

SPONSORED CONTENT



# 2026 STATE OF THE TICK CONTROL MARKET

## INSIDE

- » Rising Pressure
- » Revenue Potential
- » Tried-and-True Treatments
- » Getting Customers On Board
- » Exclusive Research

SPONSORED BY





# Totally Ticked

**A**t the risk of sounding like a broken record, tick pressure is up — *again*. In some markets, the weather is creating a more attractive habitat for ticks; in others, the apparent rise in pressure may actually just be rising demand for tick control services as people become increasingly aware of the health risks associated with ticks. Either way, calls are coming in earlier and more frequently each year, and more pest management companies are treating ticks than ever before (85%), according to the 2026 PCT State of the Tick Control Market survey.

“It’s out of control,” said Matthew Garten, CEO, Select Exterminating, which serves New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Massachusetts — a hotbed of tick activity. “The pressure is the highest we’ve ever seen. Our calls have easily doubled over the past three years, partly because of media exposure, but also because of health education and the weather. This past winter was so cold, and the snowpack was prevalent for so long that it encapsulated the ground, insulating the ticks.”

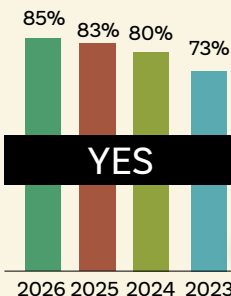
Warmer states are seeing a surge, too. In fast-growing Northwest Arkansas, for example, Natural State Pest & Lawn, Fayetteville, Ark., has been getting more, and earlier, tick calls for the past several years. “Compared with five years ago, the biggest difference is not just the amount of tick activity, but also how much more aware people are of ticks and the diseases they can carry,” said Michael Carter, general manager of Natural State Pest & Lawn. “Outdoor activity is a big part of life here, with people spending a lot of time hiking, biking, golfing and kayaking; ticks are on people’s radar much more than in the past. Notably, they are learning more about alpha-gal syndrome, and that has added to their concern.”

Another growing area, Tallahassee, Fla., has seen tick pressure steadily rise as new construction alters the environment. “Tallahassee is committed to protecting the natural beauty of the area — the Canopy Roads, for example — as it grows as a city, but we’re encroaching into wildlife habitats,” said Mosquito Joe General Manager Robert Frost. “A lot of properties are built right up against conservations, so deer, raccoons and field mice — all perfect hosts for ticks — come right into people’s yards. Those homeowners love looking at the animals, but then a month later, we’re getting calls that their child had three ticks on them that week. Suddenly, having wildlife in their backyard isn’t so cute anymore.” 🐾



## TAKING ON TICKS

Does your service location offer tick control services?

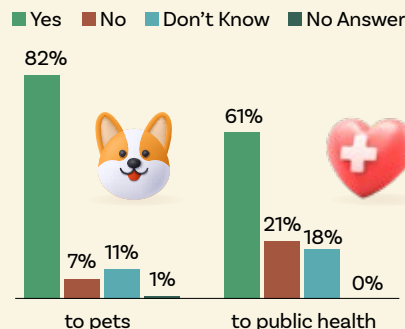


Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 162 in 2026, 143 in 2025, 209 in 2024, 197 in 2023



## THE RISKS OF TICKS

Do your customers consider ticks a threat?



Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 137



## ABOUT THE SURVEY

The PCT 2026 State of the Tick Control Market survey was sponsored by Central Life Sciences/Zoëcon and compiled by Readex Research, a privately held research firm located in Stillwater, Minn. A sample of 10,914 pest control owners, executives, technical directors and managers was systematically selected from the PCT database.

Data was collected from 162 respondents — a 1% response rate — via an online survey from March 28-April 16, 2026. The majority of results are based on the 137 respondents whose locations offer tick control services. The margin of error for percentages is plus or minus 8.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Charts may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

## Fear Factor

If you live in an area where people are well aware of Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) or other tick-borne diseases, then you're probably getting more calls for tick control services than ever before. Yet only 61% of pest management professionals (PMPs) believe that their customers consider ticks a threat to public health. Many more — 82% — consider them a threat to pets.

