Millipedes are common occasional pests that may invade buildings particularly during hot dry weather. Although millipedes may show up in large numbers, they do not bite, sting or transmit diseases nor do they infest food, clothing or dry, structurally sound wood. Millipedes vary in both color and size. The most common species that invades buildings is the “garden millipede”, which is brownish-black in color and about one inch long. Although millipedes are often called “thousandleggers”, they actually have far fewer legs, but each body segment has two pairs of very short legs. When disturbed, millipedes often curl up into a “C” shape and remain motionless. They crawl slowly and protect themselves by secreting cyanide-like compound that has an unpleasant odor. Some people confuse millipedes with centipedes, which look somewhat similar. Centipedes have only one pair of legs per body segment and the legs are usually longer than those on millipedes. Centipedes also tend to move about more quickly than millipedes.

Life Cycle and Habits
Millipedes pass the winter primarily as adults and lay their eggs in the soil in the spring. Individuals may live for several years. Millipedes are attracted to dark, cool, moist environments that are rich in organic matter such as compost piles, heavily mulched shrub or flower beds, rotting logs, or the soil under logs and stones. They usually go unnoticed because they live in these relatively hidden habitats. Millipedes are scavengers, feeding primarily on decomposing vegetation, but occasionally they will damage soft-stemmed plants in gardens. Major nuisance problems usually occur when the conditions become too hot and dry and the millipedes move to find moisture, or else when it's too wet and water-saturated soils force them to the surface and higher ground where they often end up on concrete slabs, foundations and siding. Millipedes may also migrate in the fall, presumably in search of overwintering sites. All of these activities result in millipedes invading crawl spaces, basements and other areas of buildings. Common points of entry include door thresholds (especially at the base of sliding glass doors, garage doors), expansion joints, and through the voids of concrete slabs.
block walls. Frequent indoor sightings of these pests usually means that there are large numbers breeding outdoors in the lawn, or beneath mulch, leaf litter or debris close to the foundation. Millipedes do not survive indoors for more than a few days (more likely just a few hours) unless they can find suitable moist conditions.

**Management**

Pesticides are typically a short-term and only moderately effective solution to a long-term problem. Emphasis should be placed first on reducing conditions and access points favorable to millipede invasions:

**Minimize Moisture, Remove Debris** - The most effective, long-term measure for reducing entry of millipedes (and many other pests) is to reduce excess moisture and hiding places, especially near the foundation:

- Remove leaves, grass clippings, heavy accumulations of mulch, wooden boards, stones, boxes, and similar items laying on the ground beside the foundation. This does not mean you can't have mulch around the foundation; simply keep it 6-12" away from the wall.

- Prevent water from accumulating near the foundation, in basement walls or in the crawl space. Keep gutters and down spouts free of debris and use either splash guards or perforated pipe to reduce puddling. Homes with poor drainage may need to have foundation drains installed, or the surrounding ground contoured or sloped to redirect surface water away from the foundation.

- Repair leaking exterior water spigots and prevent water from puddling where there are drip lines from air conditioning units. Reduce the humidity in crawl spaces and basements by providing adequate ventilation, sump pumps, polyethylene soil covers, dehumidifiers, etc.

- Since millipedes thrive in the moist, dense thatch layer of poorly maintained turf, de-thatching the lawn and keeping the grass mowed close should make the lawn less suitable for millipedes. Over-watering may also contribute to millipede problems.

**Seal Pest Entry Points** - Seal cracks and openings in the outside foundation wall, and around the sills of doors and basement windows. Install door sweeps on all exterior entry doors, and apply caulk along the bottom outside edge and sides of door thresholds. Seal expansion joints where outdoor patios, sunrooms and sidewalks abut the foundation. Expansion joints and gaps should also be sealed along the bottom of basement walls on the interior to reduce entry of pests and moisture from outdoors.

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**Cutting Costs to Live Within Your Income**

Developing self-control of your spending is a basic step in cutting the cost of living. Some families instinctively seem to know how to get what they want, even on a limited income. But others need help in managing their finances to get what they need and want. Research shows that people worry more about money than any other family problem. If families communicate and everyone understands what the financial situation is, there will be greater cooperation.

