



Code of Best Practice

# Precautionary Treatment of Invertebrates

Version 2. August 2020.

## British Pest Control Association Code of Best Practice for Precautionary Treatment of Invertebrates



A BPCA Code of Best Practice is a set of written rules which explains how people working in our industry should behave in a particular situation. It encompasses relevant legislation but is not the law in itself.

However, were a member to act outside of the norms outlined in the COBP, they may be subject to disciplinary action or be in breach of legislation. Members must abide by Codes of Best Practice

in their day-to-day work. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Association.

**Version 2. August 2020.**

[bPCA.org.uk/codes](https://bPCA.org.uk/codes)  
Driving excellence in pest management

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# British Pest Control Association

## Code of Best Practice for Precautionary Treatment of Invertebrates

BPCA members may be asked to treat biting invertebrates in locations such as domestic properties and offices when there is no evidence of infestation.

In circumstances where invertebrates are not present, treatment with an insecticide can be potentially viewed as misuse - this may result in a breach of legislation.



Legislation such as COSHH instructs the operator to consider if the use of a hazardous substance is actually required.

This Code of Best Practice is designed to remind members of their responsibilities and act as a supporting document for members who feel pressured by customers to apply insecticides when they are not required.

### Legislation

#### Is treatment with an insecticide required?

Legislation such as the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) instructs the operator to consider if the use of a hazardous substance is actually required.

In pest management terms, this means establishing if the pest can

**“In circumstances where there is no apparent evidence of an invertebrate infestation, treatment with an insecticide could be viewed as misuse and may result in a breach of legislation.”**

be controlled by other means, such as good hygiene practice or sealing of access points.

If the answer is yes then insecticide is not an appropriate treatment option.

**Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) Pest Control Procedures Manual - Bed Bugs** states:

- “It is a legal requirement under the **Protection of Animals Act 1911** (as amended) that the presence of pests is identified before a pesticide treatment can take place. Therefore, the initial risk assessment conducted as part of any pest control treatment must identify the invertebrate pest species (involving an appropriately qualified entomologist if necessary).”

**Control of Pesticide Regulations 1986 and EU Biocidal Products Regulations 2012:**

- COPR and BPR are pieces of legislation that make the labels of our pesticide products a legal requirement to follow.
- Pest controllers must continue to consult the label prior to every treatment to ensure they are aware of any changing requirements.
- **Article 69** of **EU BPR** states that “Authorisation holders shall ensure that biocidal products are...labelled in accordance with the approved summary of biocidal product characteristics.”

### Key principles and considerations

Pest management professionals should consider the following:

**1**

#### Is there evidence of invertebrate activity?

Before an insecticide is applied, the pest management professional must be confident that a pest species is present.

The use of insecticide without just cause is illegal and can result in unnecessary contamination of property, foodstuffs and non-target species.

If the evidence is not apparent after inspection then the pest control operator must use monitoring equipment to determine the nature, level and extent of infestation.

If the customer is convinced that there are invertebrates but the pest control operator cannot find any, then insecticide use must not commence.

**2**

#### Appropriate assessment

Before any insecticide application occurs, the pest control technician must be happy that the appropriate COSHH, risk and environmental assessments have been completed.

If the technician does not agree with the assessment, or does

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not feel competent to carry out the relevant assessment, then guidance will be required from another company representative.

Assessment should not just consider the application of the pesticide, but also the transportation and mixing of the product whilst on the customer's site.

3

### Use the appropriate insecticide

It is the responsibility of the pest management operator to consult the label of their chosen insecticide, to determine if it is appropriate for the pest and the location of the treatment.

Always adhere to the label and use the insecticide with the manufacturers recommended applicator.

4

### Treatment process

Pest management professionals should ensure that non-target species and members

of the public are excluded from the treatment area.

If a liquid insecticide is being applied then the exclusion needs to remain in place until it is completely dry.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should be worn as per the product label or risk assessment.

Application equipment should be suitable and sufficient, with maintenance records available to support this.

5

### Treatment records

Reputable companies leave records of the treatments that have been carried out.

It is essential that if you apply an insecticide, you detail on the report key pieces of information.

This includes information such as the treatment location, the active ingredient and trade name, quantities of pesticide used, and any exclusion recommendations. Competent contractors will also

offer advice on when they will return if required, and on pest prevention measures to help control further infestation issues.



The British Pest Control Association requires that its members meet a range of criteria including strict abidance to all of our Codes of Best Practice. You can search for our members on the BPCA website [bpca.org.uk/find](http://bpca.org.uk/find)

BPCA makes strenuous efforts to ensure the accuracy and current relevance of its publications, which are intended for use by technically competent persons.

However, this does not remove the need for technical and managerial judgement in practical situations.

Nor do they confer any immunity or exemption from relevant legal requirements, including by-laws.

If you suspect something in this document is incorrect or out of date, please report it to [technical@bpca.org.uk](mailto:technical@bpca.org.uk).

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### Further reading and related legislation

- Control of Pesticide Regulations 1986
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002
- EU Biocidal Product Regulations (528/2012)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002.