



PESTICIDAL DUSTS

Many animals use dust to rid themselves of parasites. Birds, cats and dogs will often roll in the dirt to make use of the insecticidal properties of dust. The dusts available commercially for insect control are finely ground minerals or pesticides combined with a dry carrier. Some of the marketed forms of dust are boric acid, diatomaceous earth, silica aerogel, sulphur and lime. Most of these dusts are less toxic than chemical pesticides, with minimum impact on the environment and groundwater. In spite of their relative harmlessness once settled, it is a good idea to wear goggles and a face mask when applying dusts because they can be irritating when airborne.

Borate Products

Boric acid is a stomach poison when ingested. Borate products come as powders, pastes, aerosols, tablets, and liquid solutions. They have a low toxicity to humans and other animals. Boric acid is effective against cockroaches, although not immediately. It takes about 5 days for them to die after ingesting it. If kept dry a single application will work for years. Borax-based products are widely used as insecticides against ants, cockroaches, fleas, silverfish, termites and other insects.

Diatomaceous earth

Diatomaceous earth is a mined mineral product. It is the fossilized remains of single-celled organisms that lived millions of years ago (diatoms). Diatomaceous earth works on insects by puncturing their outer protective layer, causing death by dehydration. It comes formulated alone or with pyrethrin insecticides. Alone, it is virtually nontoxic to mammals. It is even added to animal feed to control intestinal parasites and worms.

In the home, it can be applied in wall voids, attics and other out-of-the-way spots to kill such insects as ants, cockroaches, and termites. Sprinkled on the carpets, it will kill fleas. As a barrier around garden beds it discourages slugs and snails.

Caution: Only natural diatomaceous earth should be used for pest control (not pool grade).

Silica aerogels

Silica aerogels absorb hundreds of times their weight in moisture. When silica aerogels come into contact with the waxy coating of an insect, it desiccates and kills it. These products are very safe. Insects killed by silica aerogels include ants, bedbugs, bees, box elder bugs, stored grain beetles, cockroaches, crickets, firebrats, fleas, weevils, silverfish, spiders, ticks, wasps, and mealworms.

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Sulphur

Sulphur has been used as an insecticide since the time of the Egyptians. Then, it was used as a fumigant in the granaries. Gardeners use sulphur today for plant diseases such as mildew, scab, rust, leaf blight and fruit rot. It also controls mites and chiggers. Sulphur can be purchased as a powder for dusting or spraying, and as a liquid spray. Use caution when applying; sulphur can be very irritating when inhaled.

Dust	Product Names
Boric acid	Science Boric Acid Dust Enforcer Roach Ridd Drax Ant Kil Gel Roach Kil Borid Roach Prufe Antrol Ant Killer Formula II Hot Shot Roach Powder Plus Roach Killer Powder Real-Kill Rid.A.Bug Roach Powder
Diatomaceous Earth	Shellshock Insecticide Concern Diatomaceous Earth Insect Killer
Silica Gel	Sulfodoene Scratchex Power Dust Adams Flea And Tick Dust (both products also contain pyrethrins and carbaryl)
Sulfur	Orthoganic Garden Sulfur Dust or Spray Green Light Wettable Dusting Sulfur Safer Garden Fungicide Concentrate Garden Fungicide RTU Flotox Garden Sulfur