"We're in the mountains of Tennessee, where people hunt in the woods, play in the woods and sometimes live in the woods, but surprisingly, we don't get a lot of calls for ticks. I think it's because people just pull them off and go on about their business. They don't see it as that big of a deal, at least to the point of calling someone to do something about it," said Aaron Veal, owner, Phoenix Pest Control, Maryville, Tenn.

This is worrisome because the two species Veal's team encounters most are the American dog tick, a vector for Rocky Mountain spotted fever and tularemia, and the lone star tick, which also carries tularemia, as well as AGS, ehrlichiosis, Heartland virus disease, southern tick-associated rash illness (STARI) and Bourbon virus — all potentially serious diseases. He said the public is well aware of these risks but generally becomes concerned only when their pets are involved.

"The crazy thing is people will ask about the safety of their dogs before they'll ask about the safety of their kids. If their child is getting ticks on them, they just tell them to stay out of the woods. If the dog's getting ticks, they'll spend \$1,000 cutting back the tree line," he said.

The script seems to flip in the Northeast. Matthew Garten shared that Select Exterminating's tick customers are primarily concerned with their families' health and safety. "Pet owners have become accustomed to dealing with fleas and ticks on their pets; their focus now is on their families," he said. "We're seeing more calls from clients with young children who are concerned about the health risks. Media exposure plays a part, plus people throughout this region may have seen the effects on a friend or neighbor who has contracted Lyme or another disease. They want to go onto a tick program to make sure they're protected."





# Money in the Bank

**W**hile tick services may not generate a huge portion of the typical pest management company's overall revenue — PMPs reported 6.4%, on average — 36% expect that percentage to rise in 2026, and 62% expect it to remain reliably steady. Only one in 100 expects their tick revenue percentage to be down this year.

That tracks with the surges in tick pressure certain markets are seeing, and with the longer-term trend of increasing populations. Asked to look back five years, 31% of PMPs reported that tick control services have become a more significant portion of their business, 53% said it has held steady, and just 12% said it represents a less significant portion of their business.

## A CHUNK OF CHANGE

What percentage of your overall revenue was derived from tick control services in 2025?

**6.4%** OF REVENUE, ON AVERAGE

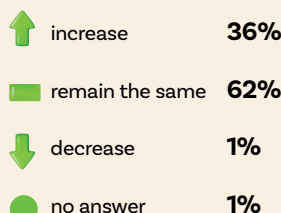
|             |     |
|-------------|-----|
| 30% or more | 4%  |
| 20-29%      | 4%  |
| 15-19%      | 5%  |
| 10-14%      | 6%  |
| 8-9%        | 5%  |
| 5-7%        | 15% |
| 3-4%        | 12% |
| 1-2%        | 43% |
| 0%          | 6%  |
| no answer   | 1%  |

Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 137



## TICKING UPWARD

Compared with last year, how do you expect the percentage of revenue generated by your tick control services to change this year?



Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 137

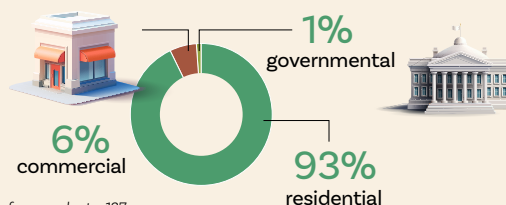
## Home is Where the Ticks Are

Tick issues surface in residential settings much more often than in commercial settings, and more in rural and suburban than urban. Rural homes in particular are more likely than other properties to be situated near wooded areas, and people tend to spend more outdoor time at home than at work.



## HOMEBOODIES

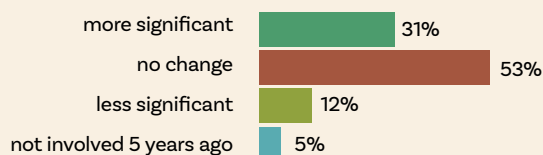
What market represents the largest percentage of your tick control service revenue?



Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 137

## TAKING ON MORE SIGNIFICANCE

In the past five years, have tick control services become a more or less significant portion of your business?



Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 137





# Solo Service or Bundled Up?

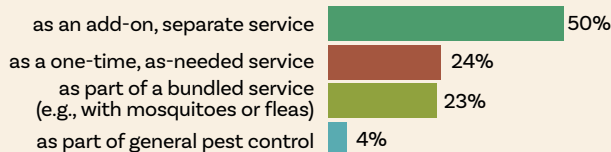
**T**he majority of PMPs (74%) said they offer tick control services as an add-on, separate service or a one-time, as-needed service, but almost one in four (23%) bundles tick with either mosquito or flea services. Flea and tick can be a natural fit since they both pester pets, but they require different treatment approaches. Mosquito and tick can be a natural combo because they involve many of the same harborage places and respond to the same products — namely, broad-spectrum insecticides and certain essential oils.

Michael Carter of Natural State Pest & Lawn made the case for a bundled approach: “Bundling tick services with fleas and mosquitoes has worked well for us. There is a lot of overlap in timing and treatment areas, plus most people are not calling about just one issue. They want to be able to enjoy their yard without worrying about ticks, fleas or mosquitoes every time they step outside. Bundling those services lets us offer a more complete outdoor program while still addressing each one the right way.”

In contrast, Robert Frost of Mosquito Joe of Tallahassee (Fla.) likes to keep things separate, although he does capitalize on the cross-sell potential: “If someone calls with a tick issue, I want to address the ticks first and get them knocked out. Then I explain to the homeowner that my mosquito barrier has enough of a residual to prevent ticks from coming back into the yard; if they want us to put them on a recurring mosquito service, they won’t have to worry about ticks anymore. If they had been considering a mosquito service, this tends to push them over the top, and they sign up for the recurring service. Once they’re in, they love the service because they aren’t bothered by mosquitoes *or* ticks.” 🦋

## TOGETHER OR SEPARATE?

### How do you offer tick control services?



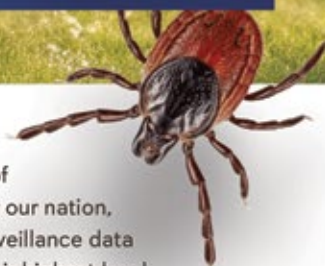
Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 137





# Red, White and Bite-Free

## Tick Control for America's 250th Summer



Just as the American flag is defined by three essential elements, an effective tick control program depends on treating all three control zones.

This summer, millions of Americans will head outside to celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. While 2026 marks a major milestone for our nation, it is also shaping up to be the year of the tick. CDC surveillance data indicates emergency room visits for tick bites are at their highest level since 2017.

For homeowners and pet owners, that increase in tick activity poses serious health risks. Tick-associated illnesses and conditions such as Lyme disease, Alpha-gal syndrome, and Rocky Mountain spotted fever are expanding into new regions and creating growing concerns for families and outdoor enthusiasts from sea to shining sea.

For nearly one quarter of our nation's history, Zoëcon® Professional Products has been formulating and synthesizing key IGR ingredients in the USA for pest control professionals. This summer, that expertise matters more than ever. A three-zone approach — treating outdoors, indoors, and on the animal — is the key to keeping America's birthday party bite-free.



## Outdoors



### This Land is MY Land

Ticks are typically found near the woodland edge and in unkempt areas. They are likely to hang out in mulch beds and leaf litter or on brambles and tall grass. Treating these zones proactively reduces the chance of people and pets becoming accidental hosts, but it requires more than a surface spray. When using a product like **Precor® Outdoor F-T-M**, you'll want to ensure you get a 10-gallon drench for every 1,000 sq ft. to penetrate where ticks hide.

The micro-encapsulated formulation combines our pioneering insect growth regulator, (S)-methoprene, and tau-fluvalinate for immediate knockdown of ticks and over 50 outdoors pests.

