



# Oklahoma School IPM

## Wasps and Hornets



Management of stinging insects is especially important because some people are severely allergic to stinging insect venom.

**Description:** Yellow jacket wasps, hornets and other paper wasps can be identified easily by the tightly constricted region between their thorax and abdomen. While they have four wings, only two wings may be visible from a distance. At the tip of their abdomen there is a stinger capable of delivering a potent sting



**Location:** Paper wasps generally construct elaborate paper nests that can be found along the eaves of buildings and other sheltered areas. They are attracted to food and food odors, so they are often found foraging around trash containers and other areas where food is present.

**Life Cycle:** Eggs are laid singly by the queen into cells of the nest and hatch into legless grub-like larvae. Sterile worker wasps (similar to the queen) assist in building the nest, feeding young and defending the nest. In the fall, mated female offspring of the queen seek overwintering sites while the remainder of the colony dies.

**Monitoring:** If large numbers of wasps are appearing in areas frequented by children, search the school grounds for nests. Look for nests in the ground (often under rock piles or bushes), among the branches of trees or shrubs, under eaves, playground equipment, meter boxes and inside walls.

**Cultural Methods:** Use good sanitation practices outside. This will eliminate the lure of food odors.

Seal off openings in structures, playground equipment, pipes etc. to prevent wasps from constructing nests inside cavities accessed by those openings

Use traps to catch wasps. Empty these traps by placing them in the freezer to kill the wasps that were captured

**Pesticides:** Help your school's pest management professional by identifying wasp nest locations so they can spot treat them with appropriate pesticides to kill the colony. Once the nest is eliminated, use cultural methods to help prevent reoccurrences.

