



## Wasp Alert

July 2015

### Beware of Angry Yellow Jackets

The COE Pest Management is advising there is a higher than normal amount of yellow jacket (wasp) activity this year than in years past. This is attributed to the dry spring and hot weather we are now having. Additionally, the wasps have been observed as already getting aggressive which typically does not occur until late August or September.

Some people suffer serious or even life threatening allergic reactions if those winged pests sting. We can all take some simple steps to help prevent stings.

1. Be careful not to disturb nests.
2. Never strike or swing at a wasp and never trap them against your body. If a wasp is crushed it could incite nearby wasps into a frenzied attack as the wasp venom contains a chemical which, when released into the air, signals guard wasps to come and sting whomever gets in their way.
3. Should a wasp fly near you, raise your arms to protect your face and stand still or move away slowly to a safe place. Moving rapidly often provokes attack.
4. Wear a hat, closed shoes, socks and light colored plain and loose fitting clothing covering your entire body.
5. Never wear wool because wool retains some degree of animal odor.
6. Avoid heavy, flowery perfumes, colognes or scents.
7. Avoid having sweet beverages and foods outdoors.
8. If a wasp gets into your vehicle, stay calm. It wants out just as much as you want it out. Slowly and safely pull over, open the window or door and allow them to escape.

#### What should you do if you get stung?

Most people have a mild reaction to stings which may include itch, irritation, redness and/or swelling. For mild reactions, symptoms can be relieved with ice, baking soda, meat tenderizer, 1 to 2.5% ammonia solution, topical steroids or oral steroids and/or antihistamines.

Severe allergic reactions to stings can be fatal. These reactions, called anaphylaxis, can include breathing problems, swelling of the lips or throat, faintness, confusion, rapid heartbeat and/or hives.

**If you experience a severe reaction, seek emergency medical attention immediately.**

**If you come across a nest on City of Edmonton Property, contact 311 and they will arrange to have it destroyed.**

**Please post or review with employees that do not have access to e-mail**

#### Questions?