For sensitive accounts or areas, **Essentria® Mosquito & Tick Concentrate** offers a botanical option that kills ticks, with the added benefit of up to 14 days of repellency against mosquitoes. This versatile, water-based formula is designed for use with automated spraying systems, fogging systems, and mist blowers. Additionally, Mavrik® Perimeter and Lambda 9.7 CS spray are solid broad-spectrum perimeter options, especially around areas where dogs and cats frequent.

## On Animal



### Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happy Pets

Ticks are opportunists looking to catch a ride on household dogs and cats. Advise customers to check pets and clothing after time spent outdoors and to keep the yard tidy: short grass, cleared brush, no leaf litter piles near the house. **Petcor®<sup>2</sup> Flea & Tick Spray** is approved for on-animal applications for dogs, puppies, cats, and kittens.

Containing (S)-methoprene, PBO, and etofenprox, the fast-acting formula kills flea and ticks and repels mosquitoes, making it a practical leave-behind or upsell after your service visit. It also reinforces the importance of extending tick management beyond perimeter treatments alone.

## Indoors



### Defend the Home Front

Ticks can survive indoors longer than most customers expect. Without access to high humidity outdoors, ticks typically aren't a serious issue indoors, but the Brown Dog Tick is known for its unique ability to thrive inside.

After hitching a ride inside on pets or people, Brown Dog Ticks will hide in pet bedding, baseboards, carpet edges, and even in furniture. After they feed, they can lay hundreds of eggs in small clusters. Once those eggs hatch, you're facing hundreds of near-invisible larvae that are looking for their next meal.

Targeted indoor treatments can reduce and eliminate this threat. Applying **Precor® 2625 Premise Spray** to hot spots such as baseboards, carpet edges, and furniture delivers a combination of three adulticides and a synergist to kill ticks indoors. **Zenprox® EC** is a non-repellent etofenprox formulation that delivers knockdown with extended residual activity. Zenprox® EC is one of a handful of products labeled for broadcast treatments on carpets, floors, and other labeled areas where ticks are located.



## Let's Celebrate Red, White & Bite-Free

Just as the American flag is defined by three essential elements, an effective tick control program depends on treating all three control zones. For more than 50 years, the Zoëcon tick control portfolio has helped protect American backyards. As we build on our legacy, we are focused on delivering industry trusted solutions for the next 250 years, and beyond.



# Tick-Tight Treatments



**W**hen you pull up to a property and immediately see high grass, wood piles, leaf litter, mulch beds, dense ground cover, etc., you know you have your work cut out for you. Not only do you have to perform a tick treatment, but you also have to help the customer understand that their collaboration is essential. Unless they do their part to keep the lawn tidy and deter wildlife from coming in, your treatment efforts are likely to fail.

“I have an account in my head right now that we encountered last year: Wisteria vines were growing up the sides of the house, the shrubs were overgrown — we couldn’t even make it through the walking paths with a backpack sprayer. It was a nightmare. We tried our best, but it was a losing

battle because the homeowner wasn’t able to address all of the harborage issues that were causing the tick problem,” said Clint Collins, general manager of HTP Termite & Pest Control in Huntingdon, Tenn.

Collins added that most of the calls HTP gets for tick control services are from their rural customers rather than those in metro areas. Properties are often surrounded by fields or wooded areas, so they do a liquid edge treatment, perimeter bands around tree bases and misting as needed.

In fact, 98% of PMPs told PCT they use a residual pesticide to treat ticks. That percentage is up over last year by 6%. Insect growth regulator (IGR) usage is up as well, as PMPs look to break the lifecycle of ticks, preventing larvae and nymphs from maturing into

reproducing adults. Where 43% said they used an IGR in 2025, now fully half of PMPs do. Rodent control has become more of a focus as well, up 5% over 2025, with 23% of PMPs saying they address these wildlife hosts.

