

# COCKROACHES FACT SHEET

## *Frequently Asked Questions*



### **Where are they coming from?**

Cockroaches are one of the most adaptable and common pest species on earth. They are natural to most environments and often live in close association with human activity. Some prefer indoor spaces and others prefer to be outdoors. Cockroaches like dark, damp environments and constantly seek out water sources and decaying organic matter to feed on. As a result, they may be found in homes and all manner of building structures, landscaping, piping, parks and natural spaces, and just about any habitat containing life. One of the things that makes them so successful is that they are incredibly mobile, always seeking out new environments where they can thrive.

### **Why do they like sewers?**

Cockroaches are drawn to damp, dark spaces, including basements, crawl spaces, storm drains, floor drains, and all manner of pipes. Sewer pipes can offer both a source of water and decaying organic matter, so as cockroaches move about, they may try to invade sewer pipes in search of the most ideal habitat. Dry conditions—such as those we experience during our hot summers and throughout extended drought periods—prompt cockroaches to seek out increasingly hard to find water sources. Even in the driest times, sewers provide a moist environment that is attractive to these pests.

### **Who do I call if I see cockroaches?**

If you see cockroaches in or around sewer manholes or cleanouts, please call us first at **(916) 875-6730**. We'll come out and check our sewer pipes in the area. Eradicating these pests takes coordinated effort. If they're on your property or in your home, please consider performing pest control treatment at your home, just as you might do for any other property-invading pest like ants, wasps, termites, or ticks. It can be beneficial to contact a pest management company. Additionally, if you see cockroaches in other public areas, like parks or in other utility structures, please call the appropriate agency (e.g., the parks and recreation district, the water company, etc.).

### **What is SASD doing when cockroaches are found in sewers?**

When a customer calls with a concern about cockroaches in the sewer system, we investigate within 2 hours. If our investigation confirms cockroach activity in our sewer pipes, pest control treatment of our pipes is scheduled using qualified pest control specialists. After the treatment, we monitor for the effectiveness and re-treat when necessary. SASD has a proactive preventive maintenance program for sewer pipes with a repeat history of cockroach activity.

### **Can cockroaches get from sewer pipes into my home or business?**

If your P-traps and indoor plumbing are well maintained and regularly utilized, it is highly unlikely that cockroaches will enter your home through sewer pipes. Floor drains may provide access to cockroaches if left unused for some time. To prevent this, floor drains should be flushed every week or so to recharge the trap, or the drains can be outfitted with closable lids or rubber stoppers. More commonly, cockroaches tend to enter the property along the outside of plumbing, so make sure to seal any holes around pipes wherever they enter structures.

### **What else can I do to keep cockroaches away from my property?**

You can help by eliminating potential food, water, and shelter sources that attract cockroaches, while also sealing any cracks and crevices around your property. Call SASD at **(916) 875-6730** if you see cockroaches in or around sewer manholes or cleanouts. Remember, do not try to remove any manhole cover or control the issue

yourself—it is dangerous and illegal to access sewer manholes without authorization. For cockroaches on your property or in your home, consider contacting a local pest control company. For more information about cockroaches, reference material is available at the [University of California Statewide Integrated Pest Management Program website](#). In addition, the Sacramento Office of the University of California Cooperative Extension, a community resource providing advice and information related to pest problems, can be reached at (916) 875-6913.

### **Are there different kinds of cockroaches? If so, what kind is impacting the sewers?**

There are an incredible number of cockroach species. In our area, while the American cockroach is commonly found to invade sewers, storm drains, and other piping systems, local pest control companies also report finding Oriental, German, and Turkestan cockroach species.

### **RESOURCES**

- **SASD:** (916) 875-6730. Call if you see cockroaches in or around sewer manholes or cleanouts.
- **University of California Cooperative Extension – Sacramento Office:** (916) 875-6913. A community resource providing advice and information related to pest problems
- [University of California Statewide Integrated Pest Management Program](#)
- [Cockroach Identification Guide](#)