



A publication prepared exclusively for members of the
National Wildlife Control Operators Association

NWCOA NEWS

Issue: 36
Spring 2020

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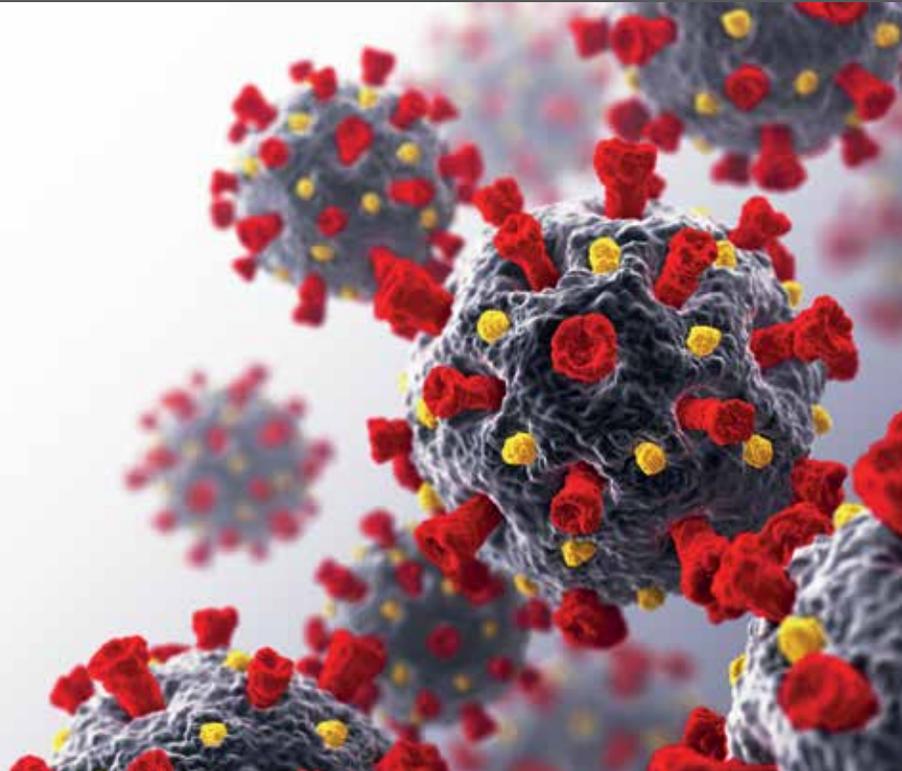
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COVID-19 UPDATE

2020 is going to be remembered as the year of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The virus has been able to spread quickly, prompting the CDC to recommend everyone practice social distancing. This has resulted in many Local and State Governments placing Stay at Home Orders, and closing businesses that are considered non-essential. While our members' health and safety is our top priority, we understand the need for the services you provide. Page 10 provides general suggestions on best practices for planning and preparing offices for the safe return of employees, visitors, contractors and others who may be interacting with or visiting your business.

Member Benefits!

Read all about the NWCOA member benefits. See pages 19-20.

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RYAN HALL

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

What a different time we live in. In just under a month, we went from finalizing marketing details for our upcoming in-person training events to hurriedly trying to provide information regarding essential businesses, small business loans, and hosting a handful of our training courses online. My first message is to all NWCOA members, friends, and family to stay safe and healthy.

In these tough times it is great to be able to rely on our fellow NWCOA members for guidance and support. Please do not hesitate to ask for assistance or check the COVID 19 resource page on the NWCOA website. As businesses and organizations start to tread the waters of re-opening their operations, please know that we are here to assist in any way we can. Reach out to a NWCOA board member or the staff at any time.

With all the COVID-19 news, we haven't been able to properly share the great success of our 2020 Wildlife Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada. I would like to take a moment and offer gratitude to all those who made this event possible. Thank you to NWCOA's Executive Staff, NPMA, NWCOA Board of Directors and the NWCOA Training Coordinator, vendors, and all the members who made the Expo a success. We look forward to our 2021 Wildlife Expo which will be held January 31st – February 5th, 2021 in Orlando, Florida. Mark your calendars!

As we look toward the rest of year, we are looking forward to opportunities to provide even more member benefits to NWCOA members and vendor members. Our association has continued to see growth over the past few years, and we expect the same in 2020.

This past December, NWCOA's board of directors took part in an annual strategic planning meeting. The outcome of this meeting was a defined strategic plan for the association covering three years, 2020-2023, and includes short and long-term goals, such as new programs, increased advocacy efforts, streamlined processes, and additional collaboration.

NWCOA's mission is to advance the wildlife damage industry. Our vision is to be the source of expertise in resolving human wildlife conflicts. With the associations mission and vision defined, our goals for the association

are to Advocate, Collaborate, Educate, and Strengthen. Under these goals, we have determined outcomes we would like to accomplish over the next three years which will require an increased need for volunteers to serve on committees. Please reach out to our board members or the NWCOA staff if you are interested in getting more involved with the association.

Lastly, we continue to assess training needs and the ability to host in person meetings. We are planning to offer a few more online training opportunities in the coming months, so stay tuned for those announcements. We are planning to host several in-person meetings as planned starting in June 2020. Information on both in-person and online training is available on our website at www.nwcoa.com.