**BOTANICALS: A CENTRAL ROLE.** In Tallahassee, Fla., Mosquito Joe’s Robert Frost shared that his company’s most popular tick treatment uses a hybrid approach. “We use as low a pesticide-based product as we can get, plus essential oils, in conjunction with an IGR. That enables us to attack the pests and take care of the issue without leaving any heavy residual effects. Customers want the ticks gone, but they’re also concerned about the safety of their children and pets.”

**LAWN SERVICES A PLUS.** If your company offers lawn services in addition to pest management, that can be a plus for tick management. “Fertilization and weed control are not direct tick treatments, but they do help improve the lawn, reduce overgrowth and cut down on some of the cover ticks are attracted to,” said Michael Carter, Natural State Pest & Lawn. He added that, although tick work is run through the pest control side of the business, the company’s lawn and pest technicians both know how to upsell and manage ticks, as well as how to educate customers about conducive conditions that can add to tick pressure.

**CONSIDER THE SPECIES.** How important is it for PMPs to identify and understand the species of tick they are dealing with? It’s usually not critical to treatment, since products are designed to control all types of ticks, but sometimes understanding the biology and behaviors of a certain species can provide insight into the best way to approach an infestation.

Kevin Hathorne, training and



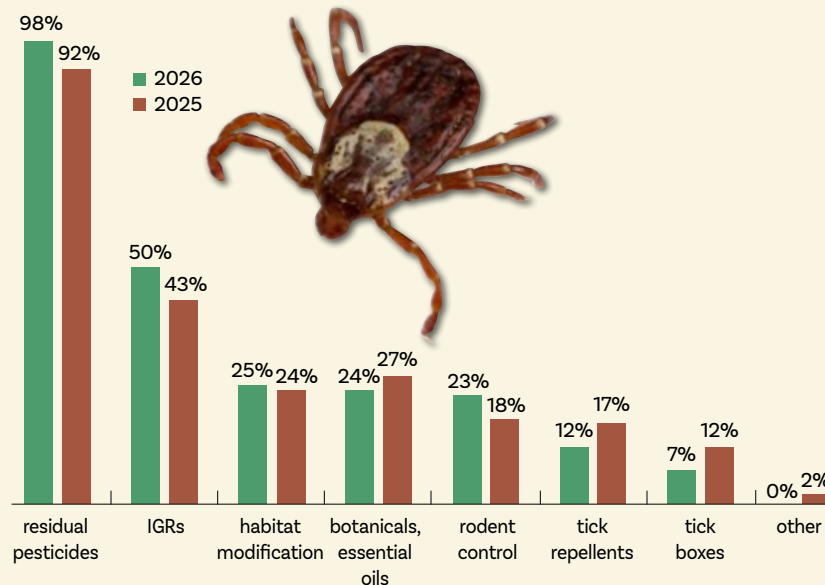
technical director of Terminix Service in Columbia, S.C., said, “There can be differences across species in lifecycles and host preferences, and the various tick-borne diseases are only spread by certain species, but these differences don’t usually come into play for technicians and treatments.” Occasionally, circumstances do call for a species-specific approach, he added, citing the need to look beyond outdoor applications when brown dog ticks infest an indoor structure or to recommend tactics for diverting deer when black-legged ticks are the prevailing species.

“If your treatment approach isn’t working as well as usual, it makes sense to dive deeper into the biology and behavior of the species so you can make adjustments,” Hathorne said. “If you need help properly identifying a species, the *Mallis Handbook of Pest Control* and *NPMA Field Guide to Structural Pests* are good resources. You can also consult your state extension office if you need more support.”

