

# MORE PEOPLE. MORE PESTS.

## Is densification leading to pestification at your property?

"Densification of space is reshaping the commercial real estate landscape," according to John G. Oliver, managing principal for Oliver & Company and chair of BOMA International.<sup>1</sup> It certainly is, and in more ways than many might realize. While property managers are seeing impacts on rental income and psf expenses, the Orkin Man is seeing something else: an impact on pest pressure in "densified" office spaces. Put simply, more people per square foot means more of the things that pests like – namely food, drink and places to hide.

Collaborative workspaces are all the rage, and they have real benefits, but if your tenants are packing more people into the same square footage, here are a few important things to keep in mind to make sure pests don't show up for work.

## 5 Ways to Avoid Pest Problems in An Open Floor Plan Office



1

Make sure your facility maintenance team knows to keep meeting spaces clean when they're not in use. Your building's cleaning crew can help, but a clean, pest-free space starts with the people in the office every day. Consider designating someone from your administrative staff to keep an eye on these spaces.



Open floor plans come with more collaborative spaces – conference rooms, common work areas and the like. People know it's their responsibility to clean their own offices, but who's responsible for keeping shared spaces clean? Food and drink left in these spaces can be a powerful pest attractant.



2

More people on each floor means coffee machines and filtered water machines are going to get a lot more use, and more fills means more spills. Water gives pests what they need, while cream and sugar give pests what they crave.



Plan to clean the areas around these machines more often, and don't make tenants walk to throw away their creamer cups, sugar packets and stir sticks. Put a small trash container right next to the machine to cut down on the tiny spills that you can't see but pests can.



3

More workstations mean more books, paper, food, drink, waste baskets, desk plants and other little knickknacks that attract and harbor pests throughout your tenant's office.



When it comes to pest control, cleanliness is key. Encourage your tenants to keep their workspaces tidy, clean up any food and drink carefully, and recycle (when possible) their paper before it piles up.



4

Speaking of recycling, more workers in the same space will generate a lot more recyclables and trash.



You may need to increase the frequency of your trash and recycling pickups to keep up with increased demand. Letting it back up can invite pest problems. Discuss a more frequent program with your waste management professional and be sure to educate tenants on your building's recycling program.



5

Even if you do all of the above, as your buildings have more people per square foot, you may start to see more pests.



Talk to your pest control provider about your space. You just want to make sure they are coming frequently enough and conducting thorough inspections every time. You can also consult the provider during renovation planning to identify any potential risks. As your tenant's businesses and your reputation thrive in smaller spaces, your pest control expert can help make sure pests don't.

<sup>1</sup>July 14, 2014 BOMA International press release: "BOMA's Experience Exchange Report Reveals Rising Office Incomes As Industry Emerges From Post-Recession Slump"