



Don't bring hitchhikers to New Zealand on your vessel

The threat: Exotic pests, such as red imported fire ants and mosquitoes, could affect human health and seriously harm New Zealand's economy and unique environment. Many insect pests can fly, meaning that they do not have to be physically transferred from a vessel to the land to establish a population. You could unknowingly be carrying a variety of pests on board.

What are hitchhikers?

Hitchhikers are insects and animals that arrive on your vessel – sometimes in small numbers undetected and sometimes in swarms. Some such as moths can lay their egg masses on the vessel. Some termites and borer beetle can live in the wooden parts of the vessel structure. Some may build nests (ants) or inhabit standing water (mosquito larvae).

Some common hitchhiking pests found on ships and yachts at New Zealand ports are ants, termites, beetles, mosquitoes, wasps and bees.

Exotic termites have been found on recreational vessels arriving into New Zealand. These are usually found in wooden structures and fittings when vessels are undergoing refit.

Arriving vessels have also been found carrying exotic ants. They pose a risk to public health, agriculture and horticulture and can become significant urban pests.

There are numerous interceptions of exotic mosquitoes at ports each year including the Asian tiger mosquito (*Aedes albopictus*) which can spread a number of diseases such as Dengue fever and Ross River Virus.

You can help prevent the spread of hitchhiking pests to New Zealand

Prior to leaving your last port check your vessel for pests (insects and other animals). Pay attention to decks, holds, and galleys or other areas where food is found, as well as warm areas such as near engine rooms. Also check wooden structures and packing for insect damage by wood-borers or termites.

Kill or remove all pests found on board. Use a knock-down insecticide containing permethrin to kill insects and use baited traps for vermin. Also traps could be used for crawling insects such as ants.

Undertake a regular pest management programme and keep a look out for pests during your voyages.

Mosquitoes may breed in water on board such as in saucers under pot plants and in tyre fenders. Remove standing water by drilling drain holes in objects such as tyre fenders. (Add chlorine bleach to water which you suspect may contain larvae).

If you have a pest infestation or something you cannot deal with before arrival, declare this in your Advance Notice of Arrival form

and report it to a biosecurity inspector on arrival in New Zealand. They will assist you with removal of the pests or treatment of your vessel.

Biosecurity NZ officers can now issue infringement notices to commercial and recreational vessel operators that don't meet their biosecurity obligations.

- The infringement notices cover lower-level offences that would have required prosecution to enforce in the past:
- Failure by an operator to provide notice of a vessel's arrival in New Zealand.
- Failure by an operator to respond to an official request to declare what has been done to comply with risk management requirements (eg. biofouling rules).

The penalties are \$400 for an individual and \$800 for a corporation. Biosecurity NZ still has the option to prosecute if necessary.

The new fines emphasise the importance of keeping unwanted pests and diseases out of New Zealand.

www.biosecurity.govt.nz/importing/border-clearance/vessels



Drywood termites



Asian tiger mosquito



Asian gypsy moth and egg mass