

I've spent the better part of my career here in Southeastern Connecticut crawling into the dark, damp spaces behind appliances and staring at the pipes under kitchen sinks. If you've called into the office at **Petrin's Pest Control**, you've likely heard me ask the same thing before we even talk about chemicals: **"Where is the water coming from?"**

Most folks think roaches are just attracted to crumbs, but that's only half the story. If you're seeing <https://petrinspest.com/pests/cockroaches/> them near your HVAC vents, baseboards, or under the sink, you aren't dealing with a "dirty house" problem—you're dealing with a structural highway. Roaches are desert-hardy insects that have learned to exploit the climate-controlled tunnels we built for them.

The New England Roach Reality: Who's Moving In?

In our corner of New England, we aren't usually dealing with those giant, flying palmetto bugs you see in the deep South. We are mostly tracking the German Cockroach—the undisputed champion of indoor hitchhiking. They love the high humidity and stable temperatures provided by our utility infrastructure.

When you see them scurrying near **gaps around plumbing**, they aren't just passing through; they are accessing the "wall void," the dark, protected superhighway that connects every room in your building. Whether you're in a single-family home in Mystic or a multi-unit complex in New London, these insects use the same architectural blueprints we do.

My Mental Map: The Top 5 Roach Hiding Spots

If you want to know where they are, stop looking at the middle of the floor. Check these five spots:

1. Behind the refrigerator motor (the warmth is like a spa for them).
2. Inside the rubber seal of your dishwasher door.
3. Under the sink where the drain pipe meets the wall (the classic "wet" zone).
4. Behind the faceplates of electrical outlets near plumbing walls.
5. Inside the HVAC vent registers where dust and moisture accumulate.

How They Get In: The Utility Line Openings

Roaches are masters of the "squeeze." A German cockroach can flatten its body to fit through a gap as thin as a dime. When builders install pipes or run electrical conduit through floors and walls, they often leave a significant gap around the pipe. If you don't **seal vents and roaches**, you're basically leaving the front door open.

Point of Entry Why They Choose It **Fix Plumbing** Cutouts Access to condensation and "wall void" moisture. **Stainless steel wool + high-quality caulk.** **HVAC Vents** Constant airflow brings odors of food (food scent lures). **Install mesh screens** inside the register. **Electrical Outlets** Provides a bridge between the wall interior and living space. **Foam gaskets** behind the faceplates.

Don't Fall for the "Just Keep it Clean" Fallacy

It absolutely drives me up the wall when people are told, "just keep it clean," as if a tidy kitchen is an impenetrable fortress. I have seen pristine, magazine-cover kitchens crawling with roaches because of a slow-leaking pipe behind the dishwasher. Hygiene helps, but it doesn't stop a roach that's using your plumbing line to travel from a neighbor's unit to yours.

You know what's funny? according to the npma (national pest management association), sanitation is only one pillar of pest control. Exclusion—the actual physical blocking of entry points—is the only way to ensure they stay out once they've been treated. Don't let anyone overpromise that one spray will solve a colony; if you don't seal the plumbing, the spray is just a temporary speed bump.



Early Warning Signs: What to Look For

You don't always need to see a live roach to know they've moved in. I remember a project where thought they could save money but ended up paying more.. Keep an eye out for these tell-tale signs:

- **Smear Marks:** Look for dark, brownish, irregular streaks that look like drips of ink or coffee on baseboards or near plumbing pipes.
- **Droppings:** They look like black pepper or coffee grounds left in drawers or behind the fridge.
- **Shed Skins:** As they grow, roaches molt. Finding these light-brown, papery shells is a sure sign of a breeding population.
- **The Odor:** A heavy infestation carries a distinct, musty, oily smell. If your pantry smells "off," it's time to check the containers.

Pro-Tip: I hate open cereal bags. If you see a roach, throw out the cardboard boxes. Transfer everything into airtight, labeled plastic or glass containers. If they can't smell the food, they lose a primary reason to congregate in your pantry.



Health Risks and Indoor Air Quality

Roaches aren't just gross; they are a public health issue. Their shed skins and droppings contain proteins that are known allergens. So yeah, for kids and those with respiratory issues, these allergens become airborne as they break down, significantly lowering your indoor air quality. If you see them in your vents, you are literally breathing in pulverized roach debris. That's not just a pest problem—that's a household health emergency.

Need Help? We're Here to Communicate

We know that waiting for a technician can be stressful. That's why at **Petrin's Pest Control**, we prioritize communication. We utilize **live chat and SMS powered by Avocado** so you can send us photos of the gaps under your sink or the droppings you found. It makes our job faster and gets you answers without the back-and-forth phone tag.

Our goal is to get you back to a safe home. We don't just treat; we identify the moisture source and the structural gap. If you're browsing our site and see our **Google review presence** graphic, you'll see that our customers appreciate that we actually look for the root cause—the leaks and the gaps—rather than just throwing a chemical at the wall and walking away.

Final Advice for the Weekend Warrior:

Grab a flashlight, get on your knees, and look under your sinks. If you see a gap around a pipe, seal it. If you see a leak, fix it. If you don't stop the water and the access, the roaches will find their way back, no matter how much you scrub. Stay vigilant, label your pantry, and stop leaving cereal bags open!