FOOD SERVICE PEST REFERENCE · FREE TOOL

Questions to Ask Your Pest Control Company, and a Model Scope of Work

Twelve neutral questions a restaurant manager can ask any pest control company, including the one it already has, and a model scope of work for a food-service pest program. No company is graded here, and no company is recommended.

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How to use this document

Ask the questions of your current company at the next service visit, or of any company you are considering. There are no trick questions; a good technician will welcome them. The model scope of work below is written for private restaurant owners to adapt into their own agreements. It names no prices and no contract terms. Procurement note: this model scope is published for private operators and is not written for any public solicitation; a public buyer with an open or planned solicitation should not adopt it, and the author, who owns a pest control company that may bid public work, does not adapt it for any solicitation (see Utah Code R33-104-103(3) and 2 CFR 200.319(b)). Not legal advice.

Twelve questions

- 1. What is the pest, by species? (Ask for the name. A German cockroach, a Pharaoh ant and a drain fly are three different programs.)
- 2. What product did you use, what is its EPA registration number, and is it labeled for use in a food establishment? (The Food Code requires the label to say so.)
- 3. May I have the service report for every visit, with the product, the amount, the target site and your license number? (Utah requires the applicator to keep this record; you are entitled to a copy.)
- 4. Where are the monitors, how many, and what were the counts this visit and last visit? (A program without counts is an opinion.)
- 5. Are the rodent bait stations covered, locked and labeled with the product and your company's name and license number? (The Food Code requires covered, tamper-resistant stations.)
- 6. What class of bait active ingredient did you use for cockroaches, and when will you rotate it? (Bait resistance is documented; rotation is the answer.)
- 7. What should my staff do in the days after a bait treatment? (The honest answer includes removing cadavers daily; dead pests are their own line on a report.)

- 8. What did you find that is not a pest-control item: a door gap, a hole at a pipe, a drain that needs scrubbing, cardboard? (A good technician reports harborage and entry, not only pests.)
- 9. What will you do if the county cites a pest line between visits? (Ask about response time and whether a callback costs extra.)
- 10. Is anything you applied a restricted use pesticide, and if so why? (There is rarely a reason in a restaurant.)
- 11. Who at your company do I call at 6 a.m. on a Saturday, and what is the number?
- 12. Will you walk the building with me once with the exclusion checklist and tell me which items are mine, which are my landlord's, and which are yours?

Model scope of work: food-service pest management program

Model language for a private restaurant's agreement with its pest control company. Adapt freely; strike what does not apply. Brackets mark fill-ins.

- 1. Qualifications. Contractor holds a current Utah commercial pesticide business license and each technician a current Utah commercial pesticide applicator license in the structural category. License numbers appear on every proposal, service record and vehicle (Utah Admin. Code R68-7-16(3)(b)).
- 2. Written program. Within [30] days Contractor delivers a written pest management plan for [ESTABLISHMENT] naming the target pests, the monitoring devices and their locations on a floor plan, the service frequency, the products to be used (each labeled for use in a food establishment), the sanitation and exclusion conditions Contractor has identified, and who corrects each.
- 3. Inspection and monitoring. Each service visit includes inspection of [the back door and receiving, the line, the dish area, dry storage, the walk-in and reach-ins, the bar, restrooms and the dumpster pad], a check of every monitoring device with the count recorded, and a written list of harborage and entry conditions observed.
- 4. Treatment. Products are applied only as labeled, by crack-and-crevice or spot application in food areas, with food, equipment and utensils removed or covered and cleaned after application as the Food Code requires (7-202.12). No tracking powders. Rodent bait only in covered, tamper-resistant, labeled stations (7-206.12). No restricted use pesticides without written justification. Cockroach bait active ingredients are rotated by class at intervals stated in the plan, with monitor counts used to confirm effect.
- 5. Service records. Contractor leaves a service record at every visit stating the date, the technician's name and license number, the areas inspected and treated, each product by name and EPA registration number with the amount applied and the target site and pest, the device counts, the conditions observed, and the recommendations. Application records are kept at least two years (Utah Admin. Code R68-7-11(11)).
- 6. Response. Contractor responds to a report of pest activity or a county inspection pest line within [one business day] and attends within [two business days]; callbacks for target pests within the service interval are [included].

- 7. Dead and trapped pests. The plan states who removes dead and trapped pests from devices and premises and how often, so that the Food Code's removal requirement (6-501.112) is met between visits.
- 8. Conditions and exclusion. Contractor reports, at each visit, the openings, gaps, harborage and sanitation conditions that bear on pests, and the plan assigns each to the operator, the landlord or Contractor.
- 9. Staff. Contractor provides, on request, a short staff briefing on reporting sightings and on why no pesticide is applied by staff.
- 10. Records and inspections. The operator may share any service record with the health department, an insurer or counsel. Contractor's technician will, on request, be available by phone to the operator during a county inspection.
- 11. Term. [Month-to-month; either party may end the agreement on 30 days' written notice; no early-termination fee.]
