



Minnesota Pest
Management
Association

MPMA

January 2023

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Announcements:

Winter Safety Tips

Stay Warm

- Wear multiple light layers to create adjustable warmth that doesn't inhibit motion.
- Wear a cap and ear coverage.
- Wear warm gloves that don't get in the way of doing your job.
- Wear warm socks rated for the temperatures you work in. Wool is a great choice.
- Body movement generates heat, so be sure to move around!

Stay Dry

- Wear an outer layer that is moisture-wicking to prevent water entry to lower layers.
- Wear socks and base layers that are moisture wicking in order to dry sweat and keep skin dry.
- Dryness helps with heat retention and temperature regulation.

Stay Fueled

- Eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner.
- Eat carbs. Carbs convert more readily to heat.
- Drink fluids. Your body uses up water trying to stay warm.
- Alternate regular drinking water with warm fluids like tea to keep up your body temp while hydrating.
- Avoid caffeinated beverages.

WAPMA

Episode 3: Owner's Corner

By: Todd Leyse

In this article, I'm going to talk about setting Goals. SMART Goals.

Smart goals, as you can see by the graphic, need to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

For instance, I will add hire (measurable) an administrator to help me with detail work (specific) by April 1, 2023 (time-bound). Is it achievable? Yes. Is it relevant? Yes.

An example of a bad goal is: I'm going to lose weight. Is it achievable and relevant? Sure. Is it specific, measurable, and time-bound? Not at all.

Think of specific, measurable and achievable as opportunities to answer Who and What. Think of relevant as Why. Think of time-bound as When. So what is missing? How.

Once you've set your SMART Goal, the hard part begins. Figuring out the How.

Most people think tactically. What are the steps? In the first example...

- I'll run an ad for Administrator.
- I'll interview them.
- I'll hire them.
- I'll train them.

But if you think about it, there are a lot more steps. Once you get your list of steps together, can you group them into Strategies? For example:

- Prepping To Hire (job description, writing the ad, what your pay range is, the hours you want covered, can they work from home, etc.)
- Hiring Them (running ads, interviewing, job offer letter, pre-employment screening)
- Onboarding (having tools/resources/accounts ready for them, going over culture and employee handbook, training)

Continued on the next page...

January 2023 - April 2023

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These strategies are fairly sequential, but don't have to be. Did you miss any strategies? Did I miss any tactics?

People who like Strategic Planning and think that way don't start with tactics. They start with the Strategies, then fill in the tactics under each strategy, maybe reviewing the Strategies again when done.

For instance: I'm going to lose 10 pounds between January 1 and March 31, 2023.
How? Here are my strategies to essentially lose 10 pounds in 13 weeks:

- Exercise
- Food Selection
- Timing of Meals/Snacks
- Beverage

Like for me, switching to water or diet pop would save me 1000 calories per day, and since a pound is 3500 calories, I could save about 2 pounds per week if I gave up sugar pop! Ok - that's not realistic for me! :)

One last thing. Sometimes you might want to set a Big Hairy Audacious Goal, as Jim Collins writes in his book Good to Great. A BHAG (bee-hag) seems unrealistic to outsiders and maybe even those in the know, but once you set it, figure out how to get there. It might be more achievable than you think. Back to my example: If I said my BHAG was to lose 25 pounds in Q1... seems unrealistic, right? Now I can't just drop sugar pop. I'll need to do other strategies too, and if I have a good plan, and importantly, if I execute said plan, that BHAG would be possible.

5 Questions with Billy Tesh

Billy Tesh, president of Crawlspace Depot answers commonly asked questions about crawlspace insulation.—Originally appearing in PCT

- 1. Am I required to have insulation in my crawlspace?** Insulation requirements such as where it's installed, R-Value, flame-spread rating, spoke developed rating and other factors can vary according to the state and local building codes where the crawlspace is located. In most areas, insulation is required either in the floor joists or on the interior of the exterior foundation walls. The insulating value (R value) is usually determined by International Energy Conservation Code (IECC). Every county in the USA falls into 1 of 8 zones. Each zone has their own requirements for the R-value based on where the insulation is being installed (floor joists, foundation wall, etc.). A helpful resource to locate your county's zone is: <https://reca-codes.com/2018-iecc>.
- 2. Do I need to replace existing insulation?** First, you will need to inspect existing insulation. If the existing insulation is dry, provides full floor joist coverage, is the correct R-value and doesn't have any mold or fungus on it, we recommend leaving it in place. Studies by Advanced Energy showed an average of 15% energy savings on heating and cooling when floor joist insulation is used in an encapsulated crawlspace versus the same insulation in a vented crawlspace; wall insulation provided an 18% energy savings under the same conditions. In other words, pulling out perfectly good insulation to replace it with wall insulation does not provide sufficient benefits in most cases to justify the cost. Of course, if existing insulation is in bad shape, we recommend removing it and insulating foundation walls.

