

Tips & Tricks SPIDERS

Control Solutions Inc.

By Dr. Brittany Campbell, BCE
Technical Service Manager



Most spiders are beneficial predators that feed on insects and pests around homes. However, they can create concern and fear for residents and customers when they move indoors or build unsightly webs. Only a few spiders are legitimately concerning to human health, so the first step is to identify the spider to determine how to move forward for control.

Effective management starts with exclusion and habitat management. Reducing clutter, sealing cracks and gaps, and minimizing outdoor lighting that attracts insects can help reduce spider populations. Use a vacuum or de-webbing tool to eliminate spiders, their egg sacs and their webs around structures.

A perimeter application of a broad-spectrum liquid insecticide can help reduce prey around a structure and limit food sources for spiders. Additionally, dusts or aerosols can be applied in cracks and crevices, around window and door frames, and other places where spiders tend to hide for targeted applications.

BASF

By Sylvia Kenmuir, BCE
Senior Technical Services Representative,
Professional and Specialty Solutions



Occasional invaders often arrive with the changing seasons, and spiders top the list of panic-inducing pests. But why do spiders seem so common in the fall? It's not that there are more of them — it's their behavior that changes, making them more noticeable to customers.

1. Mating season. Autumn is prime mating time for many spider species. Males roam more, both inside and out, in search of females.

2. Full size. After a summer of feeding and growing, many spiders reach their adult size by fall. Larger spiders are simply easier to spot in corners, windows or walking across the floor.

3. Cooler weather. As temperatures drop, spiders often seek warmth and shelter indoors, especially in garages, basements and crawlspaces.

4. Visible webs. Fall weather tends to be drier and calmer, so spider webs (especially those from orb weavers) stick around longer. They also show up more easily, particularly when outlined in morning dew.

► DID YOU KNOW?

Why are spiders difficult to eliminate? Simply put, they must receive a lethal dose of pesticide, which is harder than it sounds. Unlike insects, spiders are arachnids that don't groom, live socially or make frequent contact with treated surfaces. They're also larger, requiring higher pesticide doses. So, if spiders are the target, remember to apply the correct label rate. Once a spider builds a web, it may never touch the ground — or any pesticide — again.



SOURCE: DR. JAMEL SANDIDGE, BCE, NISUS

In short: Spiders are always around, but in fall, they're bigger, bolder and more romantic. Pest proofing before seasonal changes can help reduce sightings and cut down on frantic customer calls.

Neogen

By Andrew Fisher, BCE, PHE
Business Unit Specialist



Black widow spiders (*Latrodectus* spp.) are a genus every pest management professional (PMP) should keep on their radar. Their venom is a potent neurotoxin that can cause intense pain, muscle cramps and, in rare cases, more severe reactions. Female black widows are relatively easy to identify by their shiny black bodies and distinctive red hourglass marking on the underside of the abdomen. Their webs are irregular and messy, unlike the symmetrical webs of other common spiders, but don't rely on web shape alone to identify the species.

During routine inspections, be thorough in checking dark, quiet and undisturbed areas where black widows often hide. Focus on the corners of garages, crawlspaces and sheds, under porches and decks, and inside cluttered storage areas. Outdoors, inspect under rocks, in woodpiles and around foundations. Be especially cautious when checking rodent bait stations or electrical boxes, as these are common harborage areas.

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Nisus

By Dr. Jamel Sandidge, BCE

National Director of Technical Services



Spiders generally are considered beneficial, feeding on unwanted insects, agricultural pests and public health insect threats. Still, they consistently rank among the Top 3 pests reported by the public — because *people are terrified of spiders*. The psychological impact is real, and fear often drives the need for control.

Effective spider control goes beyond spraying. It requires pest-proofing, removing webs, reducing web-building, and eliminating egg sacs to stop future generations. Spiderlings can enter through tiny cracks — even window screens — and stay hidden for months.

Use a vacuum or web brush (indoors and out) to remove spiders and webs physically. Pair this with targeted applications of pesticide dusts and excitorepellents to increase movement, contact and transfer. With consistent effort and the right techniques, spider control becomes far more effective.

Envu

By Matt Remmen

Senior Technical Services Manager



As temperatures begin to drop, pest pressure remains, including spiders. Because virtually all spiders are predators, focus on both direct and prey control. Their prey populations are peaking but will begin to decline in many markets. When this happens, spiders tend to move to more favorable areas for both temperature and food — often, the same spaces we inhabit.

