

## Customer Spotlight: Barbara Bengtson

A new feature of the Pest Gazette is the **Pro-Tech Pest Control Customer Spotlight**. Look for this and other new sections in newsletters to follow.

This edition's spotlight is on Barbara Bengtson of Hudson, MA.

A loyal customer since 1991, Barbara was Pro-Tech's very first Semi-Annual customer. At the time, she worked for a local management company that used Pro-Tech's pest control services. One day, Pro-Tech owner Brian White mentioned his brand new program to provide routine service to customers twice a year. "My house was being over-run with ants, and my outdoor shed had wasps' nests and boring beetles," Barbara says. "I signed the Semi-Annual contract and haven't seen an ant since."



Barbara enjoys not having the hassle of scheduling appointments for her outdoor residual service. "The entire staff at Pro-Tech is quite knowledgeable, very friendly, and always professional. I trust that

the job will get done the right way without my having to be home to make sure," she explains.

Barbara once called Brian for a problem outside the normal scope of work at her house. "My cat just wasn't doing her job!" she says. Barbara had minor rodent activity in her basement and attic, but she was worried about using over-the-counter products, such as DeCon, because of the threat to her household pets. Pro-Tech was able to solve Barbara's problem safely. "Brian's response was quick, and the bait worked like a charm," she recalls.

Overall, Barbara sees the Semi-Annual program as a great value, giving her peace of mind when it comes to pests in her house. She has even added her mother's house to the program, and continues to work with Pro-Tech in a commercial setting.

We are grateful to Barbara for being a loyal customer for 19 years – and to our many other customers, who have trusted Pro-Tech to keep their homes pest-free..

*A little spray goes a long way!* 

## Time for your Semi-Annual Treatment

Spring is right around the corner, and so are all the pests that go along with the season. As usual, the **Semi-Annual residual treatment** will be performed on a neighborhood-to-neighborhood basis. As customers call in with pest issues, Semi-Annual customers in the same area will also receive their service on that day.

If you have a special requirement, wish to be home at the time of treatment, need to provide access to a locked area or the interior of your home or business, please contact us at 508.757.2409 (Worcester clients) or 508.872.1113 (Framingham area) to schedule an appointment.

Areas of your home that will receive

treatment include the foundation, accessible eaves, overhangs and shutters. We also treat temporary structures, including landscape timbers, deck posts, railings, etc. Other items or structures can be added or subtracted from the service at any time by request. All additions will incur a minimal increase in service cost.

Pro-Tech offers a wide variety of services for in and around your home. Our technicians can handle everything from attic fogging for better bee and wasp protection to treating the mulch beds along the foundation for beetles, crickets and other common household pests. Please call us to include these services, along with protection for sheds and pool houses – also critter

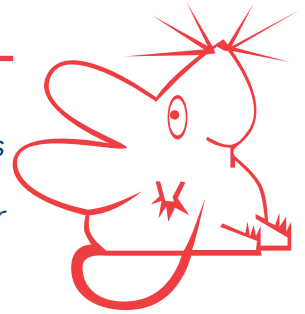
magnets – and higher eaves (above 30 ft.) that are not accessible from the ground. All Semi-Annual customers enjoy reduced rates for these add-on services.

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## Helpful Hints:

*Pest infestations occur because of favorable habitats existing in and close to your home. Eliminating these favorable habitats can prevent most common infestations and save you a lot of trouble and money. Here are a few helpful hints to make your home less attractive to pests.*



**1** Store firewood off the ground and away from the structure. Firewood is a frequent home for carpenter ants, termites, mice, spiders and snakes. Carpenter ants will forage up to 100 yards away from their nests for food, so further is always better.

**2** Trim all trees and bushes away from the house to prevent contact with the structure. This prevents insects from bypassing the foundation treatment by using the vegetation as a bridge.



**3** Avoid organic mulches around the foundation of the home and remove dead stumps and other rotting matter from within 50 feet of the home.

**4** Correct any moisture problems in the house such as leaky roofs, chimney flashing, plumbing leaks, blocked gutters and poorly ventilated attics. Insects love moist wood.

**5** Spiders are drawn to locations that offer good hunting for other insects. By switching to yellow insect lights and discouraging insects in and around your house, it becomes a less inviting environment for spiders.

**6** By regularly removing spider webs from your house, basement and attic, you make it difficult for spiders to feed themselves and prevent reproduction.

**7** Mosquito breeding around the home can be reduced significantly by reducing the amount of standing water. Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or similar water-holding containers that have accumulated on your property. Do not overlook containers that have become overgrown by aquatic vegetation. Pay special attention to discarded tires that may have accumulated on your property. The unused tire has become the most important domestic mosquito producer in this country.

