



NATIONAL

Fire Ant Eradication

PROGRAM

Media release

Fire ant program demonstrates its commitment to protecting Australia

The [National Fire Ant Eradication Program](#) is reaffirming its commitment to protecting Queensland and our way of life by treating every property in the eradication area for fire ants.

Eradication is the only way to safeguard Australia from the severe threat posed by fire ants – a globally recognised super pest impacting the lives of millions worldwide.

Starting today, fire ant eradication and compliance officers will work alongside the Queensland Police Service to gain access to properties occupied by individuals obstructing this critical national eradication effort. These actions follow prior attempts to work with these landholders and are now necessary to protect our community and prevent the spread of fire ants.

The Program has made every reasonable effort to notify and cooperate with property owners and tenants, offering them the opportunity to have their properties treated at a time that suits them.

Eradication of fire ants is only possible if every property is treated. When landholders refuse access, the Program is legally required to act.

This operation will focus on a small number of individuals who, despite repeated requests over several months, continue to deny access to their properties without reasonable justification, posing a threat to the broader community. These refusals jeopardise community safety and undermine the eradication effort.

The Program thanks the majority of landholders who have cooperated, allowing treatment to occur quickly and efficiently. The actions of a few impacts us all, putting everyone at risk.

To successfully deliver the [Fire ant response plan 2023–27](#) and eradicate fire ants once and for all, the Program must treat [100% of all targeted properties](#), as fire ants or their nests are not always visible to the human eye. Fire ant eradication must be carried out systematically, multiple times over several years, to ensure no fire ant nests remain.

Under the *Biosecurity Act 2014* (Qld), the Program is authorised to access and treat all targeted properties.

Fire ant eradication treatment products consist of small pieces of corn grit, similar in size to couscous, soaked in soybean oil containing a low concentration of an insect growth regulator (IGR), either pyriproxyfen or S-methoprene. The product contains the same ingredients found in household and agricultural pest control products, but at much lower concentrations.

The [Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority](#) finds fire ant treatments poses no significant risks to people, animals, or the environment when used as directed.

The [Therapeutic Goods \(Poisons Standard\) Instrument](#) does not classify pyriproxyfen and S-methoprene as 'poisons,' as both active ingredients have 'low toxicity' to humans.

Fire ants pose a much greater risk to the health of native animals and pets, particularly those that spend time outdoors or like to sniff around. They can also cause anaphylactic reactions in people.

Quotes attributable to Marni Manning, General Manager, Strategy and Delivery, National Fire Ant Eradication Program:

“We remain extremely grateful for the strong support we receive from the community,” she said.

“Over 99% of people support fire ant eradication treatment and understand the importance of our work – a small minority do not. This group is putting the future of our country at risk, and we cannot stand back and let this happen.



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“Unfortunately, this small group of individuals is actively blocking our teams from treating fire ants.

“They are spreading misinformation about the safety of our treatment approaches and downplaying the potential impacts of fire ants. The information they are sharing is incorrect and dangerous.

“I encourage everyone to consult the range of materials available about the Program and the treatment products used.

“The only way to eradicate fire ants is to treat all targeted properties, starting on the outside and working in.

“Eradicating fire ants is a national priority. Leaving properties untreated jeopardises this effort and puts Australia and our communities at risk.

“Fire ants cause severe and widespread damage, destroying crops, gardens and parks, damaging machinery, and posing risks to people, wildlife and pets. If left untreated, they will render land unusable, disrupt our outdoor way of life, drive up household costs, and injure or kill beloved pets and humans.

“Fire ants have changed the lives of residents in the southern United States of America. We remain steadfast in preventing that from becoming Australia’s reality.”

ENDS

The National Fire Ant Eradication Program is a nationally cost-shared program funded by:

