

# Why are Wasps a pest?

Wasps are not considered a public health risk but can present a nuisance when a nest is found in or around your home or garden.

Wasps like other insects are beneficial to the environment as they eat other insect pests. Unless the location of the nest is causing a problem treatment should be avoided.



Wasps can sting and can pose a hazard if the nest is disturbed in anyway. The elderly and those who suffer anaphylactic shock are especially vulnerable. Treatment should be sought when the wasps pose a risk to residents or to the public.



## Signs of an active wasps nest

Wasps can often be confused with other types of winged insects. A true wasp will have buttercup yellow and jet black warning stripes.

Queen wasps sleep over winter in safe locations like wood piles and roof spaces. They emerge from April onwards and seek for a suitable place to build a new nest. Signs of a nest may include:

- \* Many wasps entering and exiting one location
- \* Wasps visible on the outside of the nest
- \* Wet patches on walls or ceilings if a nest is in your loft or wall cavity



- \* A dull buzzing noise
- \* Sometimes the nest can be seen. This will usually appear as a grey ball which can range from the size of a golf ball to the size of a car tyre.



Wasps build a new nest every year and never return to an old nest. This means that old nests will remain in place but will never become active again. For this reason it is not necessary to remove old or treated nests. You can determine if a nest is old by the lack of any wasp activity.

## How to prevent attracting wasps

There are many things you can do to avoid attracting wasps, many of them are simple and things you can do in your day to day life.

- \* Keep bagged refuse and lidded bins with potential food sources away from your house
- \* If you plan to have a barbeque in the summer there is a risk of wasps honing in on your food. Purchase and install wasp traps before the event (available from most garden centres and supermarkets)
- \* Inspect your loft periodically throughout the summer to check for any new formations of a nest (especially where there is a history of wasps nests)



## Control Methods

### Self Treatment

Insecticide (dusts and aerosols) can be bought from supermarkets and most garden centres. Care should be taken when using them inside the home and outdoors.

For health and safety reasons Leeds City Council recommend that you do not undertake the treatment of nests that are above head height yourself. However, you can treat nests that are below head height and easily accessible.

When treating wasp nests yourself you may find the following do's and do not's helpful:

### Do:

- \* Refer to the insecticide instructions BEFORE USE
- \* Observe the wasps and find the point which the wasps enter and leave the nest
- \* Carry out treatments at twilight. There will be less activity at this time and most of the wasps will be in the nest
- \* Blow or spray the insecticide (dependent on what type of insecticide you have purchased) into the entry point of the nest
- \* Make sure other residents are aware of the treatment and that they avoid the nest area for 24 hours
- \* Wash away any spillages of insecticide when safe to do so



**Do Not:**

- \* Use a torch as wasps will be attracted to the beam

**Please note** – you may be stung whilst attempting to treat a wasps nest without the correct protective clothing

**Leeds City Council's Service**

If you have a wasp nest above head height, in a difficult area or you would just prefer to hire professional help please contact Leeds City Council.

The council offers competitive rates for the treatment of wasp nests in domestic and commercial properties. For further information or to book a treatment please call 0113 2224406.



# Wasps

*Pest information leaflet*



## Contact us

If you have any questions about the information in this leaflet or would like professional advice please contact

Leeds City Council Corporate Call Centre  
0113 2224406  
or email  
pests@leeds.gov.uk

Further information and copies of this leaflet can be found on the council's website  
[www.leeds.gov.uk/pestcontrol](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/pestcontrol)