



PESTS

1836 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Rental Property Pest Response Checklist

Identify the pest.
Correct what keeps it coming back.

A working checklist for Austin & Central Texas rental owners: respond to the report, coordinate the right help, and prevent a repeat.

RESPOND

Take action and assess.

RESOLVE

Identify, treat, and correct.

PREVENT

Reduce the chance it returns.

Pests reported? Start here.

Use this page first. The detailed pages support each next decision.

Interactive checklist: Click the boxes as you work through the guide, or print a copy to complete by hand.

01 RESPOND

- ☐ Acknowledge the report and open an incident record.
- ☐ Check the move-faster triggers on page 3.
- ☐ Gather the resident details on page 4.
- ☐ Pause unplanned sprays or foggers.
- ☐ Arrange access under the lease and applicable requirements.

02 RESOLVE

- ☐ Confirm the pest before choosing treatment.
- ☐ Check your lease, HOA rules, and any pest-control service agreement.
- ☐ Inspect affected and connected areas.
- ☐ Coordinate treatment and related property repairs.
- ☐ Recheck traps or monitors as directed.
- ☐ Record follow-up results and verify before closing.

03 PREVENT

- ☐ Seal gaps, damaged screens, and exterior openings.
- ☐ Repair leaks and irrigation or drainage problems.
- ☐ Keep food, pet food, and trash contained.
- ☐ Keep plants and stored wood away from the structure.
- ☐ Tell the resident what new signs to report.

THE ONE THING TO REMEMBER

Treating the pest without correcting the condition that allowed it in usually means it comes back.

DOCUMENT THE REPORT

Keep the resident report, photos, access details, vendor notes, and follow-up together with your property records.

1. Respond to the Pest Report

Act first. Use the resident questions and sample message on page 4.

☐ Acknowledge the report promptly.

Confirm receipt and explain the next step. Do not wait for a second report.

☐ Check the red flags below.

Use the pest, location, damage, and spread to set the inspection priority.

☐ Limit exposure without spreading the problem.

Keep residents and pets away from nests, droppings, damaged wiring, and contaminated areas.

☐ Arrange inspection and access.

Check the lease, confirm the appointment, and give any required entry or treatment notices.

☐ Open the incident log.

Record the report, response, and visit plan on page 9.

MOVE FASTER WHEN

- ☐ Suspected bed bugs or rodents inside living areas.
- ☐ Significant cockroach activity or reports from attached units or neighbors.
- ☐ Fire ants or stinging insects in occupied, play, or access areas.
- ☐ Possible termites, mud tubes, or unexplained wood damage.
- ☐ Wildlife inside the structure, a dead animal, or a strong odor.
- ☐ Gnawed wiring or pests inside electrical equipment. Keep clear and flag an electrical hazard.

DON'T DO THIS

☒ Do not assume the resident caused it.

Identify the pest and contributing conditions first.

☒ Do not use foggers or store-bought sprays before inspection.

Unplanned pesticides can interfere with the treatment plan.

☒ Do not sweep or vacuum dry rodent droppings.

Texas DSHS: air out the area for 30 minutes and stay out. Wear gloves, wet waste with disinfectant, let it soak for at least 5 minutes or longer if the label directs, then wipe it up. See resource 1.

☒ Do not disturb nests or open electrical equipment.

Have qualified professionals handle hidden nests and equipment-related activity.

☒ Do not move infested belongings between rooms or units.

Wait for handling and transport instructions.

☒ Do not close the file after the first treatment.

Finish the monitoring and follow-up plan.

2. What to Ask and What to Say

Gather the details once, then confirm the visit and preparation plan.

RESIDENT INTAKE QUESTIONS

- ☐ What did you see, and where?
- ☐ When did you first notice activity? Was it present at move-in?
- ☐ How many, and how often?
- ☐ Any droppings, mounds, nests, wings, mud tubes, damage, or odors?
- ☐ Has this happened before?
- ☐ What sprays, powders, traps, or foggers have already been used?
- ☐ Any recent travel, deliveries, used furniture, or pet-related concerns?
- ☐ Can you send a wide photo and close-ups safely?
- ☐ Any access, pet, or safety needs to plan for?

Bites alone do not identify the pest. Do not ask anyone to handle waste or disturb a nest for a photo.