I cannot thank you all enough for your help and support, and most of all, for continuing to participate and be involved with the industry and NWCOA as an organization. Thank you again, and best wishes. We thank you for your membership and support and look forward to continued success 2020!

Ryan Hall, CWCP, CNI
President



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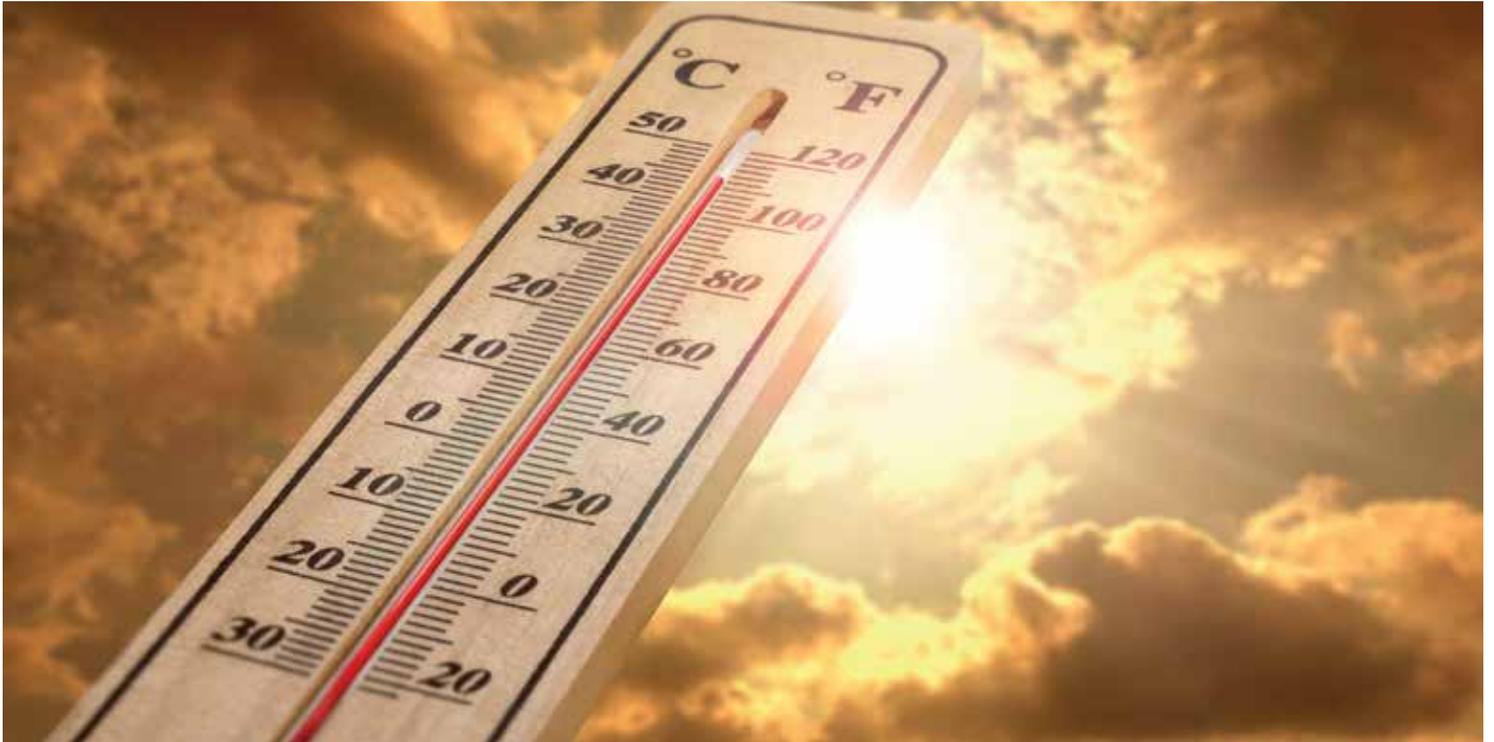
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AVOID HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS



By Christie Meresse

With many heat advisories sweeping the country these summer months, it is vitally important to ensure that yourself and your employees take the proper precautions to remain safe while working outdoors or in areas with high heat and little air circulation, such as attics or crawl spaces.

Each year over 600 people succumb to extreme heat-related illnesses. Heat-related illness is a condition resulting from exposure to extreme heat where the body becomes unable to properly cool, resulting in a rapid rise in body temperature. Prompt treatment of heat-related illnesses with aggressive fluid replacement and cooling of core body temperature is critical to reducing illness and preventing death.

Prolonged exposure to unsafe ambient temperatures can directly or indirectly cause some illnesses and can exacerbate many pre-existing conditions, such as heart and respiratory disease. Heat exhaustion and heat stroke are two of the most serious heat-related illnesses. Symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- Muscle cramping
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness or fainting

If heat exhaustion is left untreated, additional exposure to heat may cause the illness to progress to heat stroke. Heat stroke is a serious, life-threatening condition that can damage the brain or other vital organs. Heat stroke symptoms include:

- A body temperature greater than 103°F (39.4°C)
- Red, hot, and dry skin (no sweating)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Throbbing headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea

- Confusion
- Unconsciousness

Workers new to outdoor jobs are generally most at risk for heat-related illnesses with many incidents' occurring during an employee's first four days at work. It is important to gradually increase an employee's workload or allow more

frequent breaks to help new workers, and those returning to a job after time away, build up a tolerance for hot conditions.

