

# Nuisance Ants in PPS Schools

**About Ants:** There are many species of ant in Oregon. All are beneficial in the environment, feeding on other insect pests and helping break down woody debris to create new soil.

Ants do not transmit any human diseases, and most ants common in western Oregon are harmless. A few ants can bite if provoked. Carpenter ants are the only ants that can damage structures. Non-wood destroying ants may actually help prevent damage to structures, as ants are major predators of another wood-destroying species, the termite.

Non-wood destroying ants may nest outdoors in soil or moist wood, or within wall voids of structures. Pavement ants nest in soil under concrete walkways or foundations. Ants sometimes enter buildings in search of food or water, or during periods of heavy rain. Some sugar-feeding ants may move indoors in winter when their preferred food source (honeydew from aphids) is gone. Ants may also be more noticeable in spring or summer as colonies are dividing and establishing new nests.

**When Ants Come Inside:** Total eradication of nuisance ants indoors is extremely difficult. The



**About Pesticides:** According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, "By their very nature, most pesticides create some risk of harm - Pesticides can cause harm to humans, animals, or the environment because they are designed to kill or otherwise adversely affect living organisms" (