



What's all the BUZZ about these wasps?

Dear parents, staff and students,

A warm, dry spring has helped the wasp populations to thrive this year. We have consulted with professionals and have been working since before school started to identify nests and eliminate them. Student safety is our number one priority and we want you to know that we will continue to work to keep students safe from stings.

We are finding two kinds of wasps on our campus. We have paper wasps that nest in crevices and holes in the play equipment, hand rails, and fences. We also have yellow jackets that build large nests underground.

As soon as a nest is identified, we caution tape off the area and alert staff and students of the danger. We do not remove or treat nests during the day because most of the wasps are out foraging for food and will not be affected, and the ones that are guarding the nests will only get aggressive and increase the risk of people getting stung. We remove/treat nests after dark or very early in the morning when the entire colony is in their nest and in a dormant state.

To discourage the wasps from making nests, we do our best to keep our campus clean and are spending the weekend filling in holes along railings and on playground equipment.

The following are some things that you can do to help keep students from being stung:

1. Talk to children about the dangers of swatting at a wasp or poking at a nest.
2. Notify the office right away if you discover a nest or wasp activity.
3. Remind children to wash their hands after they eat. Yellow Jackets are attracted to meats and sweets, and any leftover scent found on your hands after eating.

As we move into fall, and the weather cools, we should not see this same level of activity on our campus. In the meantime, please speak with your child about the ways to avoid being stung. It would be very helpful.

We will continue to be diligent about keeping our students safe and working to eliminate the wasps' nests. Please feel free to contact Jackie Bertero, Director of Facilities and Operations, with any questions you may have.

Notice of Pesticide Application

Forestville Union School District may be applying the following pesticide during the 2018-2019 school year. For more information go to the Department of Pesticide Regulations at <http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm>

Product Name	Active Ingredient
Spectracide Wasp & Hornet Spray	Tetramethrin

We never apply any pesticide when students are present and are continuing to research alternative solutions. It is our goal to move away from the use of any toxic chemicals on our campus.

What is the Difference Between Bees, Wasps, and Yellow Jackets?

Honey Bee

These bees are medium sized and tend to be more caramel yellow rather than neon. They are fuzzy and have black and white stripes on their bodies.



Home: Honey bees are either domesticated and live in hives built by humans, or they are wild and build their combs inside any vacant cavity they find. Their comb is a waxy substance they manufacture in their body using nectar as a base ingredient. When wild, they may be found inside a hollow tree, or in your attic. They do not dig, and therefore won't be found in the ground.

Food: Honey bees collect pollen and nectar from the flowers of plants.

Weapons: The female honey bee can only sting mammals once. They have a barb on their stinger just like a fishing hook. Once it enters skin, that barb spells doom for the bee. The stinger and much of her digestive tract will remain behind, pumping venom into her victim. Honey bees only sting when they feel threatened or provoked and are the only species to die after stinging.

Wasps

Wasps come in many colors, but they are glossy and their shape is very different. They have a pointed end to their abdomen and a very skinny "waist."



Home: Wasps also make their own building materials, producing a grey paper abode. Theirs is shaped more like an upside down flower, with all the cells open on the larger end and attached to the eaves of your house, under the grill, or any other troublesome spot by one small stalk.

Food: Most tend to eat pest insects, helping us out a lot more than we know. There are many wasps that we consider beneficial insects.

Weapons: Wasps are rumored to be the cause of the most painful stings around. Those that sting can sting repeatedly. Most are stingless.

Yellow Jacket

Yellow jackets are predominantly yellow with smaller black stripes and they are glossy, rather than fuzzy. They are actually a type of wasp.



Home: This family will build their own nest out of grey "paper" they make themselves out of chewed bits of wood. This nest tends to be football shaped and smooth on the outside. They will often hang these nests from trees or shrubs, but occasionally they too will find an opening into your attic and build their nest indoors. One type of yellow jacket is called a ground bee. These are the stinging insects you are likely to disturb while mowing.

Food: They feed on a sugar and protein diet. They love to interrupt your picnic or try to help you drink your sugary drink while you sit on the patio. On the beneficial side, they prey on insects that we would otherwise not like to have around.

Weapons: They can sting repeatedly and can often be aggressive.