Insect Safety

As summer approaches, you may notice an increase in the number of insects buzzing around outside. People with an allergy to stinging insects will want to take extra precautions this time of year. Up to 5 percent of Americans are at risk for a severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction from insect stings.

This may be fatal if not treated immediately, Symptoms of anaphylaxis to watch for include: itching and hives over large areas of the body, separate or away from the site of the sting, swelling in the throat or tongue, difficulty breathing, dizziness, stomach cramps, nausea, and diarrhea. If you suffer from a stinging insect allergy, you should take extra precautions to avoid being stung.

Unfortunately, most people are not aware they are allergic to insect stings or bites until after experiencing a reaction. An allergic reaction occurs when the immune system overreacts to the insect venom.

Insects:

Ants

- Ants (fire ants) are aggressive when stinging and inject venom, which causes a burning sensation.
- Ant mounds can be commonly found under logs, rocks, and under bark in trees.

Bees/Wasps/Hornets

- These insects are most abundant in the warmer months.
- Nests and hives may be found in trees, under roof eaves, and behind siding.

Spiders

- There are many types of spiders that can bite humans, some are extremely poisonous.
- The black widow and brown recluse spiders both have very poisonous venom – a bite can be fatal.

Ticks

- Ticks are parasites that bite to suck blood, and a bite can spread many types of diseases.
- These insects can found in areas of high grass, brush, and around woodpiles.

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Sting & Bite Prevention Tips:

Ants

- Do not disturb or stand on/near ant mounds.
- Be careful when lifting items off the ground, as they may be covered in ants.
- Always be aware of your work area.

Bees/Wasps/Hornets

- Wear light colored clothing.
- Avoid perfumes and colognes.
- Wear clothing to cover as much of the body as possible.
- Remain calm if a single insect is flying around you. Do not swat at it.

Spiders

- Wear clothing to cover as much of the body (arms/legs especially) as possible.
- Do not disturb spiders if possible.
- Inspect outdoor items for spiders before lifting or moving them.

Ticks

- Avoid wooded and bushy areas with high grass if possible.
- Wear clothing to cover as much of the body (lower body especially) as possible.
- Wear a hat. Inspect clothing/body/hair after work.

What to do if you are stung or bit:

Ants

- Rub ants off briskly, as they will attach to the skin with their jaws.
- Seek medical attention if adverse health effects arise such as severe chest pain, nausea, severe sweating, swelling, or slurred speech.

Bees/Wasps/Hornets

- Wash the site with soap & water.
- Remove the stinger if possible by scraping fingernail over the area.
- Never squeeze the stinger or use tweezers.
- Apply ice to reduce swelling.
- Get medical attention immediately if you are allergic.

Spiders

- Clean the area with soap & water.
- Apply a cool compress to reduce swelling.
- If you suspect the spider is poisonous, elevate the bite area. and seek immediate medical attention.

Ticks

- Remove tick by using tweezers and grasp the tick's head as close to the surface of your skin as possible.
- Pull backwards gently. Do not jerk.
- After removing tick, wash area with soap & water.
- Seek medical attention if you feel it is necessary.
- Human reactions to stings and bites vary widely from those who are unaffected to others who have life threatening allergic reactions and need immediate medical attention.

Keep safety in mind...It will save your behind!!

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Supervisor:	Subject:
Location:	Date:
Conducted By:	Trainer Signature:

Name (print clearly)	Signature	Comments / Safety Concerns / Training Requests