

2016 Pest Annual Report

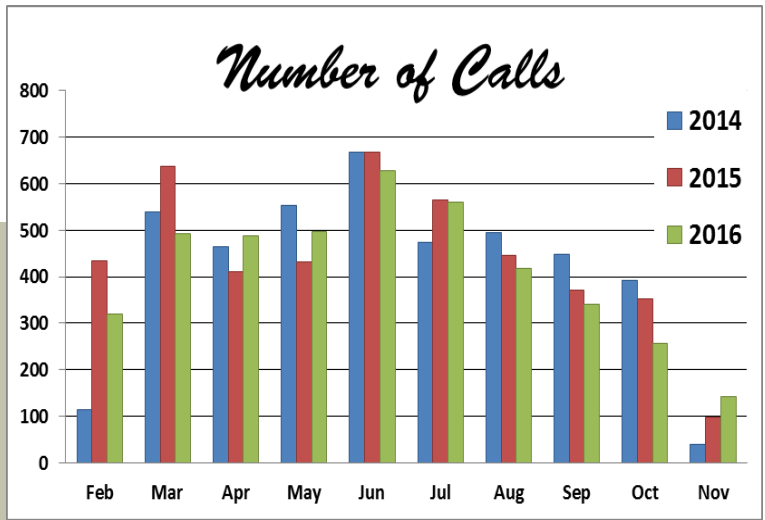
Ada County Pest Control District

A PEST SEASON OVERVIEW



Our pest department hit the ground running this year. Calls started pouring in the first of the year and our south west Idaho weather held us from treating until the last week of February. We ran four crews with roughly thirteen seasonal employees. This season we received 2741 work orders as well as treated an estimated 9125.97 acres using bait, traps, and smoke cartridges. We strove to work efficiently and timely to control pocket gopher and yellow-bellied marmot populations throughout Ada County by treating in landscaping, yards, gardens, pastures and crop fields.

Chris Culley, Pest Division Coordinator



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The total number of pest work orders created for the 2016 season was 2741; however there were 2780 phone calls asking for pest control options, which can be concluded that these additional calls were from residents within city limits inquiring about our service or for information.



POCKET GOPHERS (THOMOMYS SPECIES)



Our pest department runs four crews all season long. **This season we treated 9125.97 acres, equivalent to 14 square miles, or 6,914 football fields!** We apply a strychnine bait, smoke cartridges (smoke bombs), and/or traps to control pocket gophers from February through November dependent on the weather. Due to the nature of the pests and the wide range of their populations, we receive hundreds of public work order requests of properties a month in order to help manage and control landowner's pocket gophers.

Below are pictures sent in by a puzzled home owner of a "bald" gopher.



FUN FACT:

THE LIPS OF A GOPHER ARE ADAPTED TO CLOSE BEHIND ITS FOUR INCISORS, PREVENTING DIRT FROM ENTERING ITS MOUTH WHILE USING ITS TEETH TO DIG.

We strive to meet these demands professionally and in a timely manner, on average this can take up to 10 days or less, but by the end of the last few seasons we were able to get properties serviced within the same week in general, exceptions are from large acreage property management via service scheduling due to watering, cutting, etc. of specific properties.

Why do some of these critters have no hair....

Hairless gophers caught our attention this year. We had seen them previously in past seasons, but this year a resident called in and took pictures (to the right) of one they found in their yard. So we gathered specimens we trapped and we sent them into the Idaho Fish and Game lab through Mark Drew, the state Wildlife Veterinarian. They also didn't have much information on why they would be hairless, no one had really brought it up or looked into it before. The lab results determined that the hair loss on our specimens was due to a mite species and not of any disease. We will continue to monitor locations of hairless gophers for spatial analysis to determine how prevalent or widespread the current wild populations are as well as continue to confirm or not disease presence.

YELLOW-BELLIED MARMOT (MARMOTA FLAVIVENTIS)



Alias around the country: Rock-chuck, ground squirrel, and whistle pig (though these latter two are a completely different species of squirrels).

