



RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL  
HEALTH

PEST CONTROL

**PSOCIDS or BOOKLICE**

## **WHAT ARE PSOCIDS?**

Psocids or booklice are common but harmless household insect pests which are between 1.0 and 1.5mm long and are smaller than a pinhead.

## **WHERE ARE THEY FOUND?**

Psocids are found in humid conditions so kitchens where ventilation is not sufficient are ideal. They are attracted to dry powdery type foods such as flour, milk powder, sugar and semolina. They live in dark, warm, humid conditions such as the folds of packaging in food cupboards. People often wrongly assume it is the product itself that is at fault.

## **LIFECYCLE**

The adults live for about six months and a female lays about 200 eggs.

## **ARE THEY HARMFUL?**

Psocids are unpleasant and can affect the quality of food. They do

not spread disease however and are of no risk to health.

They can be a nuisance when present in particularly large numbers.

## **PREVENTING PSOCIDS**

Always keep your dried foods, cereal etc. in a cool, dry and well ventilated place.

When you clean out kitchen cupboards make sure all surfaces have been allowed to air dry thoroughly before you put dried products back.

Clean your food storage cupboards regularly. Spillages especially should not be left. Throw into the dustbin any out of date foods.

Ensure the kitchen is well ventilated. Whenever a kettle is boiled or pans used without lids excessive steam will be produced that could create ideal conditions for psocids. Use

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4. Thoroughly clean the cupboard(s) with a detergent solution. Make sure all spillages are cleared and allow to air dry.

5. When the cupboard(s) are empty and clean, temporary control of psocids can be achieved using any residual insecticide (such as crawling insect killer) aerosol available from hardware shops, supermarkets and garden centres. Buy one that is suitable for use near foods. However re infestation is likely unless the dampness that caused the problem in the first place is remedied. Make sure you use any insecticides properly. Read the label and follow all instructions properly.

6. Do not replace foods back into cleaned, treated cupboard(s) until surfaces are completely dried. Make sure you do not reintroduce psocids into the cupboard(s) in contaminated product missed!

The vast majority of psocid infestations can be treated very easily by following the advice given above.

If you think you have a particularly severe infestation or other parts of the house are affected please contact us for specific advice and to discuss whether you should arrange professional pest treatment.

**Prices (2009/10) Insects  
(not wasps)**

Domestic properties up to 3 bedroom house	£45
As above where the householder is on a means tested benefit	£30

**Call Hart DC Pest Control Services  
directly on 01252 774420**

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