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Contact Us:

<http://schoolipm.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Faith Oi

foi@ufl.edu

Twitter @PMU_News

[Facebook PMUNews](#)

Michael Bentley

volcum1@ufl.edu

Entomology & Nematology

Twitter [@UFEntomology](#)

[Facebook UFEntomology](#)

Online Training Available:

<http://pmu.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Pest Management in and Around Structures:

<http://www.eXtension.org/>

School IPM Focus- Signs of Rodent Activity

*Message from Faith: **Was your school district one that made a resolution to fix door sweeps** on outer building doors as an effort toward sustainable IPM in schools? A main tactic of rodent exclusion is fix door sweeps and it is much more affordable than pest control after an infestation is started. Sealing doors and windows also will help you with energy conservation as we head into warmer weather.*



If you are a school district (or school) willing to make a New Year's resolution to fix the door sweeps on external doors, please let me (foi@ufl.edu) know so we can highlight your commitment.

To review, the **building envelope** encompasses the conditioned air space of a building. In the context of a school, the parts of the building envelope that we are most concerned with are potential pest entry points such as windows, doors, ventilation points and places where the plumbing and electrical pipes go through the walls or the floor. This month's School IPM Focus highlights identifying signs of rodent activity which may indicate breaches in a building envelope.

Signs of Rodent Activity

Rodents to enter structures looking for food, nesting sites and material, and protection from predators. Mice are able to enter through gaps as small as ¼ inch and young rodents can enter with as little as ½ inch. Rodents also are extremely smart and learn about their environment. This means rodents are very effective at finding and exploiting almost any entry point into a building. To remain proactive in preventing rodent problems, an ongoing inspection and preventative maintenance plan is necessary. A key to any good inspection is being able to identify potential problem areas and signs of rodent activity.

Evidence of Rodent Activity



Fig 1. Chewing damage to paper towel roll by field mouse. Photo by: M. Bentley

- Damage to goods: Rodents will gnaw on items such as baseboards or cabinets as well as chew through food packages. Finding sawdust like wood chips or bits of packaging can be a sign of rodent activity (Fig 1).
- Urine: Rodents will urinate along runways which produce a strong characteristic odor. This urine also fluoresces under ultraviolet (black) light, aiding in the detection process.



Fig 2. Rub marks made from repeated entry into a structure by rodents. Photo credit: www.Rentokil.co.uk

- Smudges and rub marks: Rodents leave behind oil from their fur that can leave smudge marks on pipes and beams. Identifying rub marks can be a useful inspection tool when identifying rodent entry points into a structure (Fig 2).

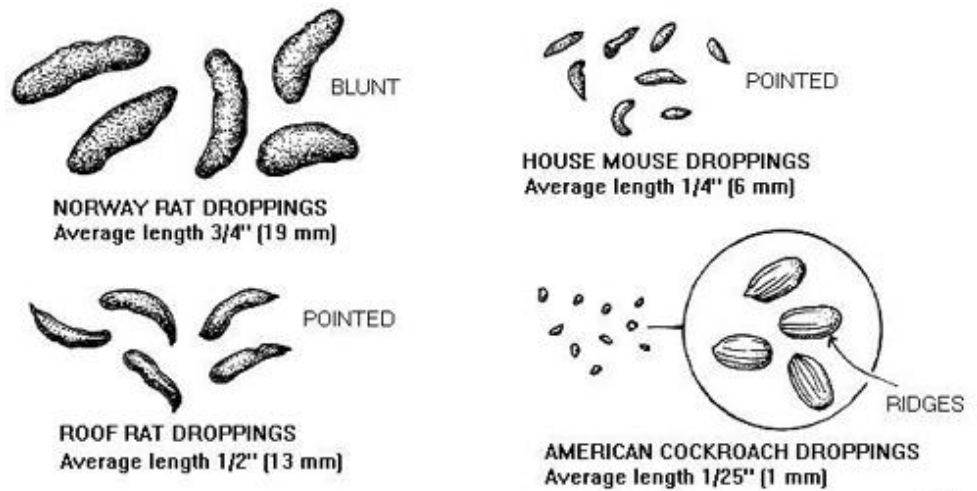


Fig 3. Identification guide of commonly encountered droppings. Photo credit: http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/fasulo/vector/chapter_08.htm

- **Droppings:** The condition and size of rodent droppings can indicate important details regarding rodent activity. Fresh droppings, which tend to be dark and moist, indicate recent activity. Old droppings are often grey, dried out, and crumble easily. Large droppings are often the result of rats, whereas small droppings can indicate mouse activity (Fig 3).