**8** Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are left out of doors. Drainage holes that are located on the sides collect enough water for mosquitoes to breed in.

**9** Use landscaping to eliminate standing water that collects on your property. Mosquitoes will develop in any puddle that lasts more than 4 days.

## FAQ's about Semi-Annual Service

### ***Q: Do I have to schedule my service, or is it automatic?***

A: Semi-Annual service is not pre-scheduled, unless specially requested. Services are completed on a town-to-town basis, usually starting with the furthest locations and working in towards Worcester.


### ***Q: I have a small shed in my back yard, and I'm worried that it will attract bees and wasps! Is that covered via the Semi-Annual program?***

A: Not yet! However, structures, such as sheds, pool houses, well covers, and landscape timbers, can be added to your service for minimal cost. For example, a shed might be \$10 extra.

### ***Q: I've been having some problems with carpenter ants since my first treatment. What should I do?***

The materials used in the Semi-Annual program are low-dose and designed to be long-term. This means once a pest crosses the treatment line, it takes 3 to 10 days for the pest to be terminated. You should look for systematic activity. Take the time to observe the surroundings. Has it recently rained? Has there been any light construction around the home? Have you recently received your annual mulch delivery? The smallest change in your environment can cause major issues in the pest world.

### ***Q: I've noticed pavement ants (sugar ants, little brown sweet ants) in my kitchen. What should I do?***

A: Pavement ants differ from carpenter ants in both size and activity. When you see a group of pavement ants inside the home, start looking for what they are looking for. These tiny ants are great scavengers! Usually a quick cleanup of the area will do the trick and eliminate the need for insecticides. 

### **Check out Pro-Tech on Facebook!**



Now you can stay connected with your "Pro-Techies" on Facebook!

We'll post regular tips on how to avoid pest problems, as well as pest activity to look for in your home, and hints on when to call the Pro-Tech professionals before it's too late.

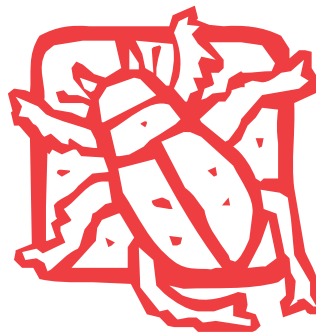
We'll also include photographs and videos as helpful pest identification tools. Search for us as "Pro-Tech Pest Control" – and become a fan!

## Flea and Tick Control


Last year, Pro-Tech introduced a perimeter flea and tick control system. This new service involves a perimeter treatment of lawns, mulch areas, walkways and wood lines. The material is spread using traditional lawn spreaders, as well as hand-held "shakers" and bulb dusters.

Pro-Tech's best tool for this job is Talstar PL, a granular material with a wide variety of attributes. It can be used in conjunction with all landscape fertilization programs and will not have any adverse effects on the lawn or mulch areas.

The great benefit of Talstar PL is its label. In pest control, the label is the law, and the law is strict and mighty. Talstar PL's label includes a wide variety of common household pests that invade lawns and mulch



areas. Benefits include, but are not limited to, the control of most ant types, crickets, chinch bugs, centipedes, fleas, and both deer and American dog ticks. While Talstar will not eliminate the insect population entirely, it will greatly diminish the infestation.

In order to keep costs low for customers, Pro-Tech offers a variety of options for this service. Whether you want just your front mulch beds treated or a general broad treatment of the entire lawn, we can handle it all. Call us for a free estimate. 


## Updated Billing Terms

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We are pleased to announce that we now accept the following credit cards: Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover. We would also like to update you on the payment policies for Semi-Annual service customers. If you pay for both of your Semi-Annual visits up front, you can take advantage of a 10% pre-payment discount. If you pay within seven days of service, you can deduct \$3.00 dollars off the price.

We appreciate the fact that most of our loyal customers pay their bills on time; however, due to an increase in past-due accounts, we have been forced to tighten our collection policy. Our terms are still the same: net 30 days. (Most service companies are 7 to 10 days.) In the event that your account is more than 30 days past due, you will be assessed a \$10.00 monthly late fee. After 90 days, your account will automatically be sent to a collection service. You will be responsible for all collection costs.

You have probably noticed that many small businesses have had to close their doors because of the economy. Small businesses do not receive government bailouts, stimulus cash or forgiveness on receivables. Yet, we have had to absorb a 50% increase in health care premiums, rising costs for goods and services, and an increase on the sales tax of all of the above.

We appreciate your continued trust in Pro-Tech. On behalf of the small business community, we ask for your understanding and consideration of the important role small businesses play in the local economy, enhancing the quality of life for our employees' families and yours. 

Thank you  
Brian White,  
President