

Be mindful of bees in the area!

Public Service Announcement



The Jim Ned Fire Department receives and responds to emergency calls for bee swarm calls on public property. These 9-1-1 calls included colony locations, infestations, and bees that were just passing through. The purpose of this service announcement is to help the public understand the characteristics of bees and the role of the Fire Department.

People often panic when they see a swarm of bees due to information released by the news media and reading various articles on the Africanized honeybees. In some South American attacks, Africanized honeybees seriously stung or killed pets, livestock, and humans. This behavior has earned the Africanized honeybees the common name "Killer Bees." Africanized honeybees look and in most ways behave very similar to Standard European honeybees, but one very important difference between the two varieties is the ultra defensive behavior the Africanized honeybees can display while protecting their colony location.

If provoked or if their colony is disturbed, Africanized honeybees may pursue up to 1/4 of a mile or more and will remain agitated longer (8 or more hours) than the Standard European honeybees. They respond faster and sting in larger numbers. Both species carry the same venom and can only sting one time.

Africanized honeybees react to activities farther than the Standard European honeybees. They react to vibration or noise from power equipment e.g. lawn mowers within 100 feet or more and can react to movement within 50 feet of



the colony. However, both species become defensive when they settle, begin producing wax comb, and raising young. A swarm of bees in flight or briefly at rest seldom bother people.

PREVENTING A SWARM INCIDENT

Eliminate all possible-colony sites in and around your home or at your place of business. Remove old tires, cans, buckets, boxes and containers. Bees may also take up residence in wood/lumber piles, trees, bushes, sheds and garages. Cover holes in walls and add screens to vents. This should limit areas where bees commonly congregate. **Property owners are responsible for removal costs associated with infestations on their property.**

DURING A SWARM INCIDENT

If a swarm should congregate, take refuge in your home or automobile. Bring in pets that are outside. Close windows or chimney flues as needed. **DO NOT BATTLE THE SWARM WITH OVER-THE-COUNTER SPRAY CAN PESTICIDE!** This may upset the swarm and cause them to attack.

Bee swarms with multiple stinging emergencies (victim involved): CALL 9-1-1

Bee Swarm/Nests (inside/or on a structure): Google search for a licensed Pest Control Operator in the county

AFTER A SWARM INCIDENT

Often bees will just move on. After a swarm completely leaves the area, remove the item that they were attracted to, if possible. If there are multiple recurrences, call a bee handler company listed through a Google search and get advice on how to abate this problem. It may also be necessary to contact one of these handlers to abate a permanent colony problem. These companies

are trained bee handlers and can abate the problem without harming the bees and make identification of the bee type.

OTHER FACTS

Bees are responsible for pollinating 80% of fruit trees, vegetables and flowers. They are also responsible for the pollination of crops that provide one-third of our diet and crops that feed our dairy animals as well as production of honey, wax and other products.

If you are allergic to bee stings, consult your primary care physician to obtain "anti-allergic medications."

When calling 9-1-1, bee handler or an extermination company, have the following information:

Approximate size of hive

- The exact location
- A description of the object or structure the bees or colony is in
- If there are any injuries

Take time out to "BEE PROOF" your home and/or business and to recognize when bees start to congregate in a specific area so you can contact a handler or exterminator early into the process.

The Fire Department DOES NOT exterminate or remove bee colonies or infestations in or around private residences or buildings. A 9-1-1 call should only be made for multiple bee sting emergencies or for persons who are having an allergic reaction to a bee sting.