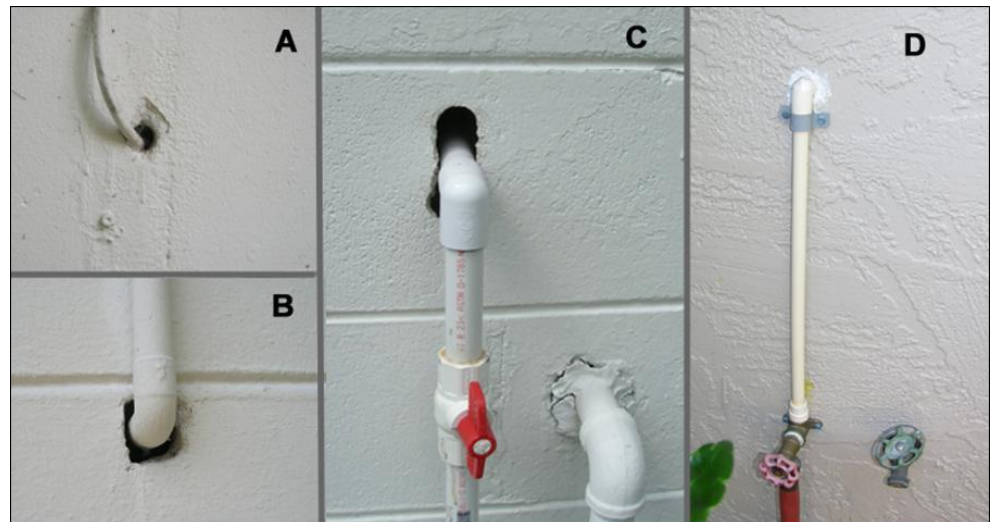


Fig 4. Entry points around the plumbing and wire penetrations of a building. A: Wiring penetration. B and C: Plumbing penetrations. D: Properly sealed plumbing penetration. Photo by: M. McGarrity and S. Johnson.

- **Entry Points:** An important aspect of maintaining a properly sealed building envelope is sealing holes and gaps throughout the exterior of a structure. Identifying and sealing entry points into a structure not only ensures the integrity of a buildings envelope, but it prevents rodent and pest entry into the building (Fig 4).

For additional information regarding rodent exclusion click [here](#). Rodents are covered in GHP Foundations, see course listings below.

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Twitter, and “invite” us on LinkedIn

Want to hear short updates from us in between newsletters? “Like” us on Facebook and “follow” us on Twitter!



Upcoming Training Opportunities

If you plan on taking the [State Certified Operator examination](#) through PMU, please submit your applications by:

Sept 8 for the Oct 17 PMU [State Exam](#) for Termite and WDO
(Write “**PMU NOV WDO**” on the top line of the state application)

Oct 1 for the Nov 7 PMU [State Exam](#) for GHP
(Write “**PMU OCT GHP**” on the top line of the state application)

April Offerings

Foundations of General Household Pest Management

Date: April 2-4, 2014; Wed-Fri

Time: 8 AM-5 PM (W, TH); 8 AM-12 PM (F)

Place: UF/IFAS Apopka MREC, 2725 S. Binion Rd, Apopka, FL 32703-8504

Registration fee: \$375

Pest control matters. Cockroach allergen mitigation can be achieved with IPM. Class duration: 2.5 days.

- Study domestic and peridomestic cockroach species and how to control them as well as rodent, small fly, filth fly, fire ant and nuisance ant management.
- Review the labels of commonly used GHP products, practice pest inspections at PMU’s house and develop treatment strategies focused on IPM.
- Do a vehicle inspection and spill drill with Paul Mitola from DACS.

[Register here](#)

Foundations of Turf Management

Date: April 9-11, 2014 (12 slots left)

Time: 8 AM-5 PM (W, TH); 8 AM-12 PM (F)

Place: UF/IFAS Apopka MREC, 2725 S. Binion Rd, Apopka, FL 32703-8504

Registration fee: \$375

Learn about common turf varieties, turf diseases, IPM of turf pests, methods of sampling, equipment calibration, turf maintenance requirements and more!

[Register here](#)

Foundations of Termite Management

April 23-25, 2014(FULL, CLOSED; see June offering)

If your company needs another course between now and September, please contact Faith (foi@ufl.edu). We will see if there is enough demand for one in June.

Learn how termites exploit over 50 building construction elements and how to treat them in a hands-on environment in 2-days instead of 2 years.

- Practice doing a DACS vehicle inspection and spill drill with Paul Mitola from DACS before a crisis occurs.
- Hear about the top 10 reasons technicians get in trouble and how to avoid them from Mark Ruff, industry attorney.
- Get more in-depth information on termite biology and behavior as well as product label navigation. Class duration: 2.5 days.

ADDITIONAL COURSES

Click on links for course descriptions or go to <http://pmu.ifas.ufl.edu/courses>

WDO category

March 13-14, 2014. WDO Inspections and Form 13645 (FULL, CLOSED)

April 24-25, 2014, Termite Foundations, (FULL, CLOSED)

June 18-20, 2014, [Termite Foundations](#)

July 30, 2014, [Termite Basics](#). Anyone in sales, office management, or brand new to the industry, this is the course for you.

Sept 17-19, 2014, [Termite Foundations](#)

GHP Category

April 2-4, 2014, this is a "must have for implementers," [GHP Foundations](#)

May 28-30 2014, [GHP Foundations](#)

July 31, 2014, [GHP Basics](#) . Anyone in sales, office management, or brand new to the industry, this is the course for you

L&O Category

Please contact Dr. Eileen Buss (eabuss@ufl.edu, (352) 273-3976) directly with questions concerning these courses.

May 14-16, 2014, [Foundations of Ornamentals Management](#) (NEW!)

Sept 24-26, 2014, [Turf Foundations](#). Doing turf work? This is a must have course.

News!

We hope you will submit news items and would be happy to help you

write a story if you have an idea but don't have the time to write up the information. We like to share news and video when it happens using our social media outlets- **Twitter**, **Facebook** and **YouTube**. When you send news we will post it on one or more of these sites and again in the monthly newsletter. Feel free to send news or announcements as soon as they happen and we will post them. We hope this will get you more visibility. Please send news items to **Michael Bentley**.



Visit our website for back issues of **Florida School IPM News**. You can scan the QR code on the right with your smart phone or tablet to get there faster. You will need a QR code reader!