

Carpenter Bees

Q. How do we treat the boring bees? We have holes in our post and sawdust below the holes!

A: Wood boring bees, also known as carpenter bees, are right on schedule this spring.

Control of the wood boring bees/carpenter bees is difficult and must be done annually. The carpenter bee mines galleries within wood, compromising the wood's strength. The gallery opening is an almost perfect half-inch diameter hole. This hole goes in straight initially and then turns at a ninety-degree angle. The most effective control can be achieved by applying insecticidal dusts or liquids to the galleries.

Homeowners may not have access to insecticidal dusts labeled for wood treatment and thus may need to apply sprays like bee/wasp killer aerosols into the nest opening. More information is available on Wood Boring Bees in an article written by Chris Ramsey, Sullivan County UT Extension Agent and NETMGA Advisor Sullivan County Extension Agency. Follow this link for this and other topics in Chris's Column: <https://www.netmga.net/chris-column//>.

If you would like to deter the bees from your fences and wood siding and prefer not to use insecticides, a good coat of oil-based paint will keep them out of your wood. They typically will come back to the same nest every year. A good wood filler with a coat of oil-based paint will help them move away from their former homes.

There are several external links available on the NETMGA site that offer all sorts of helpful gardening information <https://www.netmga.net/links/>. One such link toward the bottom of the page will take you to <https://www.gardenguides.com/>. You can find information on flowers, produce, structures, trees, and lawns.

We hope that gives you some options to address your borer bee problem!

The Master Gardeners of Northeast Tennessee