Continued on the next page...

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3. Are all types of insulation the same? All insulations aim to reduce heat loss/gain but there are advantages and trade-offs for each kind. The four most common types are batt, rigid foam board, spray foam and bubble insulation. Batt insulation is the go to when you cannot insulate the foundation wall. However, it's prone to falling down, is a skin irritant and is labor intensive to install. Rigid foam boards like Bora-Foam work great on the foundation walls and are even termite resistant. The most labor friendly option is bubble insulation as its flexibility allows you to form it around walls and piers and it can even be applied to foundation walls. It also has a built-in radiant barrier. Lastly, there is spray foam, an option we wouldn't recommend as it cannot be removed from the wall, requires additional respiratory safety equipment and is hard to install with the required termite inspection gap.

4. I've heard termites like insulation, is that true? Termites do sometimes ingest certain insulation materials (particularly foam) in order to create a passageway up to the wooden structure. There is a required termite inspection gap between the top of the insulation and the seal plate of the foundation wall (usually 3 inches) for this reason. While most foam insulations are susceptible to termite activity, we recommend Bora-Foam because termite resistance is built into it to help prevent tunneling through the product.

5. What is the best way to determine insulation requirements in my area? We always recommend speaking to your local building inspector to verify the requirements for your area. Building codes change periodically and can sometimes be hard to understand. While most places follow similar guidelines, you never want to find out the hard way that time or money was wasted by not installing insulation to code.



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Tales from the Crawlspace

PCOs recount their most memorable crawlspace encounters.

By Brad Harbison—Originally appearing in PCT

As PMPs know, the crawlspace is a critical area of a structure that needs inspected and oftentimes treated. PMPs also know the challenges and unique experiences that come with working in this setting, including wildlife encounters, finding lost items and even getting stuck.

PCT recently held a contest in which pest management professionals from across the country sent in their most memorable crawlspace encounters. Alex Retcofsky, president of PDQ Pest Control, Erie, Pa., won the contest with his crawlspace caper (shared below).

Retcofsky has been involved in the pest control industry since he was a young adult and went to work for PDQ, which was owned by his father. PDQ has always been a family business; in fact, PDQ is the Retcofsky family's abbreviated way of urging people to get tasks done efficiently — “pretty darn quick.” That abbreviation evolved to “professional, dependable, quality” pest control.

Retcofsky took the reins of PDQ in 2021, but he started working for PDQ full time after he graduated high school in 2006. Even before he worked full time, Retcofsky helped his father with small jobs. “I was going on termite jobs, pulling boards out of nails and loading debris into the truck when I was just a teenager,” Retcofsky recalled. “I remember being a little kid — elementary school aged — and going with my dad after baseball practice to go do some nighttime yellowjacket jobs. All I had to do was stand back and hold a flashlight.”

PDQ has established itself within Erie city limits as well as the surrounding cities and counties. Retcofsky said that the rural areas are the company's “bread and butter.” This was his father's idea for how to grow the company from the start.

In addition to Retcofsky's story, tales from runners-up Carlos Lugo, Resolve Pest Management, Bayville, N.J.; and David Knick, Terminix Service, Columbia, S.C., are included in the following pages.

THE MUMMY. Last spring, my crew and I took on a termite job in a home that had a large crawlspace. While quoting the job, I had opened the crawlspace for inspection. Peering around through the small hatchway with my flashlight, I could see the telltale mud tubes going up several of the foundation walls. Alas, the crawl was also full of debris, an all-too-common obstacle for PMPs when dealing with crawlspaces.

There was everything in there: concrete rubble, roofing shingles, broken glass, red bricks and other construction debris. I had informed my customer that this debris would need to be removed to treat this space properly. The property owner was in no position to do this work herself, so we agreed upon a price wherein my crew would clean out and dispose of the debris prior to the treatment.