SAMPLE INITIAL RESPONSE

Subject: Pest Report at [Property Address]

Hi [Resident Name],

Thank you for reporting the activity in [location]. Please send safe-to-take photos and let me know what you saw, where, and when it began.

I would like to arrange an inspection on [date] at [time]. Please reply to confirm that works. I will send the visit details, any required notices, and preparation instructions once it is scheduled.

Until inspection, please do not use foggers, bug bombs, or store-bought sprays. Avoid moving potentially infested items to another room or unit. Do not sweep or vacuum rodent droppings.

Please do not begin any additional treatment unless the pest professional directs you to do so.

Thank you,

[Name]
[Contact information]

BEFORE PEST CONTROL ARRIVES

- ☐ Follow the vendor's pest-specific preparation instructions.
- ☐ Do not add treatments or move infested items unless directed.
- ☐ Confirm time away, re-entry, children, pets, and aquariums.
- ☐ Confirm any food, dishes, laundry, and furniture preparation.

Keep the resident report, photos, access details, and updates together in the property record.

3. What Pest Are You Dealing With?

Austin & Central Texas: use signs as clues, not a diagnosis. Confirm before treating.

PEST	COMMON SIGNS	WHERE TO CHECK	NEXT STEP
Cockroaches	Live insects, droppings, or egg cases.	Kitchens, appliances, sink cabinets, bathrooms, utility gaps.	Identify the species and whether it is breeding indoors or entering from outside. Coordinate targeted control and repairs.
Ants / fire ants	Trails, outdoor mounds, or stinging activity.	Lawns, paths, play areas, irrigation, and equipment pads.	Confirm the species. Keep people and pets away from mounds. Request help near electrical equipment; do not open it.
Mice / rats	Droppings, gnawing, nesting material, or scratching.	Cabinets, garage, attic, foundation, and utility openings.	Coordinate removal, safe cleanup, and entry repairs. Do not sweep or vacuum dry rodent waste.
Bed bugs	Live bugs, dark or rusty spots, shed skins.	Mattress seams, bed frames, headboards, nearby upholstery.	Use an experienced bed bug professional. Bites alone are not proof. Ask about connected units; avoid moving affected items.
Termites / wood-destroying insects	Mud tubes, discarded wings, or unexplained wood damage.	Slab edges, foundation, wood-to-soil contact, and damp wood.	Request a licensed termite inspection. Photograph signs safely and leave suspect tubes or materials for the inspector.
Wasps / stinging insects	Repeated flights to an opening or a visible nest.	Eaves, vents, patios, sheds, and wall cavities.	Keep clear. Have a qualified professional assess hidden or hard-to-reach nests. Do not seal active openings without advice.

NOT LISTED OR NOT SURE?

Request identification rather than guessing. For fleas, coordinate veterinary advice for pets. Scorpions or other unidentified stinging pests may need a pest professional. Wildlife in attics or walls usually needs a wildlife-control specialist, not a pest-control treatment.

4. Find the Cause. Resolve the Problem.

Choose the response before work starts. Coordinate treatment and repairs together.

IDENTIFY > INSPECT > CONTAIN > TREAT + CORRECT > FOLLOW UP > VERIFY

CHECK WHAT IS SUPPORTING THE ACTIVITY

Food

- ☐ Accessible food or pet food.
- ☐ Grease, trash, crumbs, or spills.

Water

- ☐ Plumbing, irrigation, or AC condensate leaks.
- ☐ Standing water or drainage issues.

Entry

- ☐ Door, screen, pipe, or cable gaps.
- ☐ Slab, vent, or exterior openings.

Shelter

- ☐ Cardboard, clutter, or wood piles.
- ☐ Plants touching the building.

Introduced

- ☐ Recent luggage, boxes, or furniture.
- ☐ Pet-related or connected-unit activity.

START WITH EVIDENCE

Record what you find, not who you assume caused it. A pest report is the start of the inspection.

☐ Confirm the pest, extent, and treatment plan.

Use the matrix on page 5 and the professional-help checks on page 7.

☐ Contain when needed.

Follow vendor instructions before moving belongings or treating connected rooms or units.

☐ Agree on the treatment and repair sequence.

Assign access, traps or bait locations, cleanup, and entry repairs. Do not seal active nest openings without guidance.

☐ Complete the treatment and property corrections.