Additionally, employees should be taught how to identify signs of heat stress and quickly take steps to mitigate further heat exposure. Below are some tips for working in conditions in which prolonged periods of heat exposure are required.

ENSURE SAFE WORKING CONDITIONS

Be aware of the heat index anticipated for the day and alert employees as needed.

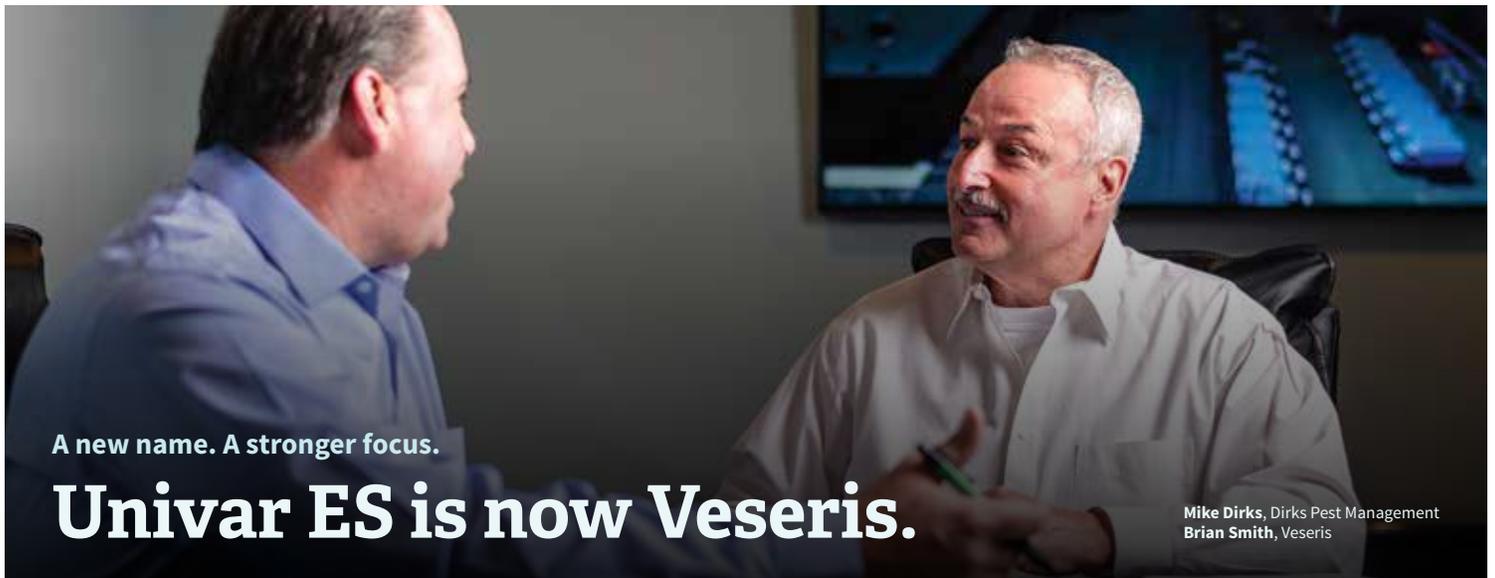
Train employees on heat-related illness signs and symptoms

Drink plenty of cool drinking water throughout the day.

Establish work/rest schedule. Rest should be taken in an air-conditioned space or cool, shaded area.

Schedule jobs for earlier in the day or at a time during the day when the heat index is lower.

Wear appropriate clothing and utilize personal cooling measures such as water-dampened clothing or cooling vests.



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NWCOA RODENT COURSE REVIEW



By Brent Scott

NWCOA has put together one of the best training programs I have had the pleasure to be a part of. Before jumping into Wildlife Control head first, I spent nearly 20 years in the automotive industry. I have had countless hours of technical training, and have found NWCOA's training to be second to none. Without it, my business would not be where it is today. I have been lucky enough to be a part of two Expos and six training courses since I joined the organization two years ago. I have made countless friends, turned competitors into collaborators, met all of the best vendors, and have a sense of privilege to be part of such a great community.

To speak towards the training I've received I would like to mention the Bat Standards and Structural Bat Management event held at AAC headquarters this past year. The hospitality was genuine and the AAC facility is amazing! I highly recommend attending a course that will give you some exposure to your vendors, such as AAC, Tomahawk, or Wildlife Control Supplies. Experiences like these carry the training events to the next level by helping you build relationships with these key players in your business.

One of the most recent courses I attended was the new NWCOA Rodent Standards course. This course has revealed a host of opportunities for my business. Based on what I learned, I now integrate several easy install

value-added upsells into my basic home inspection, which are truly valuable to my clients. I can now comfortably talk to clients with rodent issues and know that I am providing them with accurate information that makes them feel more comfortable, and myself more confident. As a wildlife professional, this course has helped me to find the intersection between general pest control and wildlife control and how that fits into my business. Rodent exclusion and trapping is a genuine money-maker and this NWCOA course has shown me how to develop a solid action plan and incorporate rodent control into my business model with quite a bit more room for growth.

