

Biosecurity advice for buyers and sellers of shipping containers





Western Australia (WA) has a robust biosecurity system to help keep our State free of unwanted exotic insect pests and snails. These pests pose a significant risk to our primary industries, natural environment and even our way of life.

Some of these pests are hard to see and can enter WA undetected in shipping containers. Buyers and sellers of shipping containers must be aware of the risks of these pests spreading into agricultural regions if an infested container is relocated or resold.

What types of exotic pests are a risk for buyers and sellers of shipping containers?

- Any exotic insect pests, those not from WA, found in a shipping container or associated cargo that has arrived from overseas or interstate, should be considered a biosecurity risk.
- WA's high priority list of cargo pests includes khapra beetle, brown marmorated stink bug, invasive ant species such as the red imported fire ant, exotic snails, the Asian gypsy moth, exotic honey bees, European wasps, exotic longhorn beetles, tree borers, termites and timber borers.
- Be aware of unusual insect pests that look dissimilar to commonly found species and check for tiny pests, including the serious pest khapra beetle (*Trogoderma granarium*) which is approximately 1.5mm-4mm in length. The khapra beetle can live for years without food, going into diapause and possibly remaining undetected for some time. Its preferred food sources are grain, cereal products and dry foodstuff.

Why do we want to keep these pests out of WA?

- Establishment of exotic pests in WA could potentially wipe out agricultural and horticultural crops, increase production costs, or lead to the loss of lucrative export markets.
- The khapra beetle, for example, is a destructive pest of stored grain and dried plant products. Australia is free of khapra beetle and it is important it remains that way. If khapra beetle was to establish, it could cause significant financial losses to the grains industry and our economy. It has been estimated that a widespread incursion could cost A\$15.5 billion over 20 years (DAWE).

Why are shipping containers a concern?

- Shipping containers are constructed in a way that can easily house insect pests, such as in their false floors which should be thoroughly inspected. Anyone who unloads, processes or transports imported cargo at ports, or buys, sells or resells shipping containers must always check for insect pests of concern.

Could selling and moving a container spread a biosecurity risk?

- Yes. Always inspect containers on arrival, including in false floors, before selling or moving them on, particularly to regional areas.

Where should I check for pests?

- On the outside and inside surfaces of shipping containers and underneath metal lips.
- Around cracks or holes and under false floors.
- On the underside of the container when loaded.

What should I be looking for?

- Live or dead animals, including insects and snails.
- Egg masses on any surface which can resemble pale furry lumps.
- Plant matter, soil or mud which may harbour pests.

What happens if I see something suspicious in one of my shipping containers?

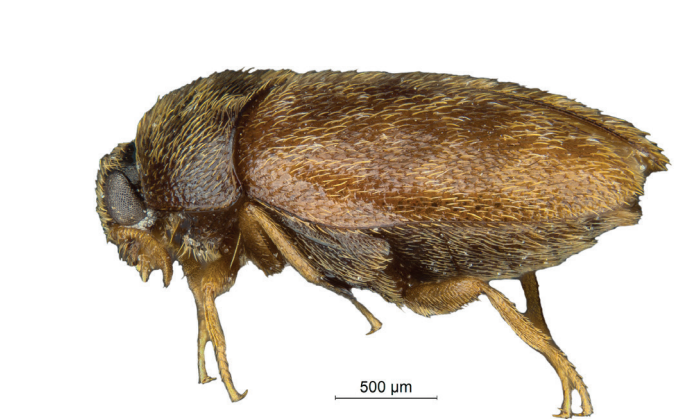
- If you find insects, animals or suspect egg masses **close, cover and isolate** – close the container lid and secure the area.
- Isolate any pests found, such as by double bagging, to prevent them escaping and immediately report findings to the **See. Secure. Report Hotline – T: 1800 798 636.**
- Take photographs where possible and note physical features to assist with identification.
- Advice around how to manage the situation and treatment options, which may include heat treatment, insecticide treatment or methyl bromide fumigation, will be provided once reported.
- If you see dirt and plant matter, ensure the container is clean before being relocated – arrive clean, leave clean is an effective biosecurity measure.



Red imported fire ant.
(Image: © Kristie Graham, USDA ARS, Bugwood.org)

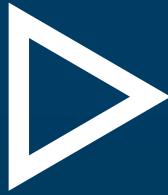


Brown marmorated stink bug.
(Image: © Kristie Graham, USDA ARS, Bugwood.org)



Look out for the tiny but serious khapra beetle, which is brownish red in colour and less than 4.5mm in length.

Remember to



LOOK

ACT

REPORT



Report

In imported goods, containers and parcels

Call the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's (DAWE)

See. Secure. Report. Hotline on – **T: 1800 798 636** **W: awe.gov.au/report**

Visit DAWE's website **W: awe.gov.au** for more biosecurity information.

On your property

Contact the WA Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development's (DPIRD) Pest and Disease Information Service (PaDIS) on **T: (08) 9368 3080**, **E: padis@dpird.wa.gov.au** or report via the **MyPestGuide™ Reporter** app.

Or visit DPIRD's **W: agric.wa.gov.au/exoticinsectpests** site.

Important disclaimer

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