Pest Controller and Fumigator Fact Sheets



WHAT DOES A PEST CONTROLLER OR FUMIGATOR DO?

Pest controllers and fumigators inspect buildings and outside areas for pest infestation, and spray chemical treatments to kill insects, rodents and other pests. They may also set cage traps to capture and remove animals.

The main duties of a pest controller/fumigator are to:

- Inspect buildings or outdoor areas.
- Decide on a course of action to control or eliminate pests.
- Prepare estimates and bills for clients.
- Prepare and spray chemical mixtures using various equipment.
- Place and set traps.
- Advise clients on how to prevent pest infestation.

What are some health and safety issues for pest controllers and fumigators?

- Irritation or allergic reaction from insect bites or stings, and plants.
- Bites and/or poisonous bites from animals/wildlife.
- West Nile virus from mosquitoes.
- Lyme disease or rocky mountain spotted fever from ticks.
- Rabies.
- Bed bugs.
- Histoplasmosis (from bird droppings).
- Hantavirus (from rodent droppings).
- Risk of disease from exposure to pesticides, herbicides, and other toxic chemicals.
- Proximity to flammable or combustible materials.
- Working in awkward positions or carrying heavy equipment.
- Walking and standing for long periods of time.
- Lifting heavy or awkward objects.
- Repetitive manual operations.
- Exposure to extreme temperatures.
- Working at heights.
- Slips, trips and falls.
- Working with power tools and other vibrating machinery.
- Stress.
- Extended work days.
- Working alone.

What are some preventive measures for pest controllers and fumigators?

- Inspect work area before work begins and identify potential hazards.
- Wear respiratory protection when working with pesticides or other toxic chemicals.
- Protect hands and skin with chemical-resistant gloves, aprons and other apparel.
- Wear safety shoes with non-skid soles.
- Learn safe lifting techniques.
- Shower and change your clothes at the end of every shift. Do not take work-soiled clothing home.

What are some good general safe work practices?

- Practice safety procedures for:
    - Working with chemicals
    - Proper selection, use, maintenance and storage of personal protective equipment
    - Fall protection
    - Correct spraying methods and use of equipment
    - Working with flammable and combustible materials
    - Power tools
    - Ladders, platforms and scaffolds
    - Lifting
    - Ultraviolet radiation and sunlight exposure
    - Working in the cold
    - Working in the heat
    - Follow company safety rules.
- Learn about chemical hazards, WHMIS and MSDSs.
- Know how to report a hazard.
- Follow good housekeeping procedures.

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