You are the only one that can make your business the best it can be, but NWCOA can give you the tools to make it happen!



Spring FEVER!

By Chris Hunnicutt

As a warm weather lover, I can't tell you how excited I am to see signs of spring! Spring brings a lot of different things to us here in the South. Pollen comes to mind, allergies also- but I really love the warmer weather which tends to bring us outside more. From home projects, grilling, to just sitting and enjoying the green grass and blooming flowers, spring usually brings new things. This particular Spring has really thrown a curveball our way though with the COVID-19 Pandemic. Nevertheless, wildlife and pest professionals are considered essential services in all jurisdictions (at the time of writing) which are under full lockdown. Animals living in close proximity to humans are a known problem. Many animals and their waste can vector diseases, parasites, bacteria, and cause other health related issues. Those of us in this business should view it as an honor and privilege to be viewed as "essential". This is such a unique and unprecedented time in America, that I find it hard to believe that each spring we aren't reminded of this very strange time in history. I hope the virus itself is a distant memory in the near future and we can get back to the traditional

Sealing up a home to prevent animal entry in the future is the most humane thing you could do. If you can keep squirrels, owls, and ducks (just to name a few) from falling down an uncapped chimney in the future, isn't that beneficial to both the animal and client?

thinking that spring means birthing season. Many different animals give birth to their young in the springtime. As newborn animals turn into the equivalent of rowdy toddlers, and then trouble making teenagers, many people will become more aware that they have a wildlife problem. It's not that the problem didn't exist prior, but now, simply because of the increased activity and noise, many people become more aware. If your clients experience a problem

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with any type of animal, be it in their attic, crawlspace/ basement, or otherwise causing health and safety concerns to their property, they will hopefully reach out to a wildlife professional as yourself. Depending on the economic implications of the current pandemic, they may opt to take your solution offering, or maybe they try to DIY. Listed below are the top 5 reasons why your clients consider hiring a professional to help with their wildlife problems:

1) Legalities.

The laws may be different depending on where you are located, but many animals are protected or regulated in regards to trapping or transporting them. While fines may or may not be enforced on homeowners wishing to DIY, perhaps the client finds the law with a quick google search and opts to call a professional. With that said, you need to make sure that you have all of your legalities in place. These laws can and do vary from state to state, and even town to town in some cases, so make sure you know and follow the laws in your service area.

2) Safety.

Animals are dirty. Besides DIRT, as mentioned above, animals bring with them a number health concerns. Animals are directly responsible for numerous illnesses, including the “regular” flu, that humans pass around every year. These are known as zoonotic diseases. Any good wildlife professional should be educated on zoonotics and other health concerns in regards to handling animals or entering contaminated spaces. As a well educated professional, you should ensure that you and your client’s health comes first. You should always take efforts so as to not cross contaminate living spaces and make the client’s problem, in fact, worse. In addition to illnesses, a bite or scratch could prove to be detrimental to one’s health also. You, the professional should have proper equipment to safely handle animals and limit the risk of danger to yourself..

3) Insurance.

What happens if things go wrong during the job? Like, REALLY wrong? A well educated wildlife professional may know how to reduce the risk that something should go seriously wrong. In the instance that something should happen though, proper insurance should be there to back you up.

4) Education.

A good professional in ANY profession should always be seeking to improve themselves and become better at their skill. In the Wildlife and Pest Control Industry, there are ample training opportunities available to learn about the latest tools and techniques, as well as network with other professionals that know a few things you may not. If you think that you know it all, well... you’ve already lost.

5) Humanity.

That’s right, I think most of us do love animals. Sealing up a home to prevent animal entry in the future is the most humane thing you could do. Think about it; If you can keep squirrels, owls, and ducks (just to name a few) from falling down an uncapped chimney in the future, isn’t that beneficial to both the animal and client? In the event that animals do have to be removed, as a wildlife professional, you should know enough about basic biology to properly assess the animals’ status. Knowing and reading certain cues can prevent newly birthed young from being abandoned in an attic, ensuring you’ve completed the job successfully. Having tools like thermal and inspection cameras can assist you in the event of a search and recovery plus set you apart from your competition.

NWCOA offers numerous training opportunities, and the options are ever expanding. Visit www.nwcoa.com/events to see upcoming training opportunities. In addition to training, NWCOA also has vendor relationships to offer discounts on insurance and other needed supplies. Be well, and Happy Spring!