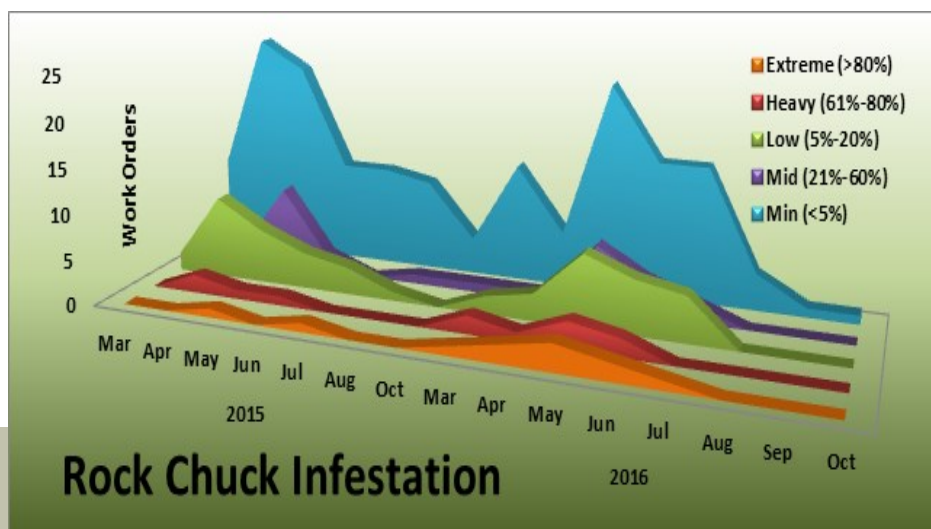
Although we don't get as many calls for yellow-bellied marmots, or rock chucks, as pocket gophers, we did complete **133 treatments this year**, mostly during the spring and fall. The infestation chart below depicts our infestation rates reported throughout the last 2 seasons. We report our infestation numbers by the amount of rockchuck burrows per area. For example, if we were to find three burrows on 20 acres we would classify it as low, on the other hand, 3 burrows on 1 acre would be high.



Melba Idaho

FUN FACT:

THE ONLY US HOLIDAY NAMED AFTER AN ANIMAL, GROUNDHOG DAY, IS NAMED AFTER THE MARMOT GENUS



TRAINING & EDUCATION

During our season start up we implemented a label test this year to ensure our applicators had without a doubt read, understood and passed our current in use Rodenticide labels. Our Safety, on-site training, policy and seminar training continue each year and this season was no different with a total of **295.25 hours total**.

Training/Education	# Employees	# Hours
Policy/Safety/Meetings	13	99.5
Onsite Training	13	128
License (Dept. of Ag)	6	35.75
Seminar (SWIWCA)	3	24
Access Training	1	8





PEST DEPARTMENT GOALS FOR 2016

1. Reduce time taken to complete large properties.

Objective: Crew leads are to report to team lead giving detail on infestation of a large property being treated. Infestations can be different and acreage sometimes doesn't dictate an accurate time for treating multiple acres. Team lead can assign multiple crews to finish properties in a timely manner.

2. Completion of work orders in 10 days or less

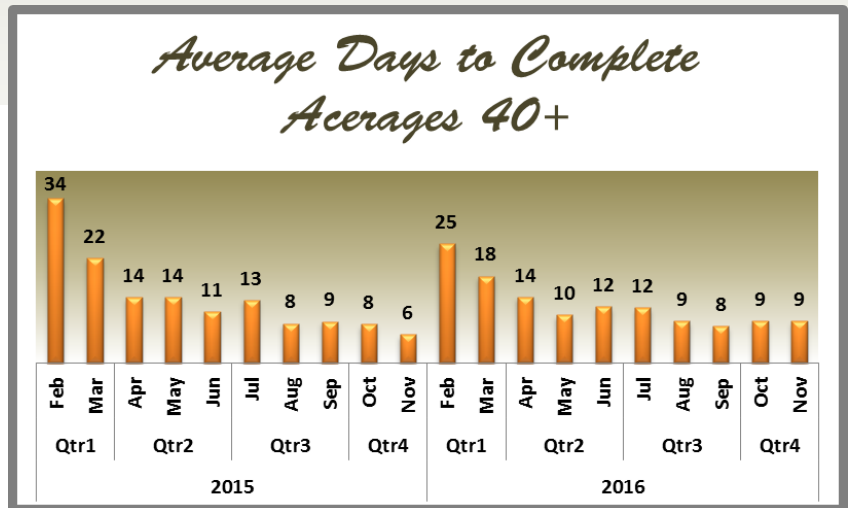
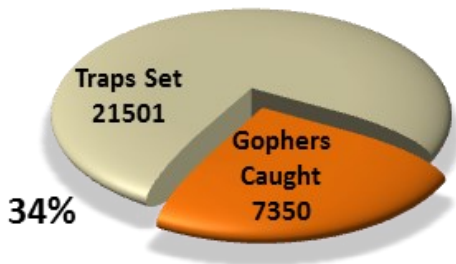
Objectives: Work Order scheduling will be done by the Team Lead and a first call first served will be standard. As with the first call, first serve, we must incorporate the properties close in proximity to be more efficient. Strychnine is favored over traps in the spring due to the labor intensity and time needed for trapping in order to reduce response time.

