

## ROACHES (July 2005)

Folks posted several good suggestions this week for controlling cucarachas. Here's a digest.

1.

I'd definitely recommend Chem-Free (837-9681). I don't think what they do is free of toxins (I'm sure someone will know more about that than I do), but it doesn't make the house smell like Raid, and it's effective on bugs of all sorts. (Kathleen McTee)

2.

We just started using Chem-Free a few weeks ago and have seen good results so far! Great service, decent pricing, and very knowledgeable reps. (Amanda Braziel)

3.

We currently use Chem-Free and they've done a great job for years though recently, we've had about 5 or 6 HUGE roaches in our kitchen. I don't know if it's the hot summer we've had but this is the worst summer for roaches I can remember. (Eli Haslanger)

4.

We use Bulwark (707-0770, 444-9844) and have used them for about 6 years. From what I remember, they use a synthetic reproduction of a tree sap on the perimeter of the house. They say it's safe for pets--I didn't ask about children. We haven't lived in the house for a few years, but when we were here before we hardly ever saw a cockroach or other bug in the house, and our renters never complained of bugs. They come 4x/year and can do it while you're gone because they don't come in the house unless you have ants. If you do see bugs in the house, they'll come back for free and do another treatment. We've been very happy with them. (Kristy Gregg)

5.

Boric Acid powder is a natural, very effective roach, ant and flea killer. It is really cheap, available at hardware stores (Breed's has it). Sprinkle a little powder in cracks before sealing them up, in those icky spaces under the oven and refrigerator, even sprinkle it on carpet, work it in and vacuum it up for eliminating flea problems. In a day or so, all the roaches you'll find will be belly up or crawling very very slowly. It's worked wonderfully around my house. It is my preferred insecticide around my very chemically sensitive greyhound, as boric acid is slightly less toxic than table salt. (But, like most things, large amounts of it can be dangerous when ingested, so watch those curious pets and kids.) Don't use it on plants. (Catherine)

6.

We, too have had great luck with boric acid ... Since their original treatment in the early 80's, for over 20 years now we have really had no bug problems in the house. One secret is that they bored ¼" holes in the baseboards UNDER our kitchen cabinets about every 12 inches, and into these holes, using a squeeze bottle with tube attachment, they blew a couple of puffs of boric acid. Similarly, wherever trim or other overlaps were not completely tight, they puffed the boric acid. Their instructed us to simply repeat whenever we saw bugs. We have done this a few times over the years. (Girard Kinney)

7.

If your roaches are little and many (German), kitchen hygiene and an exterminator might be the way to go. But if you have the great big flying honkers (American, aka waterbugs), they're probably after water. If you find them in places other than the kitchen - especially the bathroom - you may have the best results with a strong moisture control program: get rid of leaks, roach-sized openings into behind-the-scenes spaces where water pipes are, and standing water of any kind, including in the kitchen sink and in houseplant drip trays. The American roaches don't tend to infest a house the way the German ones do, so if you take away their access to your water, they may go away entirely (at least, it worked for us). (Emily Force)

8.

Web sites:

(a) Environmental Health Watch

< [http://www.ehw.org/Asthma/ASTH\\_Cockroach%20\\_Control.pdf](http://www.ehw.org/Asthma/ASTH_Cockroach%20_Control.pdf) >

< [http://www.ehw.org/Asthma/ASTH\\_Cockroach\\_Control.htm](http://www.ehw.org/Asthma/ASTH_Cockroach_Control.htm) >

(b) Univ. Of California, Davis

< <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PDF/PESTNOTES/pncockroaches.pdf> >