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NPCA Promotes Bat Conservation

In a move marking the tremendous difference that BCI has made, the National Pest Control Association (NPCA) devoted most of the May issue of *Pest Management* to promoting bat conservation and non-lethal methods for solving nuisance problems. Ten years ago, U.S. homeowners were spending tens of millions of dollars annually on counterproductive attempts to poison bats, endangering their own health and needlessly killing bats. Today, poisoning bats is illegal in many states, and there are no pesticides currently labeled for bat control without obtaining a special-use permit for extreme circumstances.

The NPCA is now taking a lead role in educating pest control operators about bats and in promoting methods of safely evicting them from homes without danger to either the bats or the homeowners. The article series in *Pest Management* extolled the benefits of bats, "nature's own PCO," familiarized pest control operators with the more common house-dwelling species, and discussed methods of excluding them from buildings. The articles were prepared with material from BCI publications and interviews with Merlin Tuttle.

An accompanying editorial suggested that PCO's can play an important role in bat conservation by helping to educate their communities about how to solve bat nuisance problems and by providing accurate information to local newspapers should public hysteria result from a local incident with bats. They also advocated that PCO's work to educate local public officials about the beneficial contributions of bats and to encourage them to conserve natural bat roosts.

The National Pest Control Association is to be congratulated for their progressive stance. Providing PCO's with accurate and helpful information about bats, as well as alternatives to poisoning them, will save the lives of many bats and is certainly in the public's best interest.

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