3. Increase % gophers trapped via more thorough trapping in active burrow systems and reducing amount of traps per burrow system, thus less time spent on each property for multiple days

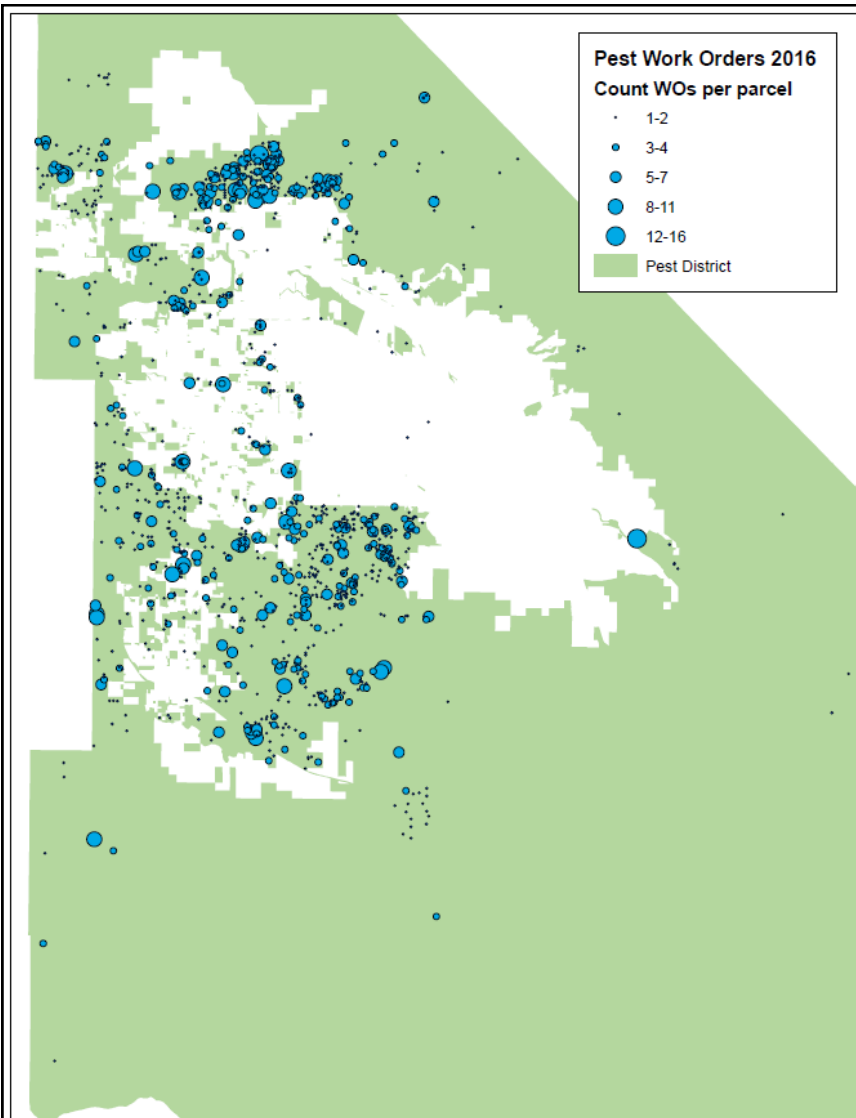
Objective: Crews will trap less in burrow systems, instead of every accessible gopher mound, 1 to 3 traps per active burrow should be sufficient.

