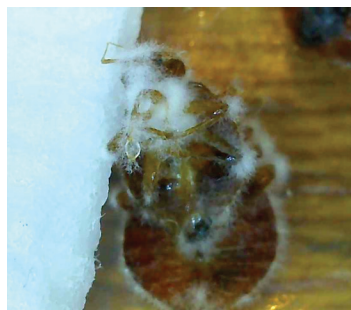
Rove Pest Control's service manager in the Michigan office loves to investigate bugs. JB also gets a kick out of seeing the effects of the treatments we have for them. He captured a bed bug that had been treated with Aprehend® and kept it in a moist environment to see the fungal spores take down the bed bug. Here's what he found.

DAY ONE: THE BED BUG BATTLE



Since we want bed bugs gone quickly, it is great to see immediate fungal growth after only 24 hours.

DAY TWO: THE BATTLE CONTINUES



After just two days, it is easy to see how one parasitized bed bug returning to a wall void could take out a whole population.

DAY THREE: FUNGAL DEATH



At this point, the bed bugs are starting to fade into the predominant white fuzz.

DAY FOUR: FUNGUS VS BED BUG



By the fourth day, the bed bug looks more like a snow puppy than a bed bug.

DAY FIVE: FINAL DAY OF SPORES



The nearly white creature represents a fresh start to your clients sleeping freely.

Authors Needed

If you are an Active or Allied member and you'd like to contribute an article to the newsletter pertaining to a current pest of concern, proper equipment use and care, application techniques, pesticide safety, choosing formulations and active ingredients, pesticide rotation – this list could go on and on – send your articles to Jay Bruesch at minnpest1@gmail.com. We'd like to have a store of articles that we can use as the need arises.

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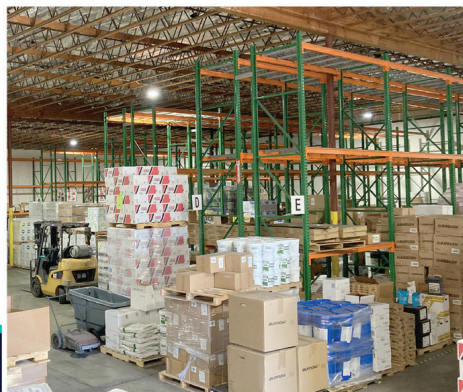

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April Board Meeting Minutes

MPMA Board of Directors Meeting July, 2024

Office of Adam's Pest Control, Inc. 2900 Eagle Bluff Circle Medina, MN 55340

Attending in person

Morgan Manderfield, Ecolab
Travis Chambers, BASF
Todd Leyse, Adam's Pest Control
Dr. Mohammed El Damir, Adam's Pest Control
Lane Zimmerman, Rainbow Pest Experts
Nate Heider, Spidexx
Gurinderbir (G.) Chahal, MDA
Caroline Kohnert, Plunkett's Pest Control

Rusty Binkley, Rockwell Labs
Jay Bruesch, MPMA
Christine Wicks, MDA/ASPCRO
Matt Eickman, Abra Kadabra Environmental

Attending remotely via Zoom

Roger Mackedanz, MDA
Dr. Stephen Kells, U.of M.
Rob Greer, Rove Pest Control

Prior to the Meeting

MPMA Active and Allied members were notified of the meeting date and time, and that it was going to be both in-person at the offices of Adam's Pest Control, and remotely via Zoom.

Morgan Manderfield, acting as President for Rob Greer

Morgan called the meeting to order at 11:30 am and circulated a signup sheet.

Gurinderbir Chahal, MDA

G. would like to share 2024 legislative changes to MDA's certification plan with MPMA.

G. described legislative and other changes that are part of MDA's revised certification plan. An SPCA license is needed not only for applicators, but for mixers and loaders of Restricted Use Pesticides. This is the same test and license as for Structural applicators. "Application" is defined as (1) dispersal of a pesticide to a target pest, whereas "Use" is defined as the preapplication activities that involve mixing and loading of open containers of RUPs. This refers only to closed containers, and only to RUPs.

As for applicators, they must be a minimum of 18 years of age in order to test for their Structural license. However, those who have already acquired a license at less than 18 years, but before the new rule takes effect, will be grandfathered, allowing them to keep their SPCA license.

All certification exams must be offered in Spanish. This is contrary to the old rule, which forbade administering the exam in Spanish under the rationale "labels are written in English, so those who use pesticides and read labels must be able to do so in English. Thus, the exam was obligatorily given in English. But nowadays, many more labels, SDSs, and training materials are available in Spanish, hence the reversal of the old rule. This will be a boon to Spanish-speaking job seekers, and goes some distance in helping to supply the pest control industry with qualified candidates for hiring. (These are notably in short supply lately.)

MDA partners with Metro Institute Inc. for testing. Unlike in the past, many (10) locations will be available for testing, allowing those who would otherwise have to travel a long distance to St. Paul to take the test closer to home.