Some spiders enter diapause, a dormant state that aligns with reduced prey opportunities. Others, such as wolf spiders (Lycosidae), may forgo diapause and remain active. This is why spider activity can persist late into the cool-weather season.

To stop spiders and the pests they feed on: dust voids, move firewood off the ground, service glue boards (where applicable), treat entry points and seal

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where possible. Inside, focus on basements, walkout garages, foyers and utility lines. Outside, focus on the bottom row of siding, sheds, firewood storage, utility penetration lines and leaf litter.

Rockwell Labs

By **Nick Godfroid, BCE**
Technical Services Specialist



As PMPs, it can be reflexive to remove a spider web and resident spider the moment we see it, but sometimes it actually can pay to take a look at it first. Common house spiders (*Parasteatoda tepidariorum*), common longbodied cellar spiders (*Pholcus phalangioides*) and other spider species that set up shop in a corner know what they are doing when they pick their real estate.

A spider's choice of web placement can tell you things such as which door has the gap where bugs come in, whether there are flying or crawling insects coming

inside, and even what species of invaders are coming in. For example, I often have identified ant problems that might not have been trailing while I was inspecting, but a spider nearby had eaten a few and left body parts for me to identify. Use these little sentries to help you inspect.

For a professional and discreet solution, we recommend using white plastic stations with glueboards inside for monitoring and capturing spiders and other pests. For long-lasting control, use amorphous silica dust.

Syngenta

By **Dr. Chris Keefer, BCE**
*Technical Services Manager,
Professional Pest Management*



Spiders can help ward off flies and other pests, but they can just as easily become a nuisance. Check out these tips for identifying and controlling spider infestations effectively:

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- ▶ Use glue boards to pinpoint infestations and areas of activity.
- ▶ Dust the interior perimeter of the attic.
- ▶ Sanitize and vacuum the area.
- ▶ Seal cracks and crevices.
- ▶ Alter lights to reduce spiders' food sources.
- ▶ Remove debris and leaf litter.
- ▶ Reduce nearby vegetation.
- ▶ Increase ventilation around the structure.
- ▶ Physically remove cobwebs and add insecticide to the physical removal tool.
- ▶ Treat known or potential prey harborage away from the structure with a liquid residual and a bait.
- ▶ Do *not* overspray a bait with a liquid treatment.
- ▶ Treat utility penetrations, eaves, overhangs, door frames and window frames.
- ▶ For more precise applications, use a backpack or a handheld air-compressed sprayer on the exterior perimeter.
- ▶ Power-spray the perimeter of the building.
- ▶ Bait the perimeter outside of the liquid application zone to help control spider prey.

AMGUARD

By Dr. Charles Silcox
Product Development Manager



A review of our customer service call log reveals that spiders rank fifth in frequency for our bifenthrin, fipronil and lambda-cyhalothrin products. The primary objective of a spider control program is to keep them out of the living areas of homes. Yet treating those areas should be avoided, because painted interior walls and ceilings are vulnerable to staining/discoloration.

One approach that has proven successful for spider control is to make a thorough perimeter application following label directions for use. Maximum label rates are suggested because they provide the longest duration of residual control.

Apply band treatments around doors, windows and other potential points of entry. If the structure has a deck, consider spot-treating underneath it, especially if there is visible evidence of spiders.

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Garages are a haven for spiders, and cobwebs often indicate priority locations for spot treatments. Spiders also love unfinished basements, which are easy to treat thanks to their exposed beams and corners. Again, spot treatments are recommended for these locations, targeting sites with evidence of spider activity.

Pelsis

By Anna Iversen, BCE

U.S. Technical Director



Sometimes, spiders are our target, particularly when they pose a threat or nuisance to our customers. Other times, they may help catch and consume the various insects we might be after.

Regardless of whether you consider them friend or foe, take note of where they are and where their webbing is. This will provide great clues as to where insects are entering the building. Spiders will place



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their webs in areas they believe they're most likely to catch insects. That means they're finding the small cracks and holes we may not see — and making use of them.

Seeing piles of dead insects, webbing and the spiders themselves helps guide us to areas that need our attention, whether that be inspection, exclusion, sanitation or control. So, before deciding a spider's fate, take a moment to see what it's telling you about the insect population and where and how it's entering the building.

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