



Ants

Why are ants a pest?

Black garden ants are a nuisance pest but are not a risk to human health. Their nests are always found in the soil in gardens or under floors. They are completely black in colour. Annually garden ants swarm as part of the colony (nest) they fly away to find a site to create a new colony. This can appear frightening but it is a natural phenomenon and should be over within 48 hours.



Pharaoh's ants pose a health risk as they are able to carry pathogens as they travel around an area for food. They are smaller than the garden ant and pale yellow-brown in colour. They can penetrate packaging and can so contaminate food for human consumption. Pharaoh's ants are only found indoors. They are very agile and are able to climb smooth surfaces. Due to their size and mobility they have been known to access sterile equipment and so can pose a significant risk to human health.



Signs of ants

Black Garden Ants

- Ants are visible inside and outside the property
- Check paved areas outdoors which provides an ideal place to live
- Trails of ants may be seen going to and from the nest site (the nest itself is often not visible)
- Ants seen around open food / spillages
- Small piles of sandy soil around threshold could indicate the nest is nearby

Pharaoh's Ants

- Long narrow trails of ants will be seen moving to and from the nest toward food sources
- They need warm humid areas to breed so are often associated with central heating systems and heated indoor areas
- Ants will forage for water around sinks and where condensation has occurred

How to prevent an infestation?

Garden Ants

- Ensure good housekeeping in food areas
- Food stuffs properly stored and held in sealed containers
- Ensure spillages are cleaned up immediately
- All bins should be emptied and cleaned regularly
- Seal any holes and gaps around windows and doors.

Pharaoh's Ants

Pharaoh's Ants are brought into the property either via foodstuffs or through affected neighbouring properties. There is little one can do to prevent an infestation.

Control Methods

If you suspect you have a problem with ants please contact the Environmental Health Department on 01442 228543/ 228455, or email pestcontrol@dacorum.gov.uk