

# **MAXIMIZING PROFITS:** Offering Dehumidification Services



***Solving your customer's moisture and humidity problems can be a profitable, beneficial service offering and Integrated Pest Management at its best.***

## **Can You See Profitability?**

Whenever you perform any residential pest related service, you very likely come across moisture related issues. Some issues may be visible from the driveway before even exiting the vehicle. The downspouts, or lack thereof, can force water against the foundation walls leading to moisture intrusion. Trees that overhang the home can create shade in the summertime but can also keep humidity higher. Frosting or condensation on the internal windowpanes is also a very good indication that there is a moisture related issue.

If performing an interior service, take notice of the thermostat. If it is set to an unusually cool temperature like 65°F, this is another good indication of higher humidity. Sensing musty odors means that bacteria has had enough moisture to develop, like a pair of worn, wet tennis shoes. Within the crawlspace or basement, you may see water lines indicative of standing water. Stringy or fallen insulation, efflorescence, condensation on ductwork, surface mold, and of course, higher pest presence are all signs of a moisture issue. Finally, talk to the homeowner. Ask them about odors, a rise in pest presence or activity, temperature comfort levels, and any known moisture issues.

This is an industry within an industry. HVAC companies, waterproofing contractors, insulation installers can all control humidity with dehumidification, but they have to wait on the phone

call from the homeowner. Pest Management Professionals have the utmost advantage to gaining profitable leads by utilizing your existing customer base and being proactive versus reactive. How many homes are you thinking about right now that you have noticed at least one of these issues?

## **How Dehumidification Can Grow Your Business**

Controlling moisture is often an overlooked maintenance protocol for homeownership. Homeowners will blame musty smells on pets, dirty clothes, and a number of other things. Effective moisture control is an important part of a home's continuation and conservation. High humidity levels in a home encourage mold, mildew, odors, unhealthy air quality, allergies, illnesses, damage to the home's structure and even pest problems. Common pests such as termites, wood-boring beetles, fleas, mosquitoes, ants, silverfish, spiders, and cockroaches thrive in high humidity. Some pests seek out these high humidity areas, since moisture is essential to life.

According to ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers), it is recommended that the relative humidity within a home's living space not exceed 45% in order to prevent mold and mildew growth. Within the basement or crawlspace, the optimal number is below 60%, with targeted numbers between 50-55%. This helps prevent mold and mildew growth, but also aids to eliminate conducive conditions for pests. Therefore, controlling moisture can be one of the greenest forms of pest control you can offer your customer base. Controlling moisture for homeowners may not only naturally control certain pest species, it may also reduce air conditioner operating costs, protect the structure of the home that can be susceptible to damage from high humidity levels and reduce the fungal growth. As a PMP, your duty is to protect both the health and property of your customers.

## **Other Benefits of Dehumidification:**

- Add dehumidification to existing service offerings as a natural form of pest control.
- Provides a cross-sell service to general pest control customers as well as a recurring revenue opportunity.
- High margin business offering, professionals can expect to make up to a 60% margin on the sale.
- Enhances your company's image as innovative professionals by providing homeowners with a unique solution to several home and health problems.
- Provides opportunity to up-sell an existing customer.
- Extends relationships with customers who might otherwise be uninformed.
- Provides a tangible solution to several problems in the home.
- Provides an IPM approach to controlling pests, mold, mildew and more.

## MAXIMIZING PROFITS:

# Offering Dehumidification Services



## Often Untapped Market

Most every home has a humidity or moisture issue due to air leakage that is likely creating other problems within the home. For example, homes with ventilated crawlspaces are often one of the most overlooked breeding grounds for pests. Newly constructed homes that are built tighter with less air leakage and more insulation creates better thermal efficiencies, but also increases the moisture load on the home. Moisture comes from a number of sources. Cooking, bathing, washing, sweating, and breathing are internally generated sources by the homeowner. Leaks in the foundation, or the roof, or plumbing leaks are others. Then you have diffusion through the substrates within the crawlspace or basement, capillary action up the foundation block, and Stack Effect. Stack Effect is pulling the outside air into the home at the lowest levels as the air warms and rises within and escapes through the attic.

Dehumidifiers can be an effective solution for homeowners looking for a GREEN or natural alternative to controlling certain pests within a home. Controlling moisture is truly integrated pest management at its best.

## Ease-of-Entry

Dehumidification is a relatively easy service to add as you already have an existing customer base. In addition, there does not need to be added cost for new personnel – you can train your existing technicians. This can also create more opportunities within the slower winter seasons. It is essentially an extension of an already provided service, such as exclusions. We are excluding moist air. Installation consists of an encapsulation to eliminate moisture intrusion from the ground and moisture diffusion through the crawlspace walls, air sealing by closing or blocking off the vents, and providing a weather-stripped, hinged access door. The dehumidifier installation is particularly easy for free-standing dehumidifiers that require a standard outlet (115V) with a GFCI breaker (15A). If utilizing a condensation pump, you would increase this to a 20A breaker.

## Materials Required

Target Specialty Products recommends the Santa Fe line of dehumidifiers.

Contact your Target Specialty Products representative for more product recommendations.

The Compact70, Advance90, and Classic (basement only) are the most commonly used models. Made for basements and crawlspaces, the Santa Fe line of dehumidifiers offers a low-profile design lending itself perfectly to a crawlspace or basement setting. They are small enough to tuck between floor

joists and can be hung from the joists to keep the ground clear. All come with a MERV 13 filter, which helps promote better indoor air quality to the homeowner. The dehumidifiers are energy efficient as well and use as little as 5.1 amps to operate. They are rated to a minimum of 70 pints of water per day at 80°F and 60%RH and are automatically controlled by a dehumidistat with a positive ON and OFF setting and a variable setting range from 20% to 80% relative humidity. The units are easily portable and come equipped with leveling feet, a drain port adapter, and an 8' drain tube. You can utilize an existing sump pump or add a condensation pump. They can also be set up for gravity drainage through the perimeter wall, meaning no bucket to empty for the homeowner.

## Pricing & Positioning

Upsell to existing customers

## Installation Time

Homeowner may be required to run a dedicated electrical line to the crawlspace, if needed (by a licensed electrician). Optional duct and condensate kits are available and provide multiple installation options for greater flexibility. Ducting also helps to push the driest air to the wettest locations to help control moisture at the source.

Encapsulating the crawlspace to reduce air leakage and moisture intrusion will increase the efficacy of the dehumidifier. At a minimum, eliminating air bypass such as blocking/closing the vents, providing a good weather seal around the access door and a properly rated vapor barrier is necessary for moisture to be controlled.

## Timing

Dehumidifiers can be installed year-round. However, humidity is felt most throughout the spring, summer and early fall months in the east coast states.

## Marketing Materials

A host of resources are available on the website at: <https://www.santa-fe-products.com>.

## Marketing Leave-Behind

Consider creating a marketing piece to educate your current customers on the importance of dehumidification in their home. Doorhangers, in areas where they are permitted, are a great way to notify neighbors of your services.



Empowering You to  
Grow Your Business™

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info@target-specialty.com

| target-specialty.com

