

# Honeybee and European wasp control

Honeybees and European wasps can both deliver painful stings, but they differ in behaviour and where they live.

Honeybees prefer dark and sheltered areas like wall cavities, chimneys, roof eaves, and tree hollows. While bees are important to the environment and generally sting only to defend themselves or their hive, it's still risky to have a hive near your home.

Hives with honey inside wall cavities may ferment over time, which can attract other insects and cause structural damage.

European wasps are similar in size and shape to bees. They have bright yellow bodies with black triangle markings, yellow legs, and two long black antennae. Unlike bees, European wasps are more aggressive, attracted to human food, and can sting multiple times without dying.

You're most likely to find European wasp nests hidden in the ground, especially around trees, shrubs, rubbish heaps, uncovered compost, or grass clippings. They may also build nests in roofs, wall cavities, or sheltered parts of buildings.

Here are some tips to keep European wasps away from your property:

- Remove any fallen fruit from your yard.
- Don't leave uneaten pet food or dog bones outside.
- Make sure rubbish bins have tight-fitting lids.
- Keep compost covered.
- Cover swimming pools when not in use.

Homeowners and tenants are responsible for pest control on their property, including removing beehives and wasp nests. For bee removal, contact a beekeeper or apiarist to safely relocate the hive. The best way to get rid of a wasp nest is to have a licensed pest controller destroy it with a registered insecticide.

If honeybees or European wasps are a public health risk, Council officers may take action under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, which could include issuing improvement or prohibition notices.

For honeybee information, visit the Victorian Apiarist Association at [www.vicbeekeepers.com.au](http://www.vicbeekeepers.com.au)

For more information on European wasp control, visit the Department of Health at [www.health.vic.gov.au/environmental-health/european-wasps-pest-control](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/environmental-health/european-wasps-pest-control)

If you're concerned about bee or wasp stings, seek medical advice or see your GP.