

How to Select a Pest Control Company

Shripat T. Kamble, Extension Urban Entomologist

Information on considerations made before hiring a commercial pest control company are covered in this NebGuide.

Most people hire a pest control company to control pests in and around their home and commercial building. In Nebraska as well as other parts of the country, pest control services generally are separated into two major categories:



1) General Pest Control, and 2) Termite Control.

In Nebraska, numerous companies offer services and special techniques to eliminate pest problems. General pest control services normally are focused on controlling cockroaches, ants, fleas, wasps/bees, ticks, silverfish, cloth moths, carpet beetles, sowbugs, pillbugs, millipedes, centipedes, clover mites, chiggers, mice, rats, birds, bats, etc. Different pests require different control methods, based on their biology and behavior. For example, cockroach control service will differ in price and application techniques depending on what type of cockroaches are present. German cockroaches have a short life cycle and typically are found throughout the year in the kitchen, bathrooms and closets. Oriental cockroaches (water bugs) have a much longer life cycle and are commonly found in basements and lower kitchen cabinets, especially in spring and fall. Similarly, different control strategies also apply to ants. Carpenter ants, for example, require different control procedures than other small nuisance ants entering the kitchen, especially in spring. Many reliable pest control companies work hard and do a good job to earn your business. However, when in doubt, the following guidelines should help in selecting a company:

General Pest Control Service

1. If possible, obtain price quotes from at least two to three companies. Compare the service, warranty and price.

The lowest price does not always mean the best deal, so when shopping for pest control professionals, ask about application techniques (chemical or non-chemical) that will be used. This is especially important for people sensitive to certain pesticides.

2. If necessary, check with the Better Business Bureau for the past record of a company.
3. Get a contract in writing. Written contacts always are better than verbal promises.
4. Make sure that the initial price assures reasonable success, or there may be an extra fee if the company needs to come back for re-treatments.
5. Inquire if the company has liability insurance.
6. Ask if the company's technician has a license to apply pesticides in Nebraska.
7. Be certain the company is registered to conduct business in the state.

Termite Control Service

First, do not panic if termite activity is found in your home or business property. It takes a while for termites to cause extensive damage. Be assured your home or building will not collapse overnight or within a couple of months.



When compared to states in the south, Nebraska is lucky to have only subterranean termite problems. Drywood, Formosan and dampwood termites are not established in Nebraska. Regardless of the situation, termite control still is a complex issue. **DO NOT ATTEMPT** to control a termite infestation on your own. In most situations, it will require the service of a licensed commercial pest control company. Termite control professionals have access to special tools and specialty products, and they are trained in special application procedures

to ensure the best protection for your home or commercial building. Before contracting with a pest control company, it is important to do a little bit of homework. Consider the following guidelines before selecting a pest control company:

1. Seek at least two to three quotes. Personal communication with a company representative is essential to avoid any confusion or misunderstanding about the inspection or the services offered.
2. Compare the type of service, price and warranty offered by each company, and remember that the lowest price is not always the best deal. Be cautious if there are large differences between bids from different companies.
3. Check with the Better Business Bureau for the company's past performance record.
4. Make sure that the company has a few years of experience in dealing with subterranean termite control.
5. Do not hesitate to ask for references.
6. Do not be pressured by a sales person or a company to sign a contract immediately or to pay in advance. *Take your time to make a sound decision.* Consult your co-workers, friends, neighbors or relatives about their experiences with termite control services.
7. Make sure the company inspects the entire building (inside and outside) plus nearby premises, as subterranean termite colonies can be rather extensive.
8. Ask the company representative to point out termite conducive conditions around the home or building and needed corrections to avert termites.
9. Ask for a written inspection report with a diagram showing current termite activities. Old damage does not mean that termite treatment always is warranted.
10. Ask for a written plan for treatment procedures, including chemical (termiticide) label, price and warranty.
11. Make sure that the company has liability insurance.
12. Be present when the pest control company is performing the termite treatment. Ask a few questions and watch the technician's activities.
13. Keep in mind that a reliable pest control company will answer all your questions and provide you with a warranty. Service technicians also will return if re-treatment is necessary.
14. Be extremely careful if a company representative claims that a structure will be treated with a secret chemical formula. This is an automatic rejection.
15. Be wary of pest control operators (PCOs) with no business address, listed phone numbers and no liability insurance.
16. Seek help from local University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension office or Nebraska Department of Agriculture - Pesticide Regulation Section, Phone: (402) 471-2394.

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