Whom should you *not* trust with identifying the species you’re managing? Well, customers, unless they happen to be entomologists themselves. Collins explained why: “We service a lot of healthcare facilities, and they sometimes misidentify ticks and bed bugs. To us on the pest control side, it might seem impossible to make that mistake, but bed bugs are a major issue in healthcare facilities in this market right now, and the media describes them as small reddish-brown bugs. You can’t blame the healthcare folks for confusing the two, but you have to be aware when you get the call that you may think you’re going out for bed bugs only to find ticks.” 🐾

### TRIED-AND-TRUE SOLUTIONS

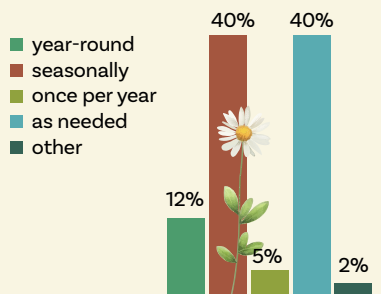
Which products/approaches do you use to manage ticks?



Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 137 in 2026, 119 in 2025; Respondents could select more than one answer

### FAIR-WEATHER FIENDS

How often do you provide tick control services to the typical client?



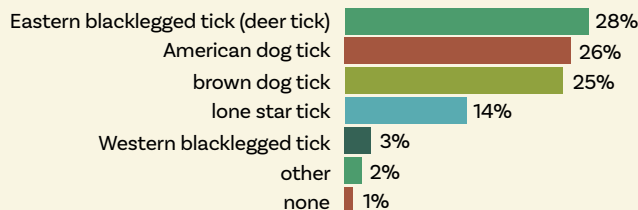
Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 137



Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 137

### WHAT'S YOUR TYPE?

What species of tick is most prevalent in your market area?



Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 137





## Education All Around

**S**haring up-to-date information with customers, as well as technicians, is important when treating for any type of pest. When ticks are involved, that education becomes absolutely essential due to the high-risk potential of ticks spreading disease.

“We spend twice as much time educating as we do treating,” said Aaron Veal of Phoenix Pest Control. “When I started this company, that was my goal: to not only kill some bugs but also educate customers so they can address the conditions that attract ticks and other pests. I explain to them that if they don’t take care those issues, they are going to keep needing us again and again.”

Veal differentiated his company in his market by having those one-on-one conversations, then he took his educational messages to a broader audience by making YouTube videos. He shares those videos with his

customers directly, too. “Customers love it, because I’ll talk with one of the homeowners, but then their spouse gets home later and asks questions the other didn’t think to ask. So I leave the link to the video for them to watch. That way, the correct information gets disseminated,” Veal said.

Kevin Hathorne of Terminix Service set forth another benefit of going into accounts well-informed and prepared to share. “The more educated you are about a service you provide, the more willing customers will be to buy it.

They want to feel confident in your knowledge and expertise. Many times, the education process helps us get the sale.”

The bottom line, said Matthew Garten, Select Exterminating, is that customer education is critical to achieving the best outcomes.

“It’s a partnership. The customer needs to be bought into the service to ensure great results. It’s all about the rate of success. The more they participate, the higher the rate of success.” 🌱

### Marketing Messages: Keep It Fresh!

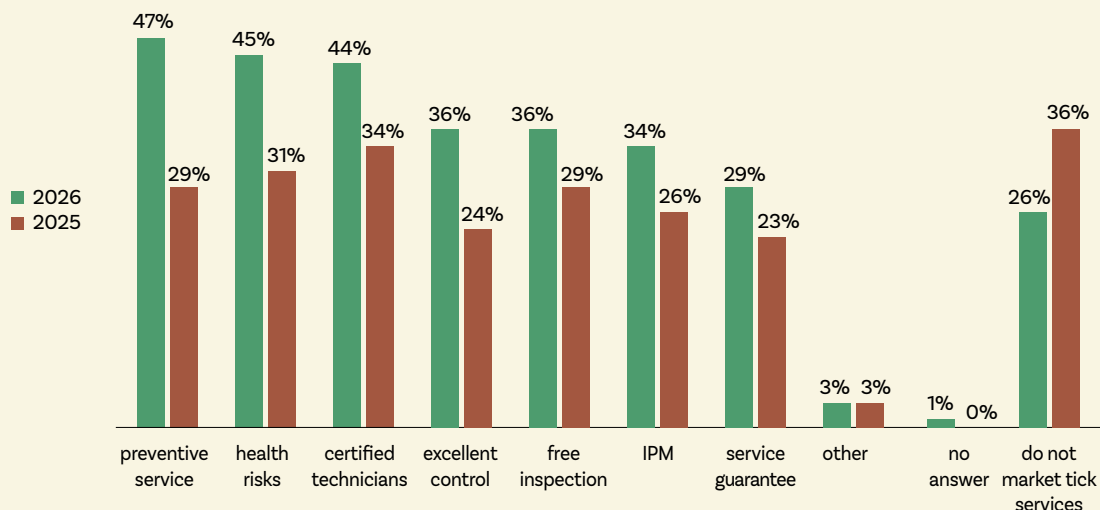
The channels have stayed the same since last year, with pest management companies marketing their tick services through social media, localized digital marketing, targeted direct mail and email, and door hangers. But the messaging has evolved, with companies increasingly touting preventive tick services (up 18% year-over-year), the health risks of ticks (up 14% YOY), certified technicians (up 10% YOY) and excellent control (up 12% YOY), as well as free inspection, IPM and service guarantee.