Follow product labels and vendor instructions. Confirm who completes each task.

☐ Monitor, follow up, then verify.

Record new activity and the vendor's closeout criteria. Keep the plan open until follow-up is complete.

KEEP THE CORRECTION WITH THE TREATMENT

The treatment gets rid of the pest. The correction keeps it from coming back.

5. When to Call a Pest Professional

Use the triggers below, then confirm the service plan.

GET PROFESSIONAL HELP FOR

- ☐ Suspected bed bugs or indoor rodents.
- ☐ Termite signs or unexplained wood damage.
- ☐ Significant or recurring cockroach activity.
- ☐ Stinging insects near people or equipment.
- ☐ Reports from attached units or neighbors, failed treatment, or heavy contamination.
- ☐ Wildlife, hidden nests, or an unknown pest.

CHECK BEFORE SCHEDULING

- ☐ Check your lease for pest and access terms.
- ☐ Review any pest-control service agreement.
- ☐ Check HOA rules or common-area responsibility, if applicable.
- ☐ Review move-in notes and prior treatments, if relevant.
- ☐ Use the right specialist for wood-destroying insects or wildlife.
- ☐ Confirm the scope, price, and follow-up before scheduling.

☐ Verify the vendor's Texas credentials.

Check the TDA structural pest-control business license, individual credentials, and category for the work. See resources 2 and 3 on page 11.

ASK THE VENDOR

- ☐ What pest is confirmed, and which areas need service?
- ☐ What repairs and treatment sequence do you recommend?
- ☐ What preparation, notices, and re-entry instructions apply?
- ☐ Who checks traps, monitors, or bait stations?
- ☐ What follow-up and verification are included?
- ☐ What are the scope, price, warranty, and service records?

BEFORE AUTHORIZING WORK

Confirm the vendor, scope, price, preparation steps, re-entry instructions, and follow-up plan in writing.

6. Document the Pest Incident

Keep one record from the first report through the final follow-up.

01

Location

Wide view for context.

02

Evidence

Pest or signs, photographed safely.

03

Condition

Entry, moisture, damage, or shelter.

04

Result

Repairs, treatment, and follow-up.

SAVE THE REPORT & INSPECTION

- ☐ Original report, date, time, and response.
- ☐ Move-in notes and prior pest-control records, if relevant.
- ☐ Photos of pest signs and contributing conditions.
- ☐ Confirmed identification and inspection findings.
- ☐ Resident messages, access arrangements, and notices.
- ☐ Prior pesticide use reported by the resident.

SAVE THE WORK & FOLLOW-UP

- ☐ Vendor scope, license check, and service report.
- ☐ Preparation and re-entry instructions.
- ☐ Treatment dates and product information supplied by the vendor.
- ☐ Repairs, entry-point sealing, and cleanup records.
- ☐ Invoices, approvals, and HOA communications.
- ☐ Monitoring results, return visits, and final resident update.

BEFORE ASSIGNING COSTS

Document the pest, conditions, and inspection findings. Review the cause, lease, and applicable requirements before assigning costs.

Safe evidence first: Do not disturb rodent waste, fire-ant mounds, or stinging-insect nests just to take a better photo.

Keep the records together with your property records. Use the incident log on the next page.

7. Pest Incident Log

One page per incident. Keep it with the property file.

PROPERTY

Property address

Unit

Resident name

HOA / community or pest-service notes, if relevant

REPORT

Reported by

Date reported

Time reported

Method (email, portal, phone,

Written notice?

☐

Yes

☐

No

Location of activity

Pest suspected

Description / signs reported

INITIAL RESPONSE

☐ Report acknowledged

☐ Safety concerns checked

☐ Inspection / access arranged

INSPECTION

Inspection date

Inspected by

Confirmed pest / not yet identified

Areas affected / connected units to check

Entry point / contributing conditions

TREATMENT & CORRECTIONS

Vendor / person completing work

Treatment date

Next visit / monitoring date

Treatment, repairs, sealing, or cleanup completed

☐ TDA credentials checked

☐ Prep / re-entry sent

☐ Lease pest provision reviewed

FOLLOW-UP & CLOSEOUT

Activity still present?

☐

Yes

☐

No

☐

Unknown

Follow-up date

Closed date

☐ Resident updated

☐

Repairs complete

☐

Follow-up complete

☐

Closed

8. Reduce the Chance of Pests Returning

Check the conditions, not just the last place a pest was seen.

