



# When the Ants Come Marching In...



## Where do ants live?

Ants usually nest in soil, but specific nesting habits depend on the species. Ants can be found nesting next to buildings, along sidewalks, and in areas adjacent to bushes and trees. Ants can build nests wherever they find a protected area, including pavement cracks, under buildings, and under rocks and wood. Indoor nesting ants prefer warm, moist locations such as wall voids, under carpets, and near hot water pipes or heating systems.

## Why are they in our school?

Ants are usually found in nests outdoors, but enter buildings when in search of food or water. Most ants found in Colorado are foragers, meaning they search for food and water to bring back to the established, outdoor colony. Following the line of marching ants may lead you to the nest, which can be eliminated directly. Pharaoh ants and some colonies of pavement and carpenter ants are able to establish permanent colonies indoors.

## Did You Know?

Ants use their antennae for touch and for sense of smell.

An ant can lift 20 times its own body weight.

Queen ants can live for years and have millions of young.

When ants fight, it is usually to the death!

Ants partake in communal feeding ([Trophallaxis](#)) which can be helpful during management.



## What do ants eat?

Ants eat fruits, seeds, nuts, fatty/greasy substances, dead or live insects, dead animals, and sweets. Diets may vary by the ant species and by the time of year.



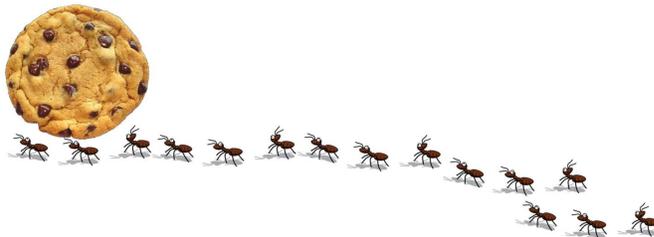
# Managing Ants with Integrated Pest Management

## Site Responsibilities Include

- Store food in pest-safe containers.
- Clean up spills and dispose of trash often

## Maintenance & Operations Responsibilities Include

- Caulk or seal cracks and crevices around foundations that provide entry from outside.
- Trim branches and limbs of trees and shrubs that touch the building to keep ants from gaining access via these routes.
- Fix dripping faucets and leaking pipes, because they may be an important water source for ants.
- Provide a dry, vegetation-free border, such as gravel or stones, around the perimeter of building foundations to discourage nest building.
- Manage honeydew-producing insects, such as aphids and whiteflies, on plants near the building. These honeydew producers attract and support large colonies of ants.
- Nests located via inspection can be treated directly with an insecticide. Persistent ants with hidden nests can be treated using ant baits. The bait is matched with ant's feeding preferences and kept out of reach of children.



## Flying Ants in Schools

FLYING ANTS! They are everywhere!!

What you are seeing are all the males and the young princess ants on their nuptial flight. They have stayed underground in their nests waiting for the perfect day.

On a nice dry warm day, they all fly off, leaving the nest in a swarm to defend themselves against predators.

Ants in different nests all fly on the same day hence the swarms you would be seeing.

The males die after they have mated. The new queens (no longer princesses!), land, remove their wings and form their own new colony underground.



When winged ants are found within a school, it is likely that a colony has already been established or entered through an opening like an open window, crack or hole.

**For additional information about the Aurora Public School's Integrated Pest Management Program, contact Andrew Nieman at [Atneiman@aps.k12.co.us](mailto:Atneiman@aps.k12.co.us)**