### GETTING THE WORD OUT

What aspects of your tick control services are featured in your marketing efforts?



Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 137 in 2026, 119 in 2025; Respondents could select more than one answer

## Pet Check

You'd be hard-pressed to find a service technician who doesn't understand how much people love their pets. Of all the common questions they get about pest control treatments, "Is it safe for my pet?" is at or near the top of the list. When you're dealing with ticks, that concern multiplies.



"The first thing we ask pet owners is whether they are treating their pets. Obviously, this isn't going to fix the pest management issue, but it is going to protect the animal," said Aaron Veal, Phoenix Pest Control. His team recommends homeowners take their pets to the veterinarian, who may prescribe oral chews, topical treatments or tick collars. In high-risk areas — primarily the Eastern and upper Midwestern U.S. — vets may also recommend annual Lyme disease vaccinations.

"Sometimes customers actually ask if we can treat their dog; of course, we can't," Clint Collins of HTP Termite & Pest Control added. "But we can, and do, help them understand how critical that vet visit is to safeguarding their pet. We also educate them about checking themselves and their pets for ticks, removing ticks safely and addressing the environmental issues around their properties to discourage tick infestations. That cooperation is critical to the effectiveness of the corrective actions we take."

## Tech Check

Service technicians should always share information with customers about how they can avoid tick bites — avoiding high grass and leaf litter, using an EPA-registered repellent when hiking and camping, staying toward the center of trails, checking themselves and their family members for ticks after being in wooded or high-grass areas, and removing ticks promptly and correctly.



Technicians also need to protect themselves when they're treating properties for ticks and other outdoor pests. These tips may help:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants tucked into socks. (Light-colored uniforms makes ticks easier to spot.)
- Apply an EPA-registered repellent to exposed skin, and treat clothing, boots and gear with permethrin.
- Conduct daily, full-body tick checks after working in high-risk environments.
- Use fine-tipped tweezers to remove any ticks that have attached, grabbing them close to the skin and pulling upward with steady pressure.
- Wash work clothes immediately in hot water to kill any undetected ticks.

# ZERO IN ON TICKS

ZOËCON® PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTS  
DOES THE REST



## ZERO IN ON TICK CONTROL



**Precor® Outdoor F-T-M** is a micro-encapsulated formulation combining our pioneering IGR, (S)-methoprene, and tau-fluvalinate to target ticks and over 50 outdoors pests.



**Essentria® Mosquito & Tick Concentrate** offers botanical control that kills ticks, with the added benefit of up to 14 days of mosquito repellency.



**Petcor® Flea & Tick Spray** is a practical leave-behind or upsell after your service visit. Petcor® Flea & Tick Spray can be used on dogs age 10 weeks and cats age 12 weeks to kill adult ticks.



TARGET TICKS WITH PRECISION AT ZOECON.COM

