**Keeping the (Real) Pests Out of Your Kitchen**

Frustrated when a roommate leaves dirty dishes in the kitchen sink? Do your kids leave a mess in your home’s kitchen? Maintaining a clean home environment is everyone’s responsibility, especially if you don’t want pests to make your space *their* home.

“Ants, cockroaches, house flies, rodents and many other pests are attracted to apartments and condominiums for the easy access to food, water and shelter,” says Dr. Zia Siddiqi, Ph.D., entomologist with pest control company Orkin. “Pests are often initially drawn to a home because of food odors, which may be undetectable to humans.”

Instead of simply hoping that you never see a pest, help prevent their arrival altogether in just a few extra minutes a day. Orkin recommends these simple steps for reducing pest “hot spots” in your home:

* Put away food and clean dirty dishes – even food that has been sitting out for a few hours can attract pests.
* Wipe down counters and other surface areas in the kitchen daily.
* Clean any spills immediately, even if it is just water.
* Line all trashcans and remove trash daily – what is trash to us could be a gourmet meal to a pest!
* Clean refrigerators weekly and dispose of old food.
* Keep non-perishables tightly sealed, especially sugar, flour and other items that may not close well in their original packaging.
* Vacuum regularly in the spaces beside refrigerators and in any cracks and crevices to clean out any crumbs that may attract pests. Vacuuming can also eliminate pest allergens and even pests themselves.

Following these simple steps helps keep pests far from your home. Your messy kids or roommates? That’s another story. For more tips on pest prevention in your home or business, visit orkin.com.