

10 THINGS YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT PEST CONTROL (BUT NEVER ACTUALLY THOUGHT TO ASK)

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

AN INTRODUCTION TO PEST MANAGEMENT.

Last year I decided to do an impromptu straw poll. I asked my friends and relatives, who in the largest part have nothing to do with pest control in any form, what they wanted to know about the industry.

I wanted to know what people outside our industry actually wanted to know about pest control, and what are their concerns? Following are those questions and the answers I felt most appropriate to give at the time, and then following that a discussion with a total laymen around the answer I gave then, and the one I would give today.

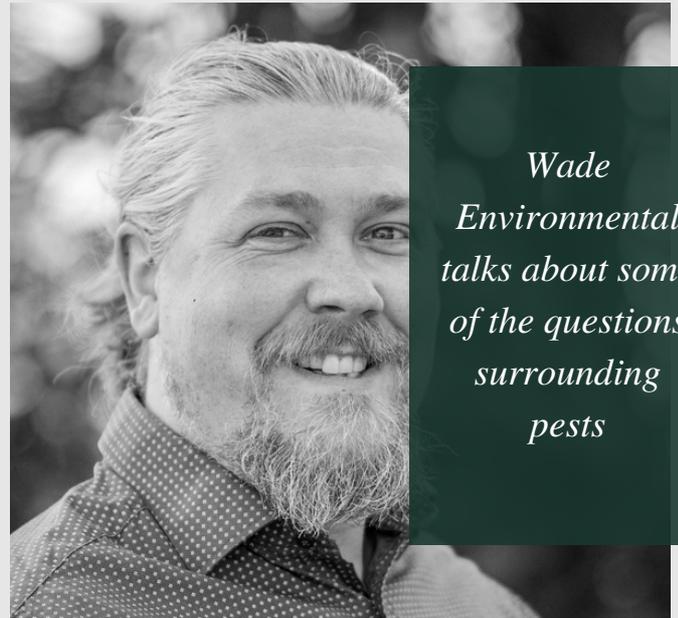
In the following posts will be the answers as they stood a year ago, with the revisions and discussions available to listen to through the podcasts on my website.

First however, I want to start with a phrase which came up several times in my conversations with people doing the research for this article,

***“I don’t mind pest control;
it is a necessary evil”***

Although I understand that there is not an intentionally negative connotation within this remark, it does show there is an inherent and underlying bias towards this industry, a necessary evil.

The fact that most people can so cavalierly associate this industry with the word ‘evil’ is frankly quite disheartening.



As you read these articles I would like you all to try and keep the following in mind, it is the personal ethos that I have tried to hold to and have tried even harder to impart at every level of engagement within the industry with sincerity and passion.

“This industry in which we work is not about the wholesale death and destruction of animals we consider to be pests or that could be pests. Instead if we are to imagine the ecology of our environment to be akin to a rose bush, then pest management is the process of dead heading the wayward and diseased limbs of that bush. It is the preservation of the whole by careful management of rogue elements, it is rather counter intuitively the practise of conservation through controlled intervention.”

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SECTION 2 - AT WHAT POINT TO CALL A PROFESSIONAL?

The choice to call a professional pest management operator (PMO) is always an option from the very start.

Generally, there will be no job too small to be dismissed out of hand and there may be more options available to a professional than you first anticipate.

There are of course many things you can do for yourself prior to the need to engage in the services of a pest controller and, although there is a plethora of chemicals available to you as a member of the general public, the largest impacts you can make to the success of any treatment are in fact nothing to do with the use of chemicals.

The first and more effective way to reduce the pest pressure on your properties is to manipulate the environment to make it less conducive to the survival and proliferation of pests.

All pests will need three things in order to survive & thrive; **food, water** and **harbourage**.

We as humans are rare in our insistence for living in environmentally harsh conditions simply for the view.

Most animals on the planet will electively look to set up home somewhere that affords them easy access to food and water, whilst giving them a suitable and safe location to sleep and raise their young.

With that in mind one of the largest impacts you can have on any population of pest animals is to manipulate the environmental to remove the presence of these factors.



- Clearing up spilt food material e.g. scattered seed from bird feeders.
- Fixing leaking taps or emptying buckets and tyres of water.
- Clearing waste and rubbish, or not leaving bonfire piles to build up.

These are all examples of some of the many things you can do to reduce the likelihood that pests (in this case rodents) will become established on your property.

There is no guarantee however that environmental manipulation alone will be sufficient to remove an establish pest population, and some environments by their nature will never be conducive to manipulation of any form. The best point at which to engage in a pest manager therefore then is after you have engaged in a program of housekeeping and environmental manipulation. Not only will this have potentially reduced the number of pests, but it will give the pest controller a clear environment within which to work and may greatly increase the effectiveness of their treatments, potentially reducing the amount of time taken to achieve control.