Tales from the Crawlspace, Continued

THE MUMMY CONTINUED

So, the day of the job, we set up an assembly line of guys to remove the rubble and toss it into our utility trailer to be hauled to the dump. Our newest and youngest tech, Marvin, being the proverbial “low man on the totem pole,” was assigned the job of being the man deep inside the crawl.

We outfitted him in a PPE space suit, set up our spotlights and sent him in on his belly. Space was limited in there, but things were going quite efficiently. Marvin was passing junk to my position just inside the crawl door and I was passing them to the guys outside to be hauled to the trailer.

Marvin must have had quite the rhythm going, because he soon stopped paying attention to what he was grabbing. This is how Marvin came face to face with a mummified cat. From my viewpoint, I actually saw the moment he realized what he was holding. Now, Marv is a strong, young, country-raised guy who does not scare easily. But this horrific carcass was in his hand and inches from his face when the reality hit him.

I heard him scream through his respirator and watched as he tossed the cat away like a hot potato while simultaneously recoiling so quickly that he knocked his head on one of the floor joists. The rest of the crew subsequently had way too much fun at Marvin’s expense. They still remind him about his cat to this day. — *Alex Retcofsky, president, PDQ Pest Control, Erie, Pa.*

AIR-TIGHT. I would say I have two memorable stories. The first one is of encountering a deceased raccoon in a crawlspace. We got a call from a customer who was selling their home, and the buyers’ home inspector claimed there was a dead raccoon within the crawlspace that must be removed. When we arrived, we found this poor little guy.

My second most memorable story is of the tight crawlspace. I’ve done so many crawlspaces in my time and never feared getting stuck until I met this one customer at a home who needed a termite inspection.



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Tales from the Crawlspace, Continued

AIR-TIGHT CONTINUED

This crawlspace was so low that you could barely lift your head as you crawled through. Without being able to send you the picture [of the crawlspace], just writing this does not do it justice.

I got midway under the furthest end of the house and started getting worried I'd get stuck with only one way into the crawlspace and one way out.

And there were no existing crawlspace vents to show light either. This one service I could not completely continue through with and ultimately told the customer there was no charge for it. — *Carlos Lugo, owner, Resolve Pest Management, Bayville, N.J.*

RATTLED. New employees often inquire as to how many snakes I have come across while performing crawlspace inspections. Thankfully, not many. I have no doubt they may be there, and I tell staff we look like an alligator crawling around in our dark coveralls — snakes will be afraid of us! Working on the South Carolina coast for 25+ years, my best memory involved a fellow employee, Scott.

Often, we would work together and share the work and income for the day. We were doing a termite estimate on a property near the marsh. It was my turn to graph, so Scott suited up for the crawl.

As I worked around the house, I heard a blood curdling scream. It was like Jamie Lee Curtis in the "Halloween" movies — very high-pitched. I ran to the rear of the home and Scott came out of the crawlspace frantically saying "rat, rat, rat."

I started laughing and asked what the big deal was. He said the rat on the HVAC trunk line surprised him, but the snake chasing the rat scared him.

We are both still with our company and, while through the years our paths have gone in different directions, we are fortunate enough to now work in our corporate training department. We work hard, and we play hard. — *David Knick, corporate technical and training supervisor, Terminix Service, Columbia, S.C.*

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MPMA Announcements

The MPMA Newsletter Needs Authors!

If you are an Active or Allied member and you'd like to contribute an article to the newsletter pertaining to a current pest of concern, proper equipment use and care, application techniques, pesticide safety, choosing formulations and active ingredients, pesticide rotation – this list could go on and on – send your articles to [Christina Valdivia](mailto:Christina.Valdivia), cc: minnpest1@gmail.com. We'd like to have a store of articles that we can use as the need arises.

MPMA Quarterly Meetings

Please keep in mind that everyone is invited to attend the in-person or virtual MPMA meetings. The MPMA newsletters will be distributed after the quarterly meetings, but everyone is encouraged to participate in the MPMA Board Meetings. That way, your opinion can be contributed to any outstanding items that are affecting the pest control industry.

Our next quarterly meeting will be in October. If you would like more information on the meetings, please make sure you are an allied member.

