**Buzz Off!**

**Don’t let Patio Pests Spoil Your Summer Fun**

Like most people, you probably look forward to warm temperatures all winter long. You may be preparing already for summer cook-outs, pool parties and other outdoor activities. Unfortunately, summer pests come along with the summer heat, and they can quickly put a damper on the season’s festivities.

“Outdoor patios attract pests, most notably flies, mosquitoes and Asian cockroaches,” says Dr. Zia Siddiqi, Ph.D., entomologist with pest control company Orkin. “Just like people, they are drawn in by the aromas coming from the grill and the promise of a good meal and a drink.”

In addition to being a nuisance, “patio pests” can pose a health risk. Flies, for example, can carry billions of germs on the outside of their bodies, including dangerous bacteria like E. coli, Salmonella and Shigella. Mosquitoes can transmit yellow and dengue fever, malaria and West Nile virus, while cockroaches can carry bacteria that cause diarrhea, dysentery and cholera. Other common patio pests such as bees and wasps can inflict painful stings when disturbed. A bee sting or allergic reaction is the last thing you want to worry about while soaking up the summer heat.

Fortunately, by following these simple steps, you can help guard your patio – and yourself – against unwanted pests.

* Remove or hinder pests’ access to food and beverages. Keep containers tightly wrapped and secured, and don’t leave food or discarded wrappers in the open.
* When dining outdoors, be sure to cover soda cans as yellow jackets often enter soda cans unseen.
* Help eliminate mosquito breeding sites by emptying standing water from objects like flower pots outside your apartment or condo.
* Empty garbage cans often, especially if they contain food waste.

Controlling patio pests often requires the help of a licensed pest control professional with appropriate equipment and protective clothing. At the first sign of a pest infestation, contact our office so we can have a pest control professional inspect and treat as needed. For more tips on pest prevention in your home or business, visit orkin.com.