

STRUCTURAL PEST CONTROL: WHAT ARE WE TEACHING - WHAT SHOULD WE BE TEACHING

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A survey of university entomology departments teaching urban and industrial pest management topics was conducted as was a survey of prominent and less prominent structural pest control companies. Universities were asked what topics they were teaching and the time devoted to each. Companies were asked what information and skills they thought new employees should have upon hiring. Companies were also asked to project their personnel needs for the foreseeable future. Excellent opportunities for baccalaureate level students is indicated for such students at salary levels comparable to other university graduates. Industry is unanimous in its belief that students need significant improvement in their communication skills, both written and oral. This single area is often the biggest problem with new hires and with „in-house“ promotion. The inability to conduct appropriate communication with customers, „in-house“ presentations, and training sessions is seen as a serious and complex problem needing immediate attention. Further many believe that recent graduates should have more knowledge of recent technology, e.g., baiting, insecticides with novel modes of action, etc. Finally several companies think that there is a reduction in basic skills of university graduates in areas such as identification and problem diagnosis. We believe that some university programs should be re-examined, and perhaps revised, to be certain that both basic technology skills and communication skills are being adequately learned by students.