



KEEP SAFE

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Biting and stinging insects: don't let'm BUG you



Outdoor workers have enough to contend with besides bugs that bite and sting. For most people, bug bites cause temporary redness and pain. But for others, bites and stings may trigger a life-threatening emergency. Understanding the risk and basic treatment can help all outdoor workers deal with these pests.

Avoid the insect world's most wanted

Mosquitoes, fleas, black flies, mites, chiggers and ticks use their mouth to suck blood from humans. Bees, hornets, yellow jackets, wasps and scorpions use a stinger to inject their venom. Spiders bite, and ants both sting and bite.

Bug bites give most people minor skin reactions like swelling, redness, pain and itching. Sometimes there is excessive swelling at the bite site. Bites can also cause headaches and vomiting.

Tick bites do not usually cause an immediate reaction, but are dangerous because they can transmit Lyme Disease, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and other diseases. Ticks normally attach to humans on the scalp or under the arms. Always check for ticks, especially after working in wooded, swampy or grassy areas. A tick bite might look like a small rash sometimes taking the form of a bull's eye.

Don't be a bug bistro

The best way to avoid bites is to make yourself unappetizing to bugs. Sweet smells attract insects. Don't leave out food or open drinks. Never drink from a can or bottle that might have an insect inside.

Do not use colognes, perfumes, scented soaps or hair sprays. Do apply insect repellent (follow directions on label). Cover

up with long pants, long-sleeve shirts, socks, shoes and a hat. Dress in pale colors, such as light green, tan and khaki, and avoid clothing with bright colors or flowery prints. Protect your hands with gloves.

It is extremely important to safeguard your body from bites. Wearing personal protective equipment such as gloves, crawl suits and hats is extremely important.

Screens, tents and other covering should be used to enclose the work area to keep pests out.

Be aware of insects' nests. Yellow jackets nest in the ground and in walls. Hornets and wasps nest in bushes, trees and under the eaves of buildings. Spiders prefer dark areas. Fire ants live in large mounds. Insects are most active at dawn and dusk.

Plan an attack against pests

Worksite emergency action plans should cover bites and stings. An individual trained in first aid should be available on-site to treat allergic reactions of various kinds, including bee stings. An emergency rescue plan would call for off-site trained individuals, such as paramedics.

Some basic first-aid steps can relieve bite pain and help prevent infection. Clean the area around the bite with soap and water and apply ice or a cold pack. If the stinger is still in the wound, remove it before washing and icing the area by scraping the surface with something stiff like a credit card or knife blade. Do not squeeze the area, or the stinger will release more venom.

(continued on page 2)

June – get ready for summer

The sun is out in all its glory. Your children are eager to jump in the pool, and you're ready to fire up the grill. You can ensure a season of fun and relaxation by taking some time to establish these outdoor safety measures.

Protect children around the pool and play set

- Secure your pool area by installing a fence — one that closes and latches by itself, and is at least five feet high — that goes all the way around it.
- Lock pool chemicals in a secure cabinet out of children's reach. Keep the gate locked when an adult is not there.
- Assign an adult to watch children carefully at all times when they are in or near the water.
- To help cushion falls, make sure the areas under and around backyard play sets are covered with a 9-to-12-inch-deep layer of soft materials such as rubber mulch, hardwood chips or pea gravel, extending six feet from all sides of the equipment.
- When children are around play sets, they should be supervised by an adult.

Become a safer griller

- Before using a gas grill, check the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line for leaks by pouring soapy water over it and seeing if bubbles appear. (Never use a match.)
- If you detect a leak, turn off the gas, and do not attempt to relight until the leak is fixed.
- Place the grill at least 10 feet away from the house to prevent fires.

Inspect your deck and make it safe

- Check how your deck is connected to your home — it should be bolted, not nailed. If in doubt, bring in a professional.
- Go underneath your deck and make sure the wood framing is attached with metal hardware like steel connectors, nails and screws. Repair any wobbly railings and loose stairs.
- Replace deck boards that have rotted or have large cracks, any hardware that has red rust.

— Home Safety Council
For more home safety tips, visit MySafeHome.org

(Insects continued from page 1)

If the bite is from a spider or scorpion, capture the insect and seek medical attention. The bites of most spiders and stings of scorpions in the United States are not potentially harmful — unless an allergic reaction occurs — but some bites (e.g. all brown recluse and black widow spider bites) will need a doctor's attention.

When removing ticks, use a pair of tweezers to grasp the tick close to the skin and pull very gently until the tick lets go. Avoid pulling too hard or jerking, which may leave part of the tick in the skin. Wash the area with soap and water, and then put an antiseptic such as rubbing alcohol on the site. Seek medical attention if a rash appears around the site or the victim later experiences chills, joint pain or other flu-like symptoms.

Act on allergies

Individuals who have an allergic reaction to bites and stings experience severe symptoms that require emergency medical attention.

One severe reaction, called anaphylaxis, causes a person's eyes, nose, lips, throat and tongue to swell, possibly resulting in difficulty breathing. The individual may become unconscious or have skin hives, severe itching or generalized swelling. This reaction usually starts just minutes after the sting and in some cases may be fatal.

If this occurs, call 911 or your local/work emergency number immediately. Anyone who has experienced a severe reaction to an insect bite should carry a kit to administer treatment in the future. Employers should be notified of any allergies so if an employee with an insect allergy is stung, they know how to properly react.

— 5 minute safety talk
National Safety Council

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Texas Electric Cooperatives

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2011 TEC LOSS CONTROL SCHOOLS (33 Schools)

Regulator Recloser Capacitors (Merkel)	January 11-14
Metering (Gonzales)	January 18-21
2 Day Transformer (San Augustine)	January 26-27
Transformer (Livingston)	February 8-11
Metering (Lubbock)	February 15-18
Regulator Recloser Capacitors (San Augustine)	February 22-25
Advanced Pole Climbing (Gonzales)	February 22-25
Regulator Recloser Capacitors (Tahoka)	March 1-4
Troubleshooting (Greenville)	March 8-11
Transformer (Gonzales)	March 29-April 1
Metering (Merkel)	April 5-8
Basic Pole Climbing (San Augustine)	April 5-8
Regulator Recloser Capacitors (McGregor)	April 12-15
Hotline 1-4 (Henderson)	April 25-29
Basic Pole Climbing (Gonzales)	April 26-29
Underground (Quitman)	May 2-6
Regulator Recloser Capacitors (Gonzales)	May 10-13
Transformer (Tahoka)	May 17-20
Hotline 1-4 (Merkel)	May 23-27
Digger Operation and Safety School (Merkel)	May 23-27
Metering (McGregor)	June 7-10
Basic Pole Climbing (Tahoka)	June 7-10
Underground (Gonzales)	June 13-17
Metering (Livingston)	June 21-24
Troubleshooting (Livingston)	July 26-29
Regulator Recloser Capacitors (Greenville)	August 16-19
Hotline 1-4 (Gonzales)	August 29-Sept 2
Digger Operation and Safety School (Gonzales)	August 29-Sept 2
Underground (McGregor)	September 12-16
Hotline 1-4 (Levelland)	September 26-30
Underground (Merkel)	October 3-7
Underground (Levelland)	October 17-21
Hotline 1-4 (Livingston)	October 24-28