MPMA Board Meeting Minutes

Moe's American Grill
2400 Mounds View Blvd. Mounds View, MN 55112

11:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M. Tuesday, January 17, 2023

● IN ATTENDANCE IN PERSON:

- TODD LEYSE, ADAM'S PEST CONTROL
- DR. MOHAMMED EL-DAMIR, ADAM'S PEST CONTROL
- CHRISTINE WICK, MDA/ASPCRO
- DR. STEPHEN KELLS, U. OF M.
- LANCE WATRIN, GRANITE PEST CONTROL
- ROB GREER, ROVE PEST CONTROL
- JAY BRUESCH, MPMA

● IN ATTENDANCE REMOTE VIA ZOOM:

- EVAN HUTCHCRAFT, NEOGEN
- MATT FERGUSON, RAINBOW PEST EXPERTS
- BOB HANSEN, BOB THE BUG MAN
- TRAVIS CHAMBERS, BASF
- CHRISTINA VALDIVIA, WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT SERVICES
- G, MDA
- BRENT KOSTKA, BUG BUSTERS MN

Rob Greer, Director

Called meeting to order at 11:30 A.M.; an attendance sheet was passed around; in-person and remote attendees were invited to introduce themselves.

Julie Baskerville, PWIPM

Request and budget for continued funding of PWIPM by MPMA were tabled for a future meeting. Alternately, PWIPM can submit a budget at any time – there is no need to wait for a formal meeting.

Christine Wick, MDA/ASPCRO

Christine is an ASPCRO (Association of State Pesticide Regulatory Officials) Board member-at large. ASPCRO is currently very much involved in EPA's proposed rules/interim decision for rodenticides. They recently met with a rodenticide task force representative. Comments are due February 12, 2003. ASPCRO has asked for an extension of this, but EPA denied this request. A recording of this session will be available for those that want one.

MPMA offered to provide our position paper on rules to ASPCRO; Christine will check with her co-workers to see if this is appropriate.



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Dr. Stephen Kells, University of Minnesota

Steve is going to be increasing his involvement in teaching, as opposed to research and outreach. He wants to increase undergraduate exposure to industry.

The Department will begin to offer Entomology as an undergraduate minor, and may later add this as a major as well. This is in large part a response to pressure to increase teaching as opposed to research.

Steve wants to set up a job board for undergraduate students looking for internships and employment opportunities.

Steve discussed mist blower, drift issues, and training (via MN PMP Conference and online) to help prevent these issues. After all, as Todd Leyse pointed out, mist blower mosquito applications tend to be focused on vegetation near property lines – right where drift would be most likely.

Christine Wick stressed the need for training on calibration of mist blowers, etc. ASPCRO committee Education and outreach to Category “L” applicators (during training for Category “L”) helped a lot. Property lines and drift off-target; open windows; these all need to be addressed.

Agenda for the 2023 SPCA Conference is ready; Dr. Kells is still trying to get a couple of speakers, particularly for Category “J.” A copy of the tentative agenda is attached, subject to a few changes Dr. Kells is negotiating at present.

- Robyn Frederick from MDA will kick off the Conference with a presentation on regulatory issues and MDA, as always.
- The Conference will include a pest ID and solutions workshop as always, created by Dr. Mohammed El Damir and Caroline Kirby.
- Coby Schal: Effective cockroach control and health concerns regarding histamines from exposure to cockroaches.
- Bobby Corrigan: Mice; and excluding pests.
- Joe Jonovich, Business opportunities for termite control in Minnesota are increasing. He'll cover ladder safety as well.
- Joleen Warnke will address new respirator resources, in response to worker protection standards that cover industry groups that are not directly involved with OSHA. She will present via live Zoom; all other presenters will be in person.
- Rick Cooper: System for identifying pests for non-entomologists, in lieu of his previously planned presentation on bed bugs.

Special sessions: All Commercial categories will be offered both in person and online.

- Fumigation will be handled by Degesch.
- Vertebrate Control: Steven Van Tassel is a wildlife control consultant.
- Category “L” will be offered; presenters from Metropolitan Mosquito Control District (MMCD).

The entire General session, as well as Special sessions, will be in person, and will be recorded for inclusion in the online version of the Conference.

Christine Wick, MDA stated that MDA could offer presenters from the inspection or enforcement side; this may not work out for this year, but there is an open invitation. For this year, we can add material to Robyn's talk as necessary, considering that the agenda is pretty well packed.

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Next Meeting:

Tuesday, April 18, 2023; 11:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.; venue TBD but will likely be Moe's American Grill again. Members may also attend via Zoom.

Mark your calendars!

Adjourn

A motion was made, seconded and approved to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 P.M.



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Thank you to all of the contributors for the Minnesota Pest Management Association Newsletter.

Without all of your hard work, time, and contributions, this would not be possible!