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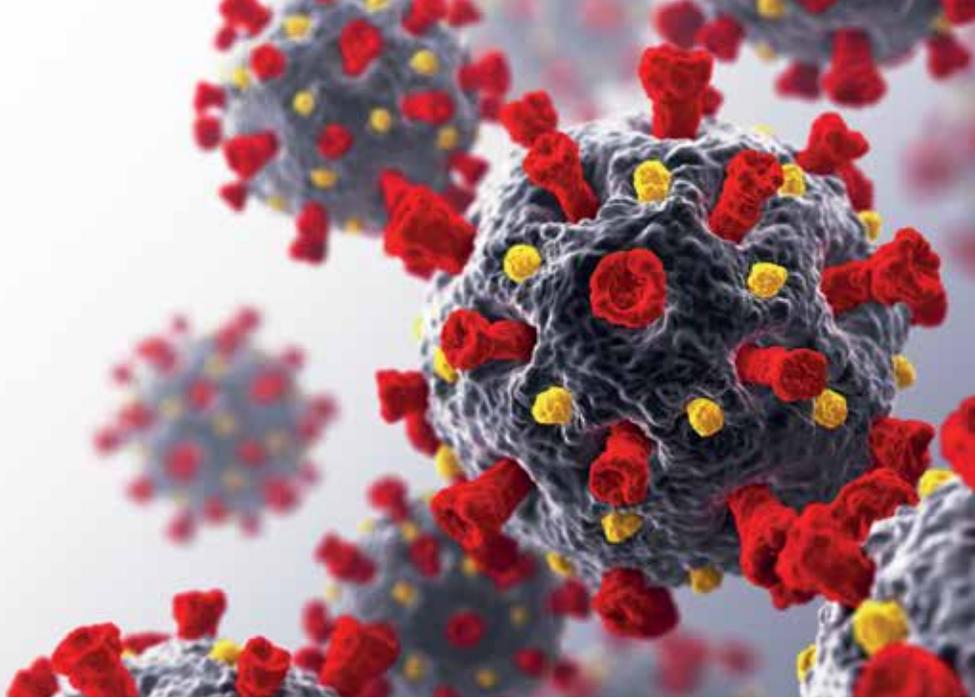


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**NEW OPTIONS
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COVID-19 UPDATES



This is a strange and unprecedented time for all Americans. The COVID-19 pandemic spread quickly across the United States in February and March, forcing cities to impose stay-at-home and shelter-in-place orders. As we prepare for a phased re-opening of businesses and re-entry of buildings over the coming months, there are resources available to ensure you, your staff and your family remain safe during this time. The below information provides general suggestions on best practices for planning and preparing offices for the safe return of employees, visitors, contractors and others who may be interacting with or visiting your business and identifies questions and issues you should consider. Safety procedures and protocols should be implemented, updated, or enhanced as we prepare to live and work in post-COVID-19. Additional information and links regarding industry specific protocols for the safe return of employees can be found on our website at www.nwcoa.com.

Start Now. Develop a plan for business re-opening or building re-entry before stay-at-home orders and other restrictions are lifted. Update your plan regularly as situations change and new information becomes available.

Assemble Your Team. Develop a planning team which may include the business owner, building/office manager, technicians, vendors, or service providers.

Communicate with Employees, Vendors and Customers. Share your re-entry plan with employees, vendors and

customers and ask them to share their plans, questions, or/and concerns with you.

Assess New Risks. Meet with your insurance broker to update coverage and assess new liability risks as a result of COVID-19.

Consult with Legal Counsel. Review all planned new procedures and protocols, staffing and operational changes, and other potential legal exposures. Be sure you understand guidance from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), and other employment-related laws and orders.

Stay Informed! Stay abreast of federal, state, and local mandates and recommendations, as well as guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and other regulatory and public health agencies.

Information provided by the International Building Owners and Managers Association, guidance on "Getting Back to Work: Preparing Buildings for Re-Entry Amid COVID-19".

HOW NWCOA CAN CHANGE YOUR BUSINESS

PART ONE

By *Schlomo Simenowitz*

My name is Shlomo Simenowitz and I am the wildlife division manager at On The Fly Pest Solutions. On The Fly was established five years ago by long time pest control business owner, Dan Brody. Dan has been an owner-operator for over 15 years in the pest industry. When I joined the company 2 years ago, Dan was excited to eventually train me in as a wildlife tech. Growing up on a farm in rural Vermont kindled my passion for wildlife; and any chance to work with animals was an exciting challenge. The job certainly fit the bill. The first year I initially worked in pest control as we waited for the occasional “noises in the attic” call to come in. When it did, I would show up to the home with a can of foam, some hardware cloth, an old Dewalt 18V, a bucket of miscellaneous fasteners, and some Havaharts, armed and confident that I could take on any four-legged intruder. Oh, how much I did not yet know.

For the first year, I honed my skills. I came up with techniques to deal with animals, learned how to use the basic tools, and I even experimented with some new traps I purchased from WCS. By the end of the year I felt invincible. When NPMA sent a flyer to our office promoting the NWCOA EXPO, I thought it would be a waste of my time. What more could I possibly learn? I naively felt I had seen and done it all. Dan eventually decided I should attend, if anything, as a morale booster and a nice vacation with my wife in Myrtle Beach. Spoiler alert, that conference changed our business. One year later and I oversee a wildlife division of 4 trucks with a dedicated office staff. Safe to say I think we made the right decision.

The Expo opened my eyes to the expansiveness of the wildlife industry. I was able to meet professionals from around the country who, unlike naive me, have seen and done it all. I networked with amazing people and created strong connections with some of the industry’s leading vendors. I sat in on many eye-opening presentations that illustrated the vastness of the industry. Suddenly I realized just how much there was to learn and improve.



