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# Spiders and Stinging Insects

## Safety Topic of the Month August 2011



# Why Safety Topic of the Month

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- Spiders, wasps, bees and other stinging insects are present on our jobsites
- Most people are not allergic to insect stings and most insect stings result in only local itching and swelling
- Nevertheless, whether a bite/sting becomes First Aid or Med Treatment, the results are preventable
- Over 2 million Americans are allergic to stinging insects
  - The degree of allergy varies widely
  - Some personnel will have severe allergic reactions (see slides 8/9)
- Severe allergic reactions to insect stings are responsible for at least 50 deaths each year in the U.S.



# Spiders

## Picture

## Facts

**Brown Recluse**



- Likes warm, dark spaces indoors
- Use caution when going through boxes of materials that have been idle for a time
- Their bites can cause the skin to blister and rot so medical treatment should be sought immediately
- Be aware of the habitats of idle junk left in the mechanical areas, duct space and crawl space

**Black Widow**



- Mainly found outdoors
- Bites/sting are painful but not usually lethal
- May appear in the UDC area of dispenser

# Bees and Yellow Jackets

## Picture

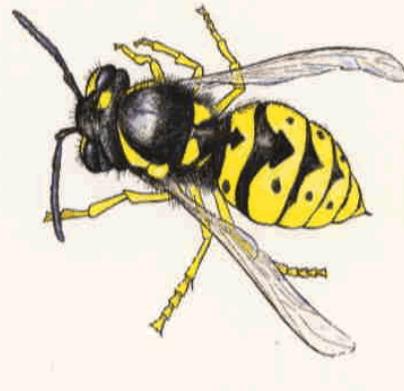
## Facts

### Bumble/Honey Bees



- Bumble Bees are ground nesting
- They react to loud machinery (ie; such as those used by landscapers) passing over or near their nests
- When using an aerosol spray against Bumble bees, getting them all can be difficult
- Bumble Bees are persistent, they never give up
- Honey Bees like nesting in High rise signs. If encountered call professional's for extermination and/or relocation
- Bees will swarm, in other words whole colony attacks

### Yellow Jackets



- Yellow Jackets build nests in the ground at the base of trees and near structures. Another landscaper problem
- Yellow Jackets release an attack pheromone when they sting or are crushed, this calls others to the attack "Do Not Swat Them"
- Allergies are serious
- Safest to poison nest at night using Sevin™ or Ficam™

# Wasps and Hornets

## Picture

## Facts

### Wasps



- Wasps typically build their nests under eaves and ledges where sign and lighting contractors work
- Wasps are not as aggressive as yellow jackets or hornets, can be eliminated with a wasp and hornet spray
- For safety, stand to the side of the nest when you spray

### Hornets



- Hornets are more difficult and dangerous to control than wasps
- Nest resemble a large, tear dropped shape ball typically attached to a tree, bush or side of a building
- Hornets are extremely aggressive when disturbed
- The nests are often located out of reach and removal is best accomplished by professional pest control firm

# Prevention

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- **SPSA: observe and evaluate area where you will be working. Have area cleared of debris, spray insecticides and or call in pest control exterminators**
- **Do not wear perfumed lotions, aftershave or scented hair products in summer months**
- **Wear light colored, smooth-finished clothes that cover your body. PPE - long pants and long sleeve shirt. Avoid bright colors (this will be hard with our safety vests)**
- **Avoid provoking insects whenever possible**
- **Avoid swatting at insects or flailing your arms. Swatting is a reflex action, train your personnel**
- **Back away, retreat slowly and calmly**
- **If you are allergic:**
  - Carry an allergy kit prescribed by a doctor
  - When checking in for work let store personnel and or supervisor know that you have an insect allergy
  - Wear a medical identification badge

# First Aid and Other Treatment for Stings

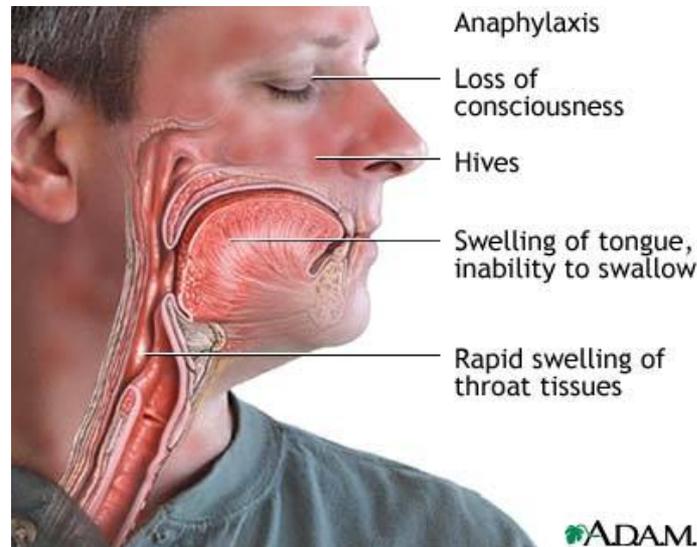
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- **Wasp, hornet and yellow jacket stings can be life-threatening to persons who are allergic to the venom or who have become sensitized from previous stings (swarms)**
- **Do not pull out stinger with tweezers as this may only shoot more venom into the wound. Use a fingernail or credit card, to knock off the stinger**
- **Wash wound with soap and water. Apply ice or cold pack**
  - Itching, pain and localized swelling can be somewhat reduced with cold compress
- **Victims may develop hives, have difficulty breathing or swallowing, begin wheezing or have similar symptoms of allergic reaction**
- **You must seek medical attention immediately if such symptoms appear!**
- **Persons who know they are allergic often carry the drug Epinephrine, a strong antihistamine which if administered soon enough can save a life**

# Anaphylaxis

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- The most serious allergic reaction is anaphylaxis
- Prompt treatment is essential and emergency help is often needed
- Severe reactions are suspected if:
  - Experiences hives and intense itching at sites other than sting site
  - Difficulty breathing, swallowing, speaking
  - Swelling of the face, mouth and tongue
  - Dizziness, vomiting and fainting
- These types of reactions usually occur in minutes but have been known to be delayed for 24 hours



# Anaphylaxis Immediate First Aid

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- **Place the victim in shock position**
  - Have victim lie flat
  - Raise victim's feet 12"
  - Turn the victim's head to one side if neck injury is no suspected
  - and cover with coat or blanket
- **Keep the person warm, comfortable, calm and reassure the person**
- **Call 911**



# Questions ???

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- 1) If you are allergic to insect bites you should
  - a. Notify your supervisor and or store personnel when you check in
  - b. Have Medical bracelet
  - c. Carry allergy kit prescribed by your doctor
  - d. All of the above
  
- 2) When a insect flies into your personal space you should
  - a. Swat at the insect vigorously
  - b. Verbally insult the insect to learn it's intentions
  - c. Back away, retreat calmly and slowly
  - d. All of the above
  
- 3) As part of PPE for insect bite prevention especially in summer months
  - a. Okay to wear perfumes, aftershave and scented hair products
  - b. Okay to wear sandals and shorts
  - c. Do not wear safety glasses, insects are small and hard to see
  - d. None of the above
  
- 4) Do you know if a member of you team is allergic? Yes or No

**Bonus: Why is it important to elevate a person's feet and turn their head if anaphylaxis occurs?**

# Questions/Answers

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- 2) When a insect flies into your personnel space you should
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- 4) Do you know if a member of you team is allergic? Yes or No. **No real right answer**

Bonus: Why is it important to elevate a person's feet and turn their head if anaphylaxis occurs?

**Prevent suffocation**