

Brian Spada Stern Environmental Group

Ken Krinzer Contributor

Brian Spada has battled his share of cockroaches in the hospitality industry in his time with Stern Environmental Group, based in Secaucus, N.J. He shares a few of his insights with *pmp*.

Q: What's the largest cockroach infestation you've battled, and how'd you win?

Spada: Being in the New York City metro area, we quite often come across American and German roaches. One of our customers, a food establishment, was opening a new facility. Before they opened their doors, we did our pre-inspection. We set up monitors, but didn't identify any roaches.

Two weeks later, we went for another inspection and there wasn't one square inch of the monitors that wasn't covered with German roaches. In my 13 years in pest control, I've never seen anything like it. We couldn't figure out where they were coming from.

Eventually, we determined they

came into the facility from a food manufacturer. We traced it to the cardboard the purveyor was using to ship the food. The manufacturer was extremely infested.

We had to get it under control before the opening. We brought in a wet-dry vacuum to get what we could. Then we gelled and baited. In seven days, we had the problem under control. It was amazing.

Q: Can you recall the single-smartest group of cockroaches you've run into, and how you, in the end, ensured you got the best of them — not the other way around?

Spada: We have many clients in the hospitality industry in New York City. One of our hospitality clients was getting German roaches on the



upper floors. For the life of me, we couldn't identify where they were coming from. There was no food source up there, not even a vending machine. We set up monitors, but weren't seeing anything.

One day, a technician suggested we monitor the food-and-beverage carts the establishment uses for room service on the upper levels. Much to our surprise, the basement had a big problem — and we found harborages in the wheel bearings of the carts. They would bring up the food in carts, leave the carts in the vestibules, deliver the food and bring the carts back down. Upon inspection, every cart was severely infested in the wheel bearing area.

It took us about a month-and-a-half to identify the problem. We checked everything, including peeling back the wall in the cupboard to get to the sheathing. Even our entomologist had overlooked the carts. **pmp**

You can reach Krinzer, a freelance writer in the Cleveland area, at pmpcontributor@questex.com.

Brian Spada's

Dos & Don'ts

Do

- Monitor. Cockroaches are territorial, and they will stay within 15 sq. ft. if there is a food source.
- Be persistent with baits and gels.
- Pinpoint the application of gels — don't use globs of it.

Don't

- Don't fog a severe infestation. There may be dead roaches on the floor, but you're not getting to the source. You're just temporarily fixing the situation. By fogging, you push the roaches further and deeper into the walls.
- Don't apply baits just anywhere. Baits attract, and you don't want to introduce a problem from one location to another.
- Don't spread gossip about your competition. Confidentiality is important.

Web Exclusive:

Visit www.mypmp.net/cockroachtale1 to listen to *pmp's* complete interview with Brian Spada from Stern Environmental Group.