



Control of wasps at home



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The wasp is one of the most easily recognised and disliked insects in Britain. It builds nests in the ground, in holes in trees and in buildings - particularly in the roof space of houses. Wasps do not normally sting unless provoked. The sting pierces the skin and releases a poison which causes inflammation and pain.

What should I do to discourage wasps?

- Clear away fallen fruit from around the base of trees.
- Make sure that the rubbish bin lid is kept shut and that spillages are cleaned away promptly.
- Rinse out items that are intended for the recycling bin, i.e. bottles and tins.
- Cover sweet smelling foods.
- Do not allow food scraps from the sink waste, to build up over the gully grating.

Will the Council get rid of wasps?

The Council's contractor will destroy wasps nest for any householder on a means tested benefit at no charge to the householder.

Please Note:-

Means Tested Benefits include:

- Housing Benefit / Rent Rebate
- Income Support
- Income Related Council Tax Benefit.

However, this does not include Single Person Discount on Council Tax.

What should I do if I am not on a means tested benefit?

You can either treat the nest yourself, or ask a private contractor to treat the nest but this will be at your own expense. The Contractor employed by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, following a formal tendering process, is CTF, telephone 020 8642 5871. This is for your information only as we cannot recommend a specific company. We do, however, strongly advise you to use an experienced contractor particularly if the nest is in a difficult place to reach.

Safety tips

Never aggravate the wasp, don't put boiling water or petrol on the nest or set fire to it. If the wasps have been aggravated, leave them for two to three days to settle down before attempting to treat. Wasps are active during the heat of the day and come back to the nest in the evening. It is therefore safer and more effective to treat the nest at dusk, when it is getting cooler.

Chemical treatments are available at hardware stockists. Always read the manufacturer's instructions before starting the treatment and follow the safety advice that is given.

Wasps rarely return to their old nest so it is not necessary to take the nest away although if the nest is in a roof space, you may want to get rid of it. The easiest way is to get a large plastic refuse sack and hold it around the nest and gently knock the nest so that it falls into the sack, then seal the bag and throw it away.

What should I do if I find a nest?

Wasps take several days to build a nest. These are normally undetected until they are two to three weeks old. If the wasps are not causing you any problem, they are best left alone. If they are causing difficulties, these can be minimised. Wasps like light and will fly towards it, so if the nest is outside, keep the windows nearest to it closed when there is a light on in the room. Do not aggravate the wasps as they sting when provoked.

What should I do if I am stung?

Remove the sting and then use a proprietary medicine or dilute vinegar to calm the irritation. If you are allergic or get stung in several places at once, or in the mouth, you should seek immediate medical advice.

What about bees?

Bees are protected and treatment is only advised if they are causing a danger. We can however give details of a local beekeeper who will remove the swarm for you. If you are stung by a bee, use bicarbonate of soda instead of vinegar but otherwise follow the advice given for wasp stings.

