

## **Being Properly Prepared to Conduct a Wildlife Control Inspection**

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If you are in the professional wildlife control business then you have learned just how important a good inspection is. By conducting a thorough inspection you will be able to properly identify the target animal and place your traps where they need to go for optimum results. This allows you to perform your job in the most professional, efficient and economical manner. The better the inspection process, the less time it takes to perform the service and the happier the customer, plus it's more money in your pocket.

To start you must have the proper inspection tools. The basics would include the following.

- A good durable rechargeable flashlight with a minimum candlepower of 30,000 – 40,000. Also suggested is one of the mini flashlights that you can easily carry with you at all times. This mini light also acts as a backup light. Also handy is a headlight since this keeps your hands free while crawling around in attics or crawlspaces. I can't stress enough how important a good light is. A professional does not show up on the job with a cheap two cell flashlight.
- Ladders are a must and you will need anywhere between a stepladder and a 40 foot extension ladder. You need to be able to access the problem areas easily and in a safe manner.
- To prevent injuries during inspection of crawl areas and attics you will need a pair of leather work gloves to protect your hands, bump cap for your head and knee guards. Safety glasses, coveralls at times and a proper respirator with HEPA filters are also recommended. You must protect yourself.
- Binoculars are a great and an underutilized tool that allows you to inspect areas more thoroughly from the ground that would normally require a ladder. A small handy durable pair similar to those used for hunting or sporting events are best.
- Vials or plastic baggies to collect insect or feces samples for identification.
- A multi purpose Leatherman tool is very handy and useful.

Now that you have your equipment you need to get as much information from the customer when they phone you with their wildlife problem. This information will possibly help identify the target animal but don't make the common mistake of selling the job over the phone based on what the customer tells you. Many times what the customer describes and what you find once you conduct an on site inspection are very different. What they thought was a squirrel in the attic turns out to be a mouse or a raccoon.

Some key questions you can ask the customer during the phone interview process that will aid in identifying what the problem may be are as follows

- Where do you hear the animal activity and what type of noises are they?
- What time of day or night is animal active?

- What wildlife have you seen on your property?
- Have they noticed any unusual damage or disturbance on the property such as when skunks dig up the lawn looking for grubs, animals raiding the garbage pails or something eating the dog or cats food outside?
- Have there been any previous wildlife problems?

By asking these questions on the phone you are able to narrow down which animal is the problem and where the problem exists on the property. This will allow you to focus and perform your on site inspection in the most efficient manner and least amount of time.

With the information acquired during your phone interview and the correct inspection equipment in hand you are now prepared to visit the customers home or business and conduct a thorough on site inspection.