



There are approximately 55 species of cockroaches in the United States. These insects have become adapted to living with/near humans. They prefer a dark, moist, warm habitat and eat a large variety of food sources. They are nocturnal and run rapidly when disturbed. The most common types are German, American, and Oriental cockroaches, with the German cockroach being the most common cockroach found in food establishments.



**Figure 1: German Cockroaches** have dark brown stripes on the back of their head (image from cockroach-pictures.com). They are the most common indoor species.



**Figure 2: American Cockroaches** are reddish brown in color (image from cockroach-pictures.com). They are most common in large urban buildings near water pipes and grease and sewer pipes.



**Figure 3: Oriental Cockroaches** are very dark in color (image from cockroach-pictures.com). They are mainly found outdoors during warm weather

### What are their habits?

- Like flies, cockroaches carry bacteria (including Salmonella, Vibrio cholera and Staphylococcus aureus) around on their bodies.
- Cockroaches have a lifespan of about one year, a female German cockroach can lay 300-400 eggs during her lifetime.
- Cockroaches leave a chemical trail (a strong, oily odor) when they travel that alerts other cockroaches to hiding places or food sources.
- German Cockroaches are the most common indoor species, especially in multiple family dwellings. They prefer food preparation areas, kitchens, and bathrooms: this is because they like warm, humid areas that are close to food and water.
- They feed at night (nocturnal). If cockroaches are seen during the day, it may indicate a potential infestation.

### Prevention and Control:

- Examine all deliveries and shipment boxes prior to bringing food into the establishment.
- Maintain plumbing systems (i.e., repair any leaks and insulate piping and condensation on cold water pipes).
- Maintain a clean facility (i.e., clean up debris and spills, clean up dead cockroaches, pull all equipment out and thoroughly clean all sides, including the wheels).
- Store food in containers with tight-fitting lids.
- Seal all cracks and crevices.
- Remove all unused equipment from the facility.