I brought on my first technician shortly after. Our sales went up and our quality of work was at an all time high. We were finally putting to use the tools and knowledge that I had acquired at the conference, but there was still something missing. With an influx of work, more questions and problems came up. I owe a huge thank you to Gregg Shumaker for encouraging me on the NWCOA online forum to pursue some of the formal certification classes that NWCOA offers. Gregg puts his money where his mouth is and was extremely accommodating at finding courses that fit my schedule. He made me feel very welcome in the wildlife community. I have since received the following four certifications:

- Bat Standards in Connecticut was an excellent class that prepared me to tackle the bat jobs that used to overwhelm me. The course balanced conservation and control with finesse.
- WCOTC in New Jersey made a perfect introduction to the world of zoonotics, biology of common species, and exclusion, just to name a few topics. Listening to Charles Holt share his secrets to flawless exclusion without a shred of ego confirmed that the NWCOA family is all about sharing and giving. Gregg’s humorous teaching style could not hide his vast knowledge of wildlife biology.

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- The Bird Standards and Rodent Standards courses in Vegas continued to impress. Although it was the first time the rodent course was taught, the presentation was flawless. The presenters delved into each section with unparalleled detail. This course will certainly have a lasting impact on our company.

My first year in the industry I was able to bring in \$80,000 of wildlife work. The year following the Myrtle Beach expo we quadrupled our profits to \$350,000! This year we continue to grow with a goal to hit a half a million in wildlife revenue alone! We owe a large portion of this success to the truly dedicated and welcoming NWCOA family. Education and professionalism pave the way to success and NWCOA embodies that. For anybody contemplating joining, training, or attending an expo, I encourage you to do all of the above.



It will be one of the greatest investments of your career. Wishing everyone much success in their wild ventures and never stop growing!



WHY ARE BIRDS SUCH A UNIQUE PEST?



By Rolie Calzadilla, CWCP
Board Member

Birds are amazing creatures that mainly become a pest when they try to make our homes or places of business theirs. Well, truth is when they try to make it their toilet, but more on that later. The real challenge when dealing with birds as a pest is that most people don't consider birds a pest. Their natural reaction is to protect birds, to love birds, they're a pet. As a professional, we cannot coddle this reaction. We must educate our clients to the risks associated with pest birds, their nests and their droppings and we must do it with finesse. Unfortunately, this reaction allows a pest bird introduction to grow into an infestation before the well-intentioned client realizes the severity of their situation.

#2 is #1: Everybody's got a motto. This one is mine! There are several reasons why birds are such a unique pest, but by far the biggest one is their droppings and their behavior when it comes to dropping their droppings. According to the CDC, rats are known to carry and transmit 35 diseases, while birds can carry and transmit over 60. Did you know that a one-pound pigeon can "drop" twenty-five pounds of waste per year? Given their prolific nature, one pair can quickly turn into 20 and that many pigeons in an attic will accumulate several hundred pounds of disease-ridden waste which might cause a ceiling to collapse.

Another unique attribute to birds as a pest is their mobility. A bird can have breakfast at a local waste transfer station or landfill several miles away and be back to your client's location in time for lunch. Oh, and carrying diseases all over its feathers, feet and yes...droppings. What other pest has that kind of mobility?

Everyone knows that calling someone a "bird brain" is a derogatory way of saying they're not "that smart." Well, I'm here to tell you not to let the small size of their brain fool you. Since self-powered flight requires a lot of energy, everything about a bird's biology is meant to conserve weight and this includes their brain. Birds pack a lot of ability into such a small space and are a lot smarter than most inexperienced WCO's give them credit for.

In the spirit of biological efficiency, birds even combine organs. Instead of having separate openings for solid waste and liquid waste, they have one opening called the cloaca. In Spanish, cloaca is the word for sewer... coincidence? I think not! Technically, birds neither poo or pee, they "drop." Their dropping is a combination of solid and liquid waste and since they can't afford to carry a lot of heavy water, they are very high in uric acid.

Most birds are protected and special care must be taken when dealing with them as a pest. Pigeons, house sparrows, and starlings are not federally protected but may be locally protected. A state or municipality can not remove Federal protection, but it can add it. In other words, a state can not say that seagulls are not protected in their state. But they can say that pigeons are... Make sure you have a good working relationship with your local wildlife department bird biologist. Better to come to them with a question before they come to you with a problem.

So, the next time a client wants you to resolve their pest bird challenge, make sure you do your homework. It's not as easy as you may think. NWCOA has an excellent bird training program and we are planning to expand it soon. Stay tuned.

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LOADING OUT A 'GO BAG'

By Joe Taylor, Paw Control Wildlife Solutions

Step into your customer's home with the right equipment, packed to impress.

Of all of the services that a wildlife operator provides, I think inspections are the most fun. We pull from limited and sometimes inaccurate information from the customer. We use our detective skills to search out the clues that pinpoints the culprit critter. We devise a plan to capture the animal and prevent the next wave from getting in. We save the day.

However, it doesn't always go smoothly. I've been embarrassed by my own stumblings and errors. I remember the time I was moving a groundhog from a positive set to a transfer cage and a momentary slip let the chuck get away... in front of the customer. No ma'am, that wasn't what I was trying to do. But what nags me the most is when I have to make trips back to my work truck to retrieve items that I should have had with me. It just feels unprofessional and makes me look unprepared.