RESULTS

1. When appropriate, multiple crews were assigned to complete large acreages (40-1200 acres) together this year to reduce the days to completion. In the chart below we can see that we were successful in doing so, but there is always room for improvement.
2. The biggest success was in the first quarter, this is our busiest time of the season. See chart below.
3. We did strive for setting 3 traps per burrow and increased our gopher set to catch ratio by 1% from last season giving us an impressive 34%.

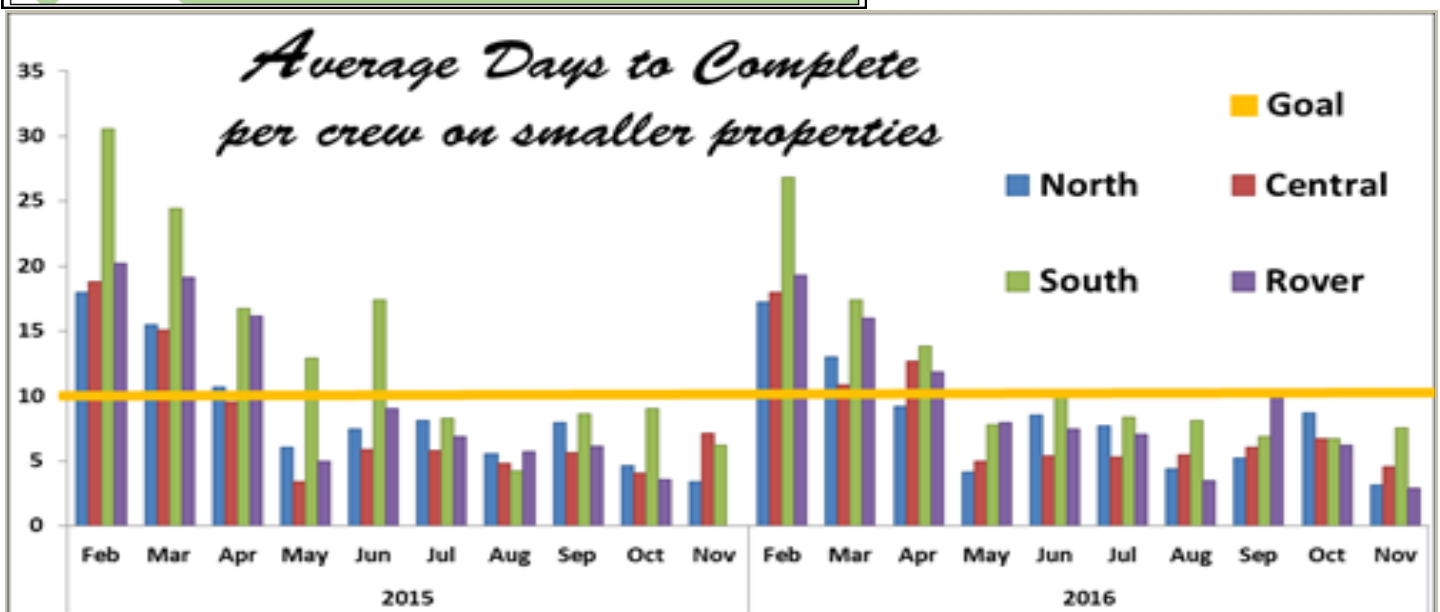


OUR SEASON CONTINUED...WORK ORDER AND CREW INFORMATION



In February we start taking calls for work orders to get ready for our season start. This year we ran one early season crew (licensed technicians only) the last week of February and then we started on March 2nd with all four crews and full time staff after training. The chart below depicts how we start behind every year, but we catch up to our goal in May this year of 10 days or less; this was our “busiest time of the season.”

Our goal was to shrink our days to completion and we strived to use bait over trapping the properties early on for treatment and lowered our time to completion for all crews this season. We ran three crews (excluding Rover Crew) from the second week in August to the first of November this year, but would periodically run a small Rover Crew to help with large properties, which gave us this the chart spike in September this year. This was done because crews were caught up and getting work done and still being effective and feasible for the district, staff not working in pest, went over to help the mosquito abatement district.



Budget

The pest control district's budget is based on general property taxes primarily (95%) and a small portion of sales tax and personal property taxes from the state since it is a special taxing district in Ada County.