A temporary license is issued once an individual has passed the SPCA exam. Better yet, all of the testing locations have free parking. Most states have outsourced testing, so Minnesota is late to the party in that respect. Mixers and loaders who have acquired the SPCA license for their jobs may also make pesticide applications for hire.

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July Board Meeting Minutes, *continued*

G. provided his full contact information for those who might have questions: Gurinderbir (G.) Chahal, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, 625 No. Robert St., St. Paul, MN 55101, g.chahal@mda.state.mn.us. (651) 201-6472.

Dr. Stephen Kells, University of Minnesota

MDA is rolling Category I (disinfection) into the SPCA license.

Steve and his staff are looking to change the annual PMP Conference to a smaller group format.

Steve would like to have the annual planning meeting for the training conferences earlier this year – ideally, around mid-August.

Morgan Manderfield pointed out that we'll need more presenters; this will result in shorter sessions. Presenters need to be informed in advance that their time in front of the group will be shorter, so that they can tailor their presentations accordingly.

Steve pointed out that we do have the option to vary the times allotted to presenters so that those who need more time will have it.

Some things, such as the MDA update, will remain largely the same from year to year, but for the most part we will try for a rotational scheme for speakers' presentations. All of the changes suggested by Steve will surely result in improvements to a conference that has already been held up as an example of an excellent conference.

The U. of M.:

1. Updating the SPCA manual
2. Rolling 'Cat I' disinfection into the SPCA license - changes to the manual. (I think G will cover this announcement, but I want to discuss how the manual will change)
3. Cat I will then be used only for water tower disinfection and mold remediation
4. Changes in the Conference to a smaller group rotation - challenges, suggestions, and ideas requested

Jay Bruesch

Vote to approve April 2024 meeting minutes. A vote was taken to approve the January 2024 and April 2024 meeting minutes, both of which have been sent out in final (non-draft) form.

Following correction of a few typographical errors on the part of the Secretary, the minutes were voted on and approved. The watermark "DRAFT" will disappear from these minutes.

Financial report and vote to approve

News item: Our IRS Form 1024 has been approved, restoring our tax-free/non-profit status.

Nominate new Board member into rotation?

We need to nominate a 2005/2006 Allied Board member.

It is time to nominate and install a new Board member to complete the rotating roster of Board members; and we need to nominate and vote on a new Allied Board member. According to persons suggested, nominations made and seconded and voted upon: Todd Leyse will assume the position of Board member (he's been up this ladder before, having served four terms as President).

continued on next page

July Board Meeting Minutes, *continued*

Rusty Binkley, Rockwell Labs, will assume the position of Allied Board member. Congratulations to Todd and Rusty, who will surely enrich the Board and will share meaningful suggestions.

Old Business

Dr. Mohammed El Damir

Update on suggestion of MPMA training sessions for members like they do in Texas.

Pest expert talks are to be monthly, and will also be offered online. The online course will have year-round availability.

Rob Greer (absent):

Rob has been looking into whether Zoom or Microsoft Teams will be able to provide a transcription of a meeting, based on a digital “tape recording” of the meeting. Alternately, we’ll probably need to wait until October for Rob’s summary and recommendations.

MPMA:

Fee structures for Active, Allied membership dues; Conference registration; advertising: Shall we leave these as is, or is it time to increase some? The overwhelming majority want to keep our membership fees and our costs for Conference exhibitors as they have been, with no changes.

New Business

Todd Leyse:

Todd is working on designing a new website as a social-media outlet, and creating the necessary databases of information to insert in the website. The new website will have a separate room for the public, and MPMA membership via a password.

The 2025 MN PMP Conference will be Joe Watrin’s (Granite Pest Control) 50th. Can we recognize him in some way? We will want to include John O’Reilly and anyone else we can find who has been around for 50 annual Conferences.

MPMA:

Set dates and venues for next two MPMA meetings.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, October 16, 2024 11:30 am – 1:00 pm (Central); venue is TBD. Members may also attend via Zoom. The meeting on January 21, 2025 also lacks a definite venue, which is still TBD.

Adjourn

A motion was made to adjourn; this was approved and the meeting was gavelled to a close at 1:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jay Bruesch, BCE

Executive Director, Minnesota Pest Management Association



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A wide range of products for the control and exclusion of rats and mice.



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A bait that is on target when primary poisoning of non-target animals is a concern. Monark SB is a lard based soft bait designed for residential application, and the only difenacoum bait available to PCO's in America.

Win with Brigand Blocks

Made of food grade ingredients and wax which is heated and cast into molds, our blocks are especially made for hot and wet conditions. Brigand... bait you can trust.



Keep Roban Barrier in your arsenal

When it comes to exclusion its out with the old ways and in with the new... Roban Barrier (formerly RodentStop) will cut your workload and look a lot nicer too.

Monark SB contains 0.005% w/w difenacoum
Brigand SB and Brigand WB contain 0.005% w/w Bromadiolone
EPA reg No's. 87235-4, 87235-1 & 87235-2

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Norway Rat
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Above photo courtesy of Jeffrey McGovern, The Resource Shop



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