This led me to assembling and packaging a set of tools and materials that I carry with me when going into a customer's home to complete an inspection. I call it my Go Bag. This carrier has all of the main items that I want with me for sleuthing, and items needed to react to the unexpected. Let's walk through what I pack.

First things first, there are a few items so important that I simply carry them on me. They are always in my pockets and ready to use. I keep two 700 lumen flashlights in one pocket. Bright enough to uncloak dark corners, but not such a high luminosity that the battery life is short. I keep a point-and-shoot camera in another pocket. I know some people prefer a cell phone for taking pictures, but I can't bring myself to dangle that over the edge of a roof. I also always carry a 9-foot tape measure and a good multi tool. I carry other stuff, but I've mentioned are my essentials. Now onto the Go Bag.

First Impressions and Inspection Work

Your customer is going to make a snap judgment when he or she first sees you. Stack the deck in your favor. The bag itself shows that you have come prepared to complete a professional service. I usually have grabbed a couple of business cards from my work truck, but I keep extras in the Go Bag in case I forget. I keep waterproof boot covers in an outside pocket, and encourage you to put them on every time. The company that came before you didn't extend this same courtesy, and your customer most certainly noticed and appreciates your thoughtfulness.

For inspection work, one of the most useful tools is also the most low tech: a small telescoping mirror. One of the reasons I came up with the idea of a Go Bag is that I too often forgot my mirror in the console of my work truck. There goes another wasted trip from inside the house back to my vehicle. Technology continues to improve while becoming more affordable. I carry a video endoscope with a 30-foot line that connects to my tablet by Bluetooth. This length is usually an overkill, but is long enough for a two-story chimney flue. It's nice being able to properly congratulate your customer on the recent arrival of their seven raccoon pups. To round out the electronics list, I hear that a lot of guys carry a FLIR device. That's probably next on the list for my Go Bag. And one last low tech item I keep in my bag is a small note pad. I use this for quick sketches and for making lists. Don't forget to pack a pen as well.

Safety First

I don't have a lengthy list of items I pack in my Go Bag that relate to safety, but each is important. For starters, I carry two types of gloves. A set of medium duty leather gloves allows me to grab rafters and other splintering hazards. They also simply give me a better grip on things. I carry several sets of disposable nitrile gloves. Then I don't mind picking up the dead mouse behind the furnace.

Any good disease control epidemiologist will tell you to

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protect your eyes and lungs. So a set of eye goggles is in order. Confession: I usually wear safety glasses, not goggles. Don't tell Stephen Vantassel. I carry two types of breathing devices. For many applications I like the ease of an N95 dust mask. I break out an N100 respirator when I'm up against the tiniest of particulates or disease agents that might have gone airborne. I also stock a disposable full body Tyvek suit.

For Retrievals

My Go Bag also contains basic gear for retrieving small animals, especially bats. Having these items secured in your bag allows you to quickly respond to an unexpected live animal. One of my favorite grab tools is an auto mechanics grabber, where you push a plunger on one end to control the clutching prongs on the opposite end. I actually carry two types: one that has a flexible shaft but goes back to being straight when you let go, and another that is bendable and retains that shape.

Once you have the small critter in hand (or clutched in your grabber), it needs to be secured. I keep a short stack of approximately 1-quart square plastic storage containers, with lids that are pre-drilled with breathe holes. I stock a couple of sizes of mesh laundry bags: both the larger standard size (I like these for birds and raccoon pups) and the smaller lingerie size (for bats). Both sizes secure with either a zipper or draw string. An obvious note: you can't leave animals inside these mesh bags for a long period of time or they might chew out.

Containing and Packaging a Mess

Most customers appreciate our willingness to go places and address issues that many other professionals avoid. We climb through sweltering attics, bruise our elbows while navigating crawl spaces, and clean up messes while suppressing our gag reflex. This is dirty work. Yet we don't leave a mess behind. I carry a small number of plastic bags in three different sizes. The smallest size is simply a handful of disposable grocery sacks. Perfect for little bits of debris. I also carry 13-gallon kitchen sized and 33-gallon trash can sized garbage bags. A couple of each is all that is needed for a Go Bag. I have full boxes of garbage bags in the work truck, but remember that a Go Bag should be light and efficient.

The other important item for containing a mess is a package of disposable plastic drop cloths. My preference is a 9x12-foot 0.5-mil painter's drop cloth. This size works well when an attic scuttle is located inside a closet, as it can be draped over the top shelf and still cover the floor beneath. I've had more than one customer slow clap when they saw the drop cloth protecting their clothing as insulation and bat droppings rain down.

Presentations

Finally, my Go Bag has gear that will be used to present my findings to my customer. You would never ask a customer to accompany you into their attic, but you do want your customer to have a clear understanding of the problem. I nearly always snap pictures while completing any inspection, and those photos are then transferred to a tablet so the customer gets a larger viewing of the evidence. While I don't store a tablet in my Go Bag, I do throw it in as I'm heading from my work truck to the front door.