For Austin & Central Texas: fire ants become more active as temperatures rise. Use spring and fall exterior checks to look for new mounds, termite signs, nests, moisture, and entry points.

Seal

- ☐ Repair damaged screens and door sweeps.
- ☐ Close pipe, cable, and exterior gaps with pest-resistant materials.
- ☐ Confirm safe timing before sealing an active nest or entry point.

Dry

- ☐ Repair plumbing, AC condensate, and irrigation leaks.
- ☐ Correct standing water and drainage near foundations.
- ☐ Check damp cabinets, slab edges, and pier-and-beam crawlspaces.

Clean

- ☐ Store food and pet food in sealed containers.
- ☐ Remove food debris behind appliances and in other hidden areas.
- ☐ Keep trash lids closed and reduce cardboard or clutter.

Exterior

- ☐ Keep vegetation and stored wood away from the structure.
- ☐ Watch for mud tubes, wood damage, and new fire-ant mounds.
- ☐ Check eaves and vents; flag pest activity near outdoor HVAC equipment.

RESIDENT PREVENTION REMINDERS

- ☐ Report new pest signs and leaks promptly.
- ☐ Check secondhand furnishings before bringing them inside.
- ☐ Follow treatment and monitoring instructions.
- ☐ Ask a veterinarian about flea prevention for pets.

Property-specific notes / prevention item

9. Before You Close the Pest Incident

Verify the outcome, save the record, and confirm the follow-up plan.

Pest

- ☐ Pest identified and treatment completed.
- ☐ Follow-up meets the vendor's closeout criteria.

Property

- ☐ Repairs and entry-point work completed.
- ☐ Food, water, and shelter conditions addressed.

Records

- ☐ Service records and incident log saved.
- ☐ Follow-up dates and findings documented.

Resident

- ☐ Completion update and instructions sent.
- ☐ Resident knows what recurrence to report.

OFFICIAL TEXAS, AUSTIN & FEDERAL RESOURCES

Full URLs are clickable. When typing a wrapped address, enter it without spaces or line breaks.

[1] Texas DSHS | Hantavirus & rodent cleanup

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/disease-surveillance-epidemiology-section/zoonosis-control/zoonosis-control-diseases-and-conditions/hantaviruses/hantavirus-frequently-asked-questions>

[6] Texas A&M AgriLife | Fire-ant management

<https://fireant.tamu.edu/controlmethods/twostep/>

[2] TDA | Current structural pest-control licenses

<https://texasagriculture.gov/Regulatory-Programs/Pesticides/Structural-Pest-Control-Service/Structural-Pest-Control-Reports-Current-Licenses>

[7] Texas A&M AgriLife | Termite inspection & control

<https://citybugs.tamu.edu/factsheets/household/termites/ent-2002/>

[3] TDA | Structural pest-control licensing

<https://texasagriculture.gov/Regulatory-Programs/Pesticides/Structural-Pest-Control-Service/Structural-Pest-Control-Licensing>

[8] Texas A&M AgriLife | Bed bugs

<https://citybugs.tamu.edu/factsheets/biting-stinging/bed-bugs/>

[4] City of Austin | Rodent reports & assistance

<https://www.austintexas.gov/services/report-problem-rodents>

[9] Texas A&M AgriLife | Wasps

<https://citybugs.tamu.edu/factsheets/biting-stinging/wasps/>

[5] Texas A&M AgriLife | Cockroaches

<https://citybugs.tamu.edu/factsheets/household/cockroaches/>

[10] U.S. EPA | Integrated pest management

<https://www.epa.gov/safepestcontrol/integrated-pest-management-ipm-principles>

General educational guidance, not legal, medical, or pesticide-application instructions. Follow product labels, vendor safety directions, and applicable requirements. Plans vary by pest and property.



PESTS

1836 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Less Time Managing. More Time Living.

The treatment is only one part of the job.

1836 Property Management can coordinate resident communication, licensed pest-control vendors, related repairs, and follow-up for your Austin & Central Texas rental.

Talk with 1836 Property Management

1836propertymanagement.com | (512) 994-4323

FOR RENTAL OWNERS

Use this checklist any time a resident reports pest activity so the response, records, treatment, repairs, and follow-up stay organized.