

# Gila County Division of Health & Emergency Management



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## Cockroach Prevention

Preventive measures are the key to successful control. It is easier to prevent a cockroach invasion than to control an established population. The success of preventive measures requires care, planning, and sustained effort. Cleanliness in the home and elimination of favorable breeding sites lessens the possibility of cockroach infestations and reduces the need for pesticides, but these practices **will not always** prevent invasions from outside sources.

### Inspections

- Cockroaches and their likely habitats should be identified before any treatment.
- Homeowners can detect conditions that will foster the development of infestations through frequent inspections.

### Sanitation

- Proper sanitation, both indoors and outdoors, effectively limits cockroach populations.
- Do not leave unwashed dishes, kitchen utensils, and uncovered food out overnight.
- Clean up all spilled liquids.
- Areas beneath and behind cabinets, furniture, sinks, stoves and refrigerators should be cleaned often, as should cupboards, pantry shelves and storage bins where particles of food frequently accumulate.
- Kitchen waste and excess refuse should be kept in cockroach proof container and disposed of as frequently as possible.
- Dry pet food should be stored in tight containers away from the kitchen and other food.
- If pets are fed indoors, leftover foods should not be allowed to remain in the feeding dish overnight.
- Outdoors, garbage cans, racks, platforms or slabs should be cleaned regularly.

### Exclusion

- Discourage cockroaches from entering the home by sealing any cracks of  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch or more in the foundation and exterior walls.
  - Check the seal or caulking around air conditioning unit, windows, doors, pipes or other openings into the home.
  - Inside the home eliminate all possible hiding areas and food sources.
  - Repair cracks and holes in floors, walls and ceilings.
  - Seal openings around plumbing fixtures, furnace flues, electrical outlets, windowsills and walls, and along baseboards and ceiling moldings.
  - Leaky water faucets and pipes should be repaired.
  - Thresholds on doors should be as tight as possible and cracks in porches and stoops should be sealed.
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### **Eliminate Hiding Places**

- Paper, Cardboard, lumber, firewood and other debris next to the home provide excellent refuge for several cockroach species.
- Keep yard trash and stacks of firewood away from the home or garage to minimize the chance of cockroach invasion.

### **Cockroach Traps**

- There are a number of cockroach traps that are inexpensive, convenient to use, disposable and contain no toxic insecticide.
- Most are about the size of a large matchbox, that are open at both ends and have the inside surface covered with a very sticky adhesive. (The adhesive immobilizes cockroaches that enter the trap.)
- Some may contain a slow release food attractant.
- Trapping alone will not eliminate cockroach populations, but must be used in conjunction with preventive measures for maximum effectiveness.
- Trapping can reveal the hiding places and the severity of infestation, help monitor the effectiveness of control measures, and detect population increases which may require an insecticide treatment.
- Traps should be placed where cockroaches are likely to travel to and from feeding and hiding areas. It is best to place traps against walls and in corners where both ends are unobstructed. Reposition the traps if no cockroaches are caught after two or three nights. The number of traps required for a home or building will vary with the kind of cockroach present and the severity and location of the infestation.

