

Seen these ants?

Information for residents and businesses



Fire ants

Solenopsis invicta

What are fire ants?

- ▲ Invasive and destructive ants, native to South America.
- ▲ Small (2-6mm), with different sized ants in each nest
- ▲ Dark reddish-brown with a darker brown-black abdomen.
- ▲ Aggressive, swarming and stinging repeatedly when disturbed.

How do they affect us?

They will sting people and animals repeatedly, causing a severe burning feeling and leading to allergic and anaphylactic reactions, infections, and rarely, fatalities.

They restrict use of backyards, parks, playgrounds, and beaches, damage electrical and agricultural equipment, and sting pets and livestock.

They form super-colonies, killing off native plants and animals and damaging ecosystems beyond repair.

What can I do?

Check for ants in hay, turf, mulch, soil, potted plants, sand, gravel or agricultural machinery, especially if:

- ▲ materials came from southeast Queensland;
- ▲ materials located in sunny, open areas of lawn or pasture, areas of disturbed soil;
- ▲ materials located in gardens, backyards, parks, roadsides, paddocks, fence lines, cropped land.



Fire ants (*Solenopsis invicta*) are small and dark reddish-brown with darker abdomens. Image shows ants at actual size.



Fire ant nests are patches or mounds of soil. They are flatter in warmer months, and higher in cooler months.

Keep a look out for nests that are:

- ▲ flattish patches of soil or mounds up to 40 cm high, with no obvious entrance holes;
- ▲ loose or crumbly looking, with a honeycomb appearance inside.

CONTACT US if you notice any suspicious nest or ants on your property or in public areas.

Seen them? Call us **1800 680 244**

Protect our kids, pets and native plants and animals

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fire-ants



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There are laws that place conditions on the movement of materials and items that can carry fire ants and their nests into NSW from infested areas in Southeast Queensland and Northern NSW.



- ▲ Whether the **premises** it comes from needs to be treated for fire ants;
- ▲ Whether it needs a **biosecurity certificate** before it enters NSW;
- ▲ Whether you need to make a formal **Record of Movement declaration** before it enters NSW.

IMPORTANT: It is an offence to bring fire ant carriers into NSW without meeting the legal requirements.

Fire ant carriers include:

- ▲ Soil
- ▲ Organic mulch, compost and manure
- ▲ Growing media
- ▲ Hay
- ▲ Potted plants
- ▲ Turf
- ▲ Sand and gravel
- ▲ Agricultural and earth moving equipment
- ▲ Grass, vegetation or clippings
- ▲ Mining or quarrying materials (chitters, overburden, coal fines, coal stones)



Above: Fire ants appear similar to other species, often need an expert to ID them.

Below: Pustules 48 hours after fire ant stings



If you are moving a fire ant carrier into NSW you are responsible for knowing what the legal requirements are, and making sure you meet them.

Check the website to find out:

- ▲ What the **current legal requirements** are;
- ▲ Whether the material or item you're moving is a **fire ant carrier**;
- ▲ Whether it's coming from a **fire ant infested area** of QLD or NSW;
- ▲ **How to treat it** before you bring it into NSW;

If you see nests or ants, or you've been stung multiple times and the stings form white pustules, call us.

Visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fire-ants to find out more.



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