

Stinging Wasps

Two of the most common wasps in Oklahoma, paper wasp and yellow jackets, both have a high stinging hazard.

Paper wasp have a slender body about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long and are variously colored yellow, brown, red and/or black. Their nest is a single open-faced comb made of paper often attached to building eaves. Colony size will range from a few to seventy-five wasp. To control paper wasp nests, it is recommended to use standard aerosol wasp sprays with rapid knockdown insecticide and a freezing component.

Yellowjacket's, are usually yellow and black striped. Most noticeable in late summer and early fall, they nest generally underground or in wall voids. Colonies can be quite large from 1000 to 5000 adults. Yellowjacket's are very defensive of their colony and can easily be disturbed by rapid movement or vibration near the nest. To control yellowjacket's it is best to seek professional help especially for large nests or those located in house voids or attics. Control nests at night when the wasps are inside. Use protective clothing and use recommended rapid knockdown insecticides.

Mud-Daubers commonly build their mud nests in attics, porches and carports. Different than paperwasp because of their thread like waist connecting the abdomen to the rest of the body. The most common colors are black and yellow but black and metallic blue black species can be seen around buildings. Mud-Daubers, unlike paper wasp and yellow jackets, do not "attack" and sting humans.

To avoid stinging wasps follow these tips

- Do not use cologne, perfume or hair spray in wasp areas.
- Do not wear bright clothing, wear tan, khaki or dark-colored clothes.
- Do not picnic or loiter near trash cans, fallen fruit or other wasp feeding sites.
- Do not swat or move rapidly when a wasp visits you or your food or drink; move slowly.
- Do not approach a nest, if you do disturb a nest, run away from attacking wasp.

The venom of stinging wasps and bees cause intense pain with swelling and redness. If stung, wash the sting site with soap and water then apply ice packs and/or baking soda water paste to reduce

pain and local swelling. Antihistamines, such as Benadryl can be helpful in lessening the swelling of mildly allergic reactions. If serious systemic reactions occur, seek a physician's help immediately. The immediate injection of epinephrine is the initial step to combat a life threatening anaphylactic reaction. If you think you are allergic to stinging insects, see an allergist who can verify a patient's hypersensitivity by performing a scratch test or intra-dermal skin test.