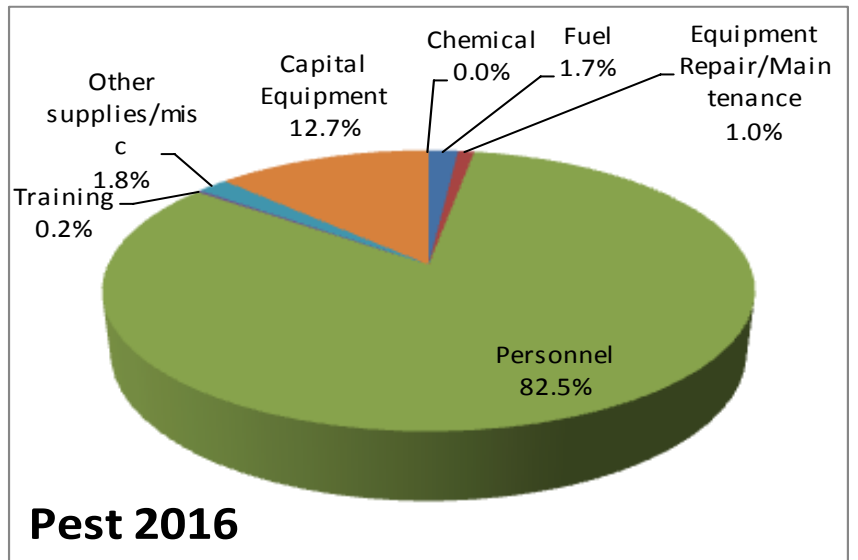


FY15-16 District Revenues
Total \$623824

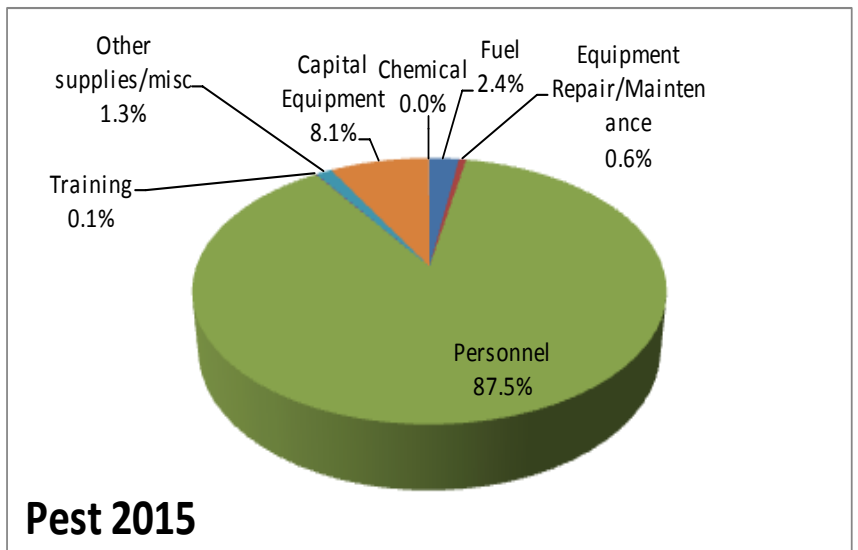
FY15-16 District Expenditures
Total \$503593

Two year comparison of B- budget (Operations) Expenses

There was no significant difference in operational funds spent from 2015 to 2016. Note: in 2014 at the end of the fiscal year, a large portion of rodenticide chemicals were purchased that has been used over the last 2 seasons which is why the chemical spent % is so low for 2015 & 2016.



Pest 2016



Pest 2015





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BRIEF HISTORY

On March 26th, 1962 the Ada County Gopher Program was established. It was a cooperative project among Ada County, the various canal companies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the land owners.

On December 19th, 1968 the pest control extermination district was created into the Ada County Precinct, which excluded the municipalities of Boise City, Meridian, Kuna, Garden City, and later Eagle as well as Star.



Melba, Idaho



PEST CONTROL DISTRICT MISSION

"The mission of the Ada County Pest Control District is to manage Pocket Gophers and rockchucks, or Yellow-bellied Marmots, that threaten agriculture or infrastructure on district resident's property. We also provide charged services for tax-exempt properties such as federal, state, and local governments, schools, churches, etc. Our staff will visit a property, determine the best control methods, and work with property owners to abate the pests."