**Planned Spending**

You and your family need to set goals and establish a plan for earning, saving, and spending money. Lack of planning may
lead to serious difficulties. *Planned spending* is the first step for solving family money problems. Design your spending plan to suit your particular circumstances and your goals.

Here are the steps in making a personalized money plan.

1. Estimate your monthly take-home pay.
2. Write down an estimate of your basic expenses using your previous experience. Do not forget to include those expenses that occur quarterly or semi-annually, such as your insurance. If you are unable to recall the amounts, keep records of expenditures for two or three months. Your expenditures should reflect your goals. Almost every expense can be reduced. The main purpose of the spending plan is to give you direction in achieving your financial goals.
3. Test your spending plan. A simple spending record shows where your money actually goes. The trial test will show whether the plan is realistic. A good spending record will also locate money leaks, or spending that you never really intended.

**Tips for Reducing Spending**

You probably know of specific things you could do to reduce spending. The following suggestions may work for you.

- Do not let your impulse determine major purchases. Postpone major purchases 24 hours so you can rethink your plan.
- Avoid shopping when you are down, depressed, tired, or hungry.
- Before purchasing an item, ask yourself "why?".
- Reduce the number of trips you make to the stores.
- Take advantage of seasonal sales throughout the year.
- Pre-shop to stop spending leaks. Decide what you want and why you want it before you go shopping. Make it a habit to compare prices and values.
- If at all possible, try out or try on the item before you buy it. This practice will provide you with the opportunity to determine if the item will meet your needs.
- Compare the cost per unit of items available in different sizes. It is not always cheaper to buy in bulk.
- Save on food by planning meals with abundant seasonal items and supermarket specials. Take a carefully prepared list to the grocery store and stick closely to it. Utilize point-of-sale information for comparing product quality and price.
- Save on clothes by planning your wardrobe. Check for fit, and buy only clothes that fit comfortably. Coordinate your clothing and accessory items. Examine care labels for fiber content and cleaning instructions. By taking proper care of your clothes, you will make them last longer and save money on replacements.
- Save on drycleaning by spot cleaning clothing, furniture, and rugs or carpets as soon as a spillage or stain occurs. Purchase items that are washable. Save money by measuring cleaning supplies (detergents, softeners, bleaches) when you use them.
- Save on transportation by selecting an automobile that adequately meets your needs, but does so without extremely high costs. A fuel-efficient automobile will have substantial savings over time. Planning trips in logical sequences instead of doubling back to places you have already been also saves fuel.
• Stay on a cash basis. If you have debts accelerate repayment. [There is little reason to retain savings that earn 5 percent interest while you still owe installment debts and loans that carry true interest rates of 12 to 22 percent.]

• For your banking services, select an institution with the lowest service charges on your accounts. Some banks do not charge anything as long as you keep your checking account above a certain minimum amount.

• Buy property insurance at a reasonable cost. In general, you save by combining several coverages in one policy. A homeowner's policy costs less than separate fire, theft, and liability insurance policies.

• When buying insurance, avoid buying on a weekly or installment basis. This costs you much more than payments made every six months or annually.

• House repairs can be costly. Get competitive bids from reputable firms before the work is started.

• Do not waste electricity or the life of the motor running your furnace or air-conditioner by making the fan pull air through a dirty filter. Forgetting to change or clean a clogged furnace filter can burn out the motor and cost you a repair bill.

• Take steps to conserve heat, cool air, and hot water. Use weather stripping, caulking, and insulation to reduce utility bills.

• Water leaks are not only annoying, but expensive. Water use charges vary from one locality to the next. A series of seemingly minor leaks, can run your water usage up several thousand gallons a year. A hundred gallons can stream through a 1/16 inch opening. A leaky toilet can waste larger amounts. Repair leaks immediately.

• Water your lawn, not the pavement. A carelessly-placed or over-powerful sprinkler can send many dollars worth of water washing down the sidewalk and into the gutter each year.

• When buying a household appliance, remember that the bottom-of-the-line model will perform its intended function without the frills of the more expensive top-of-the-line model.

• Compare the warranty coverage of the appliances you are considering in your purchase decision. A way to save on the high cost of repairs is to avoid them.

