PROFIT CENTER
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ProFoam pleases PMPs

When Toronto-based NPD Products President Michael Howe perfected ProFoam Platinum® a few years ago, he didn't foresee what impact he'd have on the U.S. pest management industry. However, California pest management professional (PMP) Bob Gordon early on saw gold in the Platinum product.

Gordon is third-generation president of Gordon's Pest Control, based in Rosemead, Calif. He's been in the industry since 1976, but it was the passing of the state's Proposition 65 bill a decade later that has long been a thorn in his side, as well as for his colleagues. Prop 65 was intended to lower the use of chemicals considered toxic to the environment by obligating users to notify neighboring properties in writing when certain active ingredients were going to be used. Everything from fertilizers to silica gel (found in shoe boxes and kitty litter) were part of the list. Naturally, many pesticide active ingredients were included.

"It's always been a hassle," Gordon says. "It makes us adjust what we buy according to what's not on the list. Because of Prop 65, school districts wouldn't let us foam because all other foamers on the market had ingredients that were on the list. We started searching for a product that could get around this, and about three years ago we found Mike in Canada. Candy Dolan of Target Specialty Products was instrumental in getting ProFoam registered in California. It's made things so much easier. We were extremely happy to find ProFoam."

Howe points out that since Prop 65 took effect, other states have followed suit with similar legislation over the years. "Missouri and Washington are just two states that put out lists, and many others have considered or are considering it," he says. "ProFoam isn't a worry for them."

Rockford, Tenn.-based Nisus Corp. also picked up on the importance ProFoam had for California PMPs and beyond. In addition, its technical team saw how well the foaming agent worked with several Nisus products, such as Tim-bor® and Bora-Care®. In 19xx, the borate manufacturer became an exclusive distributor for ProFoam Platinum.

Gordon uses plenty of Tim-bor with ProFoam, often purchasing it in 1,500-lb. totes. But beyond getting around the Prop 65 requirements, he sees other benefits to ProFoam.

"You don't have to use as much ProFoam as with other foaming agents. Its consistency is more like shaving cream



"Doc" Nichols believes that without ProFoam, Middleton's drywood termite program wouldn't be the success it is today.

than bubble bath," he explains. "Other foaming agents leave residue, like bubble bath would, at the bottom of the tank. You don't have that problem with this product."

In addition, the fresh scent goes over big with customers. "We like to tell customers it smells like a shower," Gordon says with a laugh.

NONREPELLENT BENEFIT

While Florida doesn't currently have legislation like Prop 65 in place, Orlando-based Middleton Pest Control is equally an enthusiastic user of ProFoam Platinum. Middleton Entomologist Dr. Phil "Doc" Nichols admits the nonrepellent quality of the product has opened up two revenue streams for the company that otherwise might not be as lucrative. Currently, ProFoam is the only foaming agent on the market with this benefit.

Residential drain fly business is booming for Middleton thanks to ProFoam. Technicians foam with a drain control product to dramatic effect. Foaming with a green product ensures there is no negative effect on plumbing or septic tanks. Gordon also uses the product for drain flies in his commercial accounts, teaming it with Nisus' Bac-Azap® odor encapsulation product.

Another growing segment Nichols credits ProFoam enhancing for Middleton is drywood termites. "We wouldn't be in the drywood business otherwise," he adds. "In the last four years of using it, we average about $1 million in revenue per year. We didn't have that before."

Nichols explains that ProFoam Platinum is part of a comprehensive program where Middleton technicians use acoustic devices and resistographs to find the galleries. From there, they foam their targets with ProFoam and a nonrepellent termiticide. Any unfinished wood at the account gets treated with Tim-bor.

"We foam 100 percent of our drywood termite accounts," Nichols confirms. "We rely on the nonrepellency, because they can take it to other nestmates. The coat dissipates fairly quickly and clings to the wall of the galleries. This gives them time to let the termiticide take effect.

"This market wouldn't exist without the nonrepellent foaming agent," he continues. "This summer, we had about 17,000 accounts, adding an average of 1,000 new accounts a month. It's our fastest-growing segment."

For subterranean termites, ProFoam is a valuable tool in Middleton's tool box, Nichols says. Technicians reach for the product when they need to foam gaps behind wall joists and other voids.

Gordon agrees that ProFoam is useful for both drywood and Eastern subterranean species. He says he likes using Tim-bor in combination with the agent because customers place value on low-toxicity solutions.



Using ProFoam with Bac-Azap is an effective way to remove organic buildup (and thus, breeding sources) in drains.

"Here in California, the trend in preconstruction treatment is toward treating the wood vs. treating the soil. It's just more practical," he says. "Also, we can do it in one application, not worrying about coming back for follow-up treatment. Many architects are putting borate treatments into their specs. It's an alternative to whole-house fumigation."

Nichols admits he hadn't used foams at all before ProFoam came along. The nonrepellency is what led him to buy into it.

"It has really helped us out on delivering service to customers," he says.

Nisus® CORPORATION

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