

# FLYING INSECTS

Outdoor workers are at risk of being stung by flying insects (bees, wasps, and hornets) and fire ants. While most stings cause only mild discomfort, some may result in severe allergic reactions that require immediate medical care and may cause death.

## First Aid

### If a worker is stung by a stinging insect:

1. Have someone stay with the worker to be sure that they do not have an allergic reaction.
  2. Wash the affected area with soap and water. Remove the stinger using gauze wiped over the area or by scraping a fingernail over the area.
  3. Never squeeze the stinger or use tweezers.
  4. Apply ice to reduce swelling.
  5. Do not scratch the sting as this may increase swelling, itching, and risk of infection.
- Protect Yourself
  - Wear light-colored, smooth-finished clothing.
  - Avoid perfumed soaps, shampoos, and deodorants.
  - Do not wear cologne or perfume.
  - Wear clean clothing and bathe daily.
  - Wear clothing to cover as much of the body as possible.
  - Avoid flowering plants when possible.
  - Keep work areas clean. Some insects are attracted to discarded food.
  - Remain calm and still if a single stinging insect is flying around. (Swatting may cause it to sting.)
  - If attacked by several stinging insects, run to get away. (Bees release a chemical when they sting, which attracts other bees.) Go indoors.
  - Shaded areas are better than open areas.
  - Do not jump into water. Some insects (ex. Africanized honeybees) are known to hover above the water.
  - If an insect is inside your vehicle, stop slowly, and open all the windows.

## Prevention

To prevent infestations on the work areas good housekeeping is the best way to do it

## Other Resources

- Clean your work area as you go instead of waiting before the end of the day.
- While cleaning use protective equipment such as gloves.
- Never allow debris to accumulate on the job areas.
- Clean the back of the vehicles specially if a pick up truck is used.
- Food items left overnight may attract rodents, snakes and flying insects, coordinate with the foreman of the crew to designate specific areas where the trash will be collected such as trash bags or buckets so it can be properly placed on the proper containers at the end of the day.
- Workers with a history of severe allergic reactions to insect bites or stings should carry an epinephrine auto injector and wear medical ID jewelry stating their allergy.