The Back-to-School Lunchbox

Keeping food cool means keeping it safe

In many parts of the country, the school bell rings well before summer is officially over and with it, the lunch-packing season begins. The mid- to late-August heat makes the back-to-school lunchbox particularly vulnerable to bacteria that cause foodborne illnesses. Nancy Bock, Vice President, Education, at The Soap and Detergent Association has some practical tips for keeping lunchbox contents cool … and safe to eat!

• Prepare lunches the night before. Then let the items get thoroughly cold - either in the refrigerator or the freezer.

• Pack lunches in an insulated lunch box. An acceptable substitute is a double-bagged paper bag. The two layers keep the cold inside longer and help prevent the bag from getting soggy.

• Add a cold source, such as a freezer gel - or frozen juice box! Pack perishables, including deli meats, poultry or egg sandwiches, between these cold items.

• At school, lunch boxes and bags should be kept away from heat sources, such as direct sunlight or room radiators. Refrigerate, if possible.
Finally, don't let dirty hands undo all your good work. Pack hand wipes or a hand sanitizer along with the lunch. That way, even if kids "forget" to wash their hands before eating, they'll open the lunchbox to a friendly reminder!

Cleaning Up After Disaster Strikes
Tips for coping with immediate cleaning challenges

The destruction left in the wake of Hurricane Katrina was devastating and far-reaching. The importance of cleaning to health and recovery after a natural disaster was one of many lessons learned.

While disaster cleanup can be a daunting task that requires outside assistance, there are some immediate things to consider. Nancy Bock, Vice President, Education, at The Soap and Detergent Association offers some advice.

Food safety: Just because a food item looks "okay," that's no guarantee it is safe to eat. Discard any food that has come in contact with floodwaters. Also, discard beverage containers with screw-caps, snap lids, crimped caps, twist caps, flip tops and home canned foods. These containers cannot be disinfected. Undamaged, commercially prepared food in all-metal cans or retort pouches can be saved. However, the contaminated labels must be removed. Then the outside of the containers should be thoroughly washed, rinsed and sanitized with a solution of one tablespoon of bleach per gallon of sale-to-drink water. Relabel them with a marker or new label. Include the expiration date.

Essential cleaning supplies: The basics to get you started are soap, hand dishwashing detergent, laundry detergent, unscented chlorine bleach, rubber gloves (and other protective clothing, depending on the extent of the damage) and clean water (such as bottled water). The latter is particularly important for hand cleaning dishes, utensils, pots and pans, and personal items. If you plan to use the dishwasher, run it empty through three complete cycles to flush the water lines make sure they are cleaned internally.

September 2006 Spotlight
ONSLow COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

The Onslow County Beekeepers Association (OCBA) organized on January 14, 2003 to preserve and promote the science and art of beekeeping. The OCBA meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7:00 - 9:00 pm at the Onslow County Multipurpose Complex, 4024 Richlands Hwy. There is an educational program on some aspect of modern beekeeping techniques at each meeting. Membership has grown steadily with 45 active members. The initial county membership fee is $15.00 and annual renewal is $10.00. Membership in the N. C. State Beekeepers Association is encouraged ($15.00) but optional.

The OCBA has an active outreach program sponsoring an exhibit at the Onslow County Fair and observational hives at National Nite Out, the Onslow County Farmers Market and County Primary Schools on request. Recently the OCBA applied for and received a grant from the Rural Advancement Foundation International to construct a honey House educational and training facility located at the Onslow County Extension office. The facility contains modern beekeeping equipment, tools and educational materials to help the novice beekeeper and show hobby beekeepers how to expand beekeeping into a side line or full-time business. In conjunction with this effort an emphasis is being placed on the important role
honeybees play in the pollination of many food crops.

A certified Beekeeper Short Course is offered in conjunction with Onslow County Extension in November each year for a nominal fee, contingent on interest from the public. Interested persons should contact Jeff Morton, Extension Agent, at (910) 455-5873 to enroll or be placed on the OCBA mailing list to receive monthly meeting notices.

Honey Yogurt Dressing

½ pint plain yogurt
¼ cup honey
2 teaspoons orange or lemon peel
1 teaspoon vanilla

Combine all ingredients and mix well. Keep refrigerated. (Makes 1-1/4 cup)

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