



# Pesticide Control Office

## Spring Cleaning for Your Yard

### How a Few Simple Steps Can Help Keep Pests Away this Spring

When we think of spring cleaning, we don't always extend our efforts to the yard. However, there are some simple steps that you can take on the exterior of a structure that will help to reduce the likelihood of pests invading this spring.

#### Rake Up Leaves

Removing the old leaves that have collected against the foundation of your home, under the deck, and from low points will eliminate potential hiding and feeding places for many occasional invaders like millipedes, ants, sow bugs and beetles. Leaves trap moisture and provide food for pests that feed on them as they decay.



#### Remove Standing Water

Improper drainage around the foundation of a structure can result in standing water which can be attractive to many different pests. Mosquitoes are especially troublesome in locations where manmade pools of standing water are present. Some species, like the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito will lay its eggs in stagnant water like bird baths, clogged gutters, unused flower pots and other containers in the backyard. The larvae develop rapidly and breeding populations of these daytime biting mosquitoes can become established on a property very quickly.

#### Trim Weeds

Weeds around the foundation of the house can provide access to the building, hide evidence of infestation and trap moisture. Weeds against the foundation need to be trimmed to eliminate this pest friendly environment. Vegetation next to the foundation can also make it difficult for termite inspectors to get a close look at the foundation wall, which is primary access point for termites to enter a structure.



#### Clean Up Debris

It might go without saying, but any debris that is lying in the yard can become a harborage area for insects like ants, crickets, sow bugs, and even rodents. Rats will often dig burrows beneath piles of debris because it provides shelter from predators. Firewood and brush piles should be relocated as far from the structure as practical. Even termites can be attracted to wood scraps and firewood that is stored next to a structure.

For additional information on Integrated Pest Management and proper pesticide usage, please contact:  
Department of Environmental Quality, Pesticide Control Office

Phone - (520) 562-2234

Email - [GRIC.Pesticide.Office@GRIC.nsn.us](mailto:GRIC.Pesticide.Office@GRIC.nsn.us) Website - [www.gricdeq.org](http://www.gricdeq.org)