



PEST CONTROL FACTS - PROOFING

An often underused, but important aspect of pest management is proofing. Thorough proofing to prevent access by pests should be a priority. It is a crucial component of integrated pest management and should be considered before resorting to chemical control.

As part of a thorough survey, the presence of cracks in outside walls, broken drain covers, etc, from where pests could invade and return should be noted. Appropriate recommendations can then be made.

In food production areas where pests such as rodents and flies cannot be tolerated, proofing the building is often the most sustainable solution.

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PEST CONTROL PROOFING

EXCLUSION METHODS

Maintenance activities, such as filling in holes with rodent-proofing paste and sealing gaps in walls around service pipes will have a dramatic effect.

Due to the small size and mobility of insects and mites, making any building insect-proof is extremely difficult but not impossible. In a food processing factory, a zero tolerance of flying insects is required. Therefore, every attempt must be made to exclude insects from the factory altogether using pest exclusion techniques. As a belt and braces policy, other methods such as Electronic Fly Killers are often deployed as a backup.

DOORWAYS

A policy of keeping doors closed when not in use reduces the amount of time when insects can enter and thus the probability of their entry. Closed doors must fit properly. Where this is not the case bristle strips should be fitted to exclude crawling invaders.

The use of plastic strip curtains, especially on doors in more or less continuous use, further reduces the chance of insect/bird entry. If doors are to be opened for additional ventilation they must always be fitted with an insect-proof screen.

WINDOWS

Wherever possible sufficient ventilation should be provided to prevent windows being opened. If this is the case, windows should be sealed, as a window can inadvertently be left open, allowing the free entry of flying insects.

Where it is necessary to open windows, they should be fitted with insect-proof screening. Good screening allows additional ventilation while excluding insects. However, all screens and barriers only work when they are in place and undamaged.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

A maintenance programme to seal off these points of entry should be in place. In practice no system will be perfect therefore, it is essential that this maintenance programme is ongoing. It is usually not possible, although it might be desirable, to replace parts of the infrastructure of a building to achieve sustainable pest management. However, when new buildings are designed, architects should be encouraged to consider designs that make insect pest entry less likely.

The use of door screens, air curtains and window screens is often successful but these methods frequently suffer in their effectiveness because of human intervention. Educating staff/tenants is often as important as the proofing.