

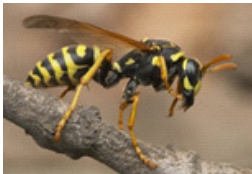


Topic: Working near Bee/Wasp Nests

Staff may encounter bee/wasp nests while performing a variety of common tasks such as:

- Grass cutting
- Working near ditches/swales
- Working near buildings
- Installing fence posts

Identification:



Wasps have a slender body with narrow waist, slender, cylindrical legs, and appear smooth-skinned and shiny. Yellowjackets, Boldfaced

Hornets, and Paper wasps are

the most common types of wasps encountered by people.

Bees are robust-bodied and very hairy compared with wasps. Their hind legs are flattened for collecting and transporting pollen.



Does it really matter which insect you are stung by?

Possibly not. Reactions to stings from either insect can range from minor swelling and discomfort to severe allergic reactions that can be fatal if not treated.

Tips for avoiding stings:

Scan work sites for nests prior to commencing tasks in areas where bee/wasp nests may be present. If a nest is found, notify all members of the crew promptly to identify the potential risk.

Elimination of the task is the most effective in avoiding risk. If the task is necessary, consider rescheduling in late summer or fall when the insects become dormant.



When possible, nests should be left undisturbed. Both bees and wasps are beneficial insects that form a vital part of our ecosystem.

- Bees and wasps rarely sting unless aggravated
- Avoid perfume, cologne or scented soaps if you are working in an area where there may be bees or wasps
- Bees and wasps are attracted to brightly coloured, patterned clothing
- Insect repellent doesn't work on bees or wasps and may even attract them
- Stay calm if a bee or wasp lands on you. It will eventually leave on its own accord. If you don't want to wait, slowly and gently brush it away.

If you are stung:

If you are stung on the mouth or nose, even if you are not allergic, get immediate medical help as swelling could block airways. Gently scrape out the stinger using a blunt object such as a credit card. Remove the stinger as soon as possible.

To help prevent infection, wash the area with soap and water and keep clean until completely healed. Ice packs can be used to reduce swelling. Commercially available antihistamines may help reduce redness, itchiness and swelling.



How to recognize a serious allergic reaction:

These symptoms could indicate a serious allergic reaction to insect stings. Seek first aid or emergency care if any of the following are presenting after being stung:

- Tightness of the throat or upper airway
- Breathing difficulty
- Weakness
- Numbness and tingling
- Hives
- Anxiety
- Abdominal cramps, diarrhea or vomiting
- Signs of shock