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**Residential
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The Truth About "Green Marketing" in the Pest Control Industry

By Rob McMaster

President, Halt Pest Control

It seems everywhere you turn these days companies are touting the fact that they're "green." They make a lot of noise about being good stewards of the environment and how their business' main priority is sustainability. This is particularly true in the pest control industry. You've seen these companies. They often weave images of nature and small animals into their logo or include "Eco" into their business name to illustrate how environmentally conscious they are.

Some of these companies do use legitimate, environmentally friendly materials and techniques. Others, unfortunately, are "greenwashing" themselves. That is, they provide false claims about being **environmentally friendly**. Their claims deliver a strong message to persuade people that they are using "green" **practices** and materials, which are aimed only at winning a sale. If consumers were to investigate these "greenwashing" companies, they would learn that the reality is that their claims simply can't be substantiated.

At **Halt Pest Control**, we've always been dedicated to making intelligent choices about techniques, materials and business practices that have a legitimately small impact on the environment. We've never felt the need to lure customers with "green" **marketing tactics**. For us, doing our job in a way that leaves a small "footprint" just makes sense. We've been doing things that way for nearly 20 years.

But in light of so many companies making claims that the way they handle pest management is more ecologically friendly than other companies, we'd like to share some facts to help you cut through the "green" marketing buzz.

Green from the Get Go

When looking for a **pest management professional**, consider their approach from the moment you call them. Most **pest control companies** will answer the phone, be very friendly, schedule a visit to come and spray your home or property and be on their way. When you make those calls, listen to what they say to you. If you're speaking to a qualified technician, are they asking you questions beyond when and where you're seeing the

pests? And what information do they provide, aside from letting you know when they'll be back to spray again, to help you manage the problem?

At Halt, we often find that by asking a few questions we can provide advice and information that the customer can implement to resolve the problem without resorting to using pesticides. Sharing this knowledge may result in a few lost sales, but we believe that it's a better approach than irresponsibly applying pesticides when the situation may not require that step, not to mention the fuel we can conserve by not adding more miles to a daily route.

Green Pesticides

Yes, there are **pesticides** and other **pest control materials** that are more environmentally friendly than others... No – no single company owns exclusive rights to them. Every **pest management company** has access to the same pest control materials.

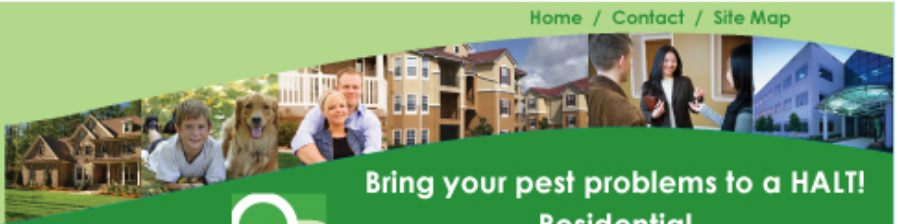
Dose Makes the Poison

How companies use these pesticides makes all the difference when it comes to being "environmentally friendly." There are several "green," organic and **natural pesticides** available, such as botanicals, boric acid, pyrethroids or **pyrethrum** and **diatomaceous earth**. Each of these can work and have their place under circumstances that call for them.

The problem is that these are "high dose dependent **pesticides**" (**HDDP**), so they require large amounts to be applied to be even mildly effective, and often require multiple applications. In addition, they are "repellant" pesticides. Insects will avoid them altogether (often because of their odor) and those who do come in contact with them as a result of being sprayed are killed without the pesticide being transmitted to the colony or source, so they may require multiple applications.

They're often applied with a power sprayer and require countless gallons to achieve a result. You may have heard from and felt reassured by other pest control companies who will "spray under, around, on top of, inside and outside" your property. The outcome is that what you gain in coverage you sacrifice in the level of

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toxicity. That is, the higher the dose, the more poison and toxic the pesticide or treatment. Soaking your home or property in pesticides, however "organic," is not an environmentally sound strategy.

Halt Pest Control has always believed that using **low dose, non-repellant (LDNR)** materials is the best approach available. Our experienced technicians can identify hot spots, or sources, where pests are entering your property. With that knowledge and using LDNR pesticides you'll have a more environmentally friendly and more effective solution. Because these materials (think of them as bait) are non-repellent, insects and pests will not avoid them so the pesticide will be carried to the source or colony. One carrier can effectively eliminate an entire colony, versus killing only those pests who come into contact with a spray. A lower dose results in lower impact with a greater result.

LDNR and Its Impact on Fuel and Emissions

Take a look at the vehicles **pest control companies** use. Typically, they're mid- to large sized trucks. Why? It requires a pretty good sized vehicle to haul around all those gallons of HDDP. One gallon of liquid weighs 8.35 pounds. A truck with a 50 gallon tank is lugging over 400 pounds of pesticide payload alone. That, on top of the power sprayer and other gear a pest management professional needs to carry can really cut down on fuel efficiency and increase the level of fuel emissions. That's a fact.

By taking an LDNR approach, Halt doesn't need to use larger vehicles. Long before the cost of fuel was an issue, we were using small, fuel efficient service vehicles. That not only makes good business sense because we don't have to pass on huge fuel costs, but it makes environmental sense. We're not dealing with the type of weight in our vehicles that other companies need to deal with because of their materials and methods.

And all of Halt's vehicles are outfitted with real time GPS systems. This enables us to evaluate routing and fuel efficiency. In fact, a group of national pest management professionals recently rated Halt Pest Control's trucks as the most efficient and productive as compared to vehicles of other companies around the nation. We're also keeping our eye on the evolving technology in

hybrids, electric and hydrogen powered vehicles as part of our long term plan.

As Green as it Gets

When it comes to **pest management**, take a close look at the companies you're talking to. Ask questions. Examine their practices and materials. We hope the information provided here will help you make an informed decision about who you work with. Of course, we hope that it will be **Halt Pest Control**. But either way, if working with a **green pest control company** is a priority for you, we want you to know the realities of "green" pest management. And if you have any questions about this information or would like to learn more about how Halt Pest Control can provide an environmentally safe solution for your family or property, please feel free to give me a call.

Regards,
Rob McMaster

Rob McMaster is the President of Halt Pest Control, Inc. You can reach him at info@haltpestcontrol.com.

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