



A Guide to American Cockroach (*Periplaneta americana*)



(510) 567-6800 • www.acvcgsd.org

Alameda County Department of Environmental Health

Appearance



The American Cockroach is the largest cockroach in our region, measuring up to two inches in length. They are uniformly reddish-brown except for a lightened coloration of the shield covering the head. This cockroach has wings that cover the entire body but seldom flies.

Behavior

Although they are typically found in sanitary sewer systems, they are occasionally found in basements, crawl spaces, ground floors of buildings and near sump-pumps because of their preference for a warm, humid and dark environment. They can migrate from sewers into buildings from any entry point such as utility pipes, cracks and crevices, sewer connections or under doors. This cockroach glues their



purse-shaped egg cases onto surfaces in protected damp areas. Each egg case may hold 14 eggs that hatch in approximately 45-50 days. Females are capable of living over a year, so infestations can be long-lasting.

Control

Sanitation and exclusion are required for long-term control of the American cockroach. Elimination of food sources, moisture, and harborage are critical for managing their population.

Sanitation: Remove rotting leaves from window wells and gutters, remove fallen fruits, stop water leaks, direct water away from buildings, keep floor drains screened, store firewood away from the house and off the ground, discard old boxes and piles of papers, ventilate moist spaces, use a tight-fitting lid on your trash can and keep it in a dry area.

Exclusion: Caulk all access points into the living area, seal as many exterior cracks and holes as possible on the outside of the home including any piping and gaps at the doors and windows. Secure all vents with a fine mesh screen.

Cockroach bait stations, gel baits, insect growth regulators, dusts and sprays are available. Insecticides will suppress the population of American cockroaches. It is best to consult a professional before applying, as incorrect use can exacerbate an infestation. Please contact us for consultations, inspections, identifications, and recommendations.



1131 Harbor Bay Parkway, Ste. 166
Alameda, CA 94502
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