I also carry a GoPro in my bag. On several occasions I have mounted the GoPro to my cap, live-streamed the video to my tablet, and then handed the tablet to my customer as I head up the ladder to retrieve raccoon pups. It's hard to describe the expression on a customer's face when they see a mesh bag full of pups snagged with mechanic's grabbers held out in a leather glove by a professional donning leather gloves, a respirator, and safety goggles. And the final clean up requires little more than folding up a single well-placed disposable drop cloth. You came prepared. Go Bag for the win.

Final Thoughts

I talked about all the items that go into my Go Bag, but not the bag itself. I use a gym duffel bag that is roughly 20"x11"x11", with pockets on each side. I probably wouldn't go any larger than this size so that it doesn't become cumbersome.

My packing list works for me. My selection certainly does not cover every situation, and I do still have to make occasional trips to the work truck. However, having a Go Bag helps eliminate the time in the driveway where you clumsily grab all the gear you think you might need, while overlooking the most obvious. We NWCOA members are a professional crowd, and good preparation helps convey that to our customers.

BEHIND THE SCENES

We hope you all are staying safe during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Our team continues to be available for all your member resource and benefit needs during this time. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can be of assistance to you or your staff.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the NWCOA staff has had to make some adjustments to the in-person training schedule. We are looking forward to re-scheduling many of the training events that were planned for March, April and May. In the meantime, our team has been offering online options for several NWCOA training courses including the Wildlife Control Operator Training, Rodent Standards Certified, and Zoonotic Disease. We hope you or your staff were able to take advantage of these trainings and we look forward to hosting additional events in the coming weeks. We are also working on placing the Bat Standards Certified training online and plan to offer that course starting in July. This virtual course will be hosted a few times this year and will allow operators to take the class without having to travel. Now more than ever we believe we are going to see a rise in virtual and online trainings, and we want to bring that convenience to our members whenever possible.

In addition to online classes, NWCOA will be rolling out a webinar series in the coming months. We are taking your suggestions on topics and providing these sessions year-round at no cost to our members. If there are topics that you would like to learn more about and want us to cover, or if you are an expert on a particular topic and would like to share your knowledge with the NWCOA membership, please reach out to us!

Lastly, we would like to thank each of you who attended the 2020 Wildlife Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada this past February. As new NWCOA staff members, we were thankful for the opportunity to meet members in person and play a role in planning this great event. Over 370 wildlife control operators and vendors attended this event, making it the most attended Wildlife Expo yet! We are looking forward to hosting the 2021 Wildlife Expo February 2-5, 2021 in Orlando, Florida. We hope you all are making plans to join us next year.

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MEMBER BENEFITS

REMINDER!

Don't forget to renew your NWCOA Membership!

Renewal invoices will continue to go out through the end of the year. Feel free to give us a call should you have questions about your invoice or your membership.

CHECK YOUR MEMBER TYPE!

As membership renewals continue to go out over the next couple of months, please remember to check your member type prior to renewing your membership with NWCOA. There are four member types for NWCOA each with specific criteria: Professional, Associate, Supporting, Vendor. If you believe you should be a member in a different category, please give us a call or send us an email.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS!

Have ideas for articles or content for the NWCOA News? Have business/company news you'd like to share with us? We'd love to hear from you!

Email us at info@nwcoa.com.

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ATS offers NWCOA members a 10% discount. Log in to the NWCOA website for member discount code. Some restrictions apply. Contact ATS for information, www.animaltrapsandsupplies.com

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NWCOA members have access to exclusive benefits and savings offered by Office Depot for things you buy everyday to operate your business. Visit officediscounts.org/nwcoa/ or the NWCOA website for details and information on registering your account today.

Travel Savings Center

NWCOA is pleased to offer additional benefits to our members through the new Travel Savings Center! Check out our ad on page 19 and visit the Travel Savings Center webpage at savings.travel/nwcoa

WELCOME!

NEW NWCOA MEMBERS

We welcome the following members to NWCOA:

Noble Armstrong
Armstrong's Wildlife Solutions

Eric Arnold
W.C.T. Magazine

Rich Autieri
Big Blue Bug Solutions

Jack Baldwin
Goose Man Jack

Dennis Bloom
Bat Free Batproofing LLC

Matthew Caldwell
Alpha Wildlife

Cody Castle
Advanced Wildlife Management

Mark Constantino
Arkadia- Eco Pest Control

Christian Cook
Cridder Ridder

Devon Davis
Animal Dispatch LLC

Wayne Dentrux
Absolutely American Pest Control

Tasheena Dillingham
Avitrol Corporation

Nicholas Dunbar
Dunbar Pest Control

Robert Dziedzic
Natures Edge Wildlife Control LLC

Adam Geus
Abell Pest Control

Marie Horner
ACE Arrow Exterminators

Travis Jerden
Natural State Wildlife Solutions

Korey Keels
Raven Termite and Pest Control

Ron Krueger
A Plus Wildlife Control LLC

Roland Ledoux
Nuisance Animal Trapping Service

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Tall Timber Wildlife Services LLC

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Justin Malm
QS Lawn & Pest INC

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Mike Martin
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Andrew McIver
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Robert Messersmith
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Christopher O'Banion
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