

HOUSING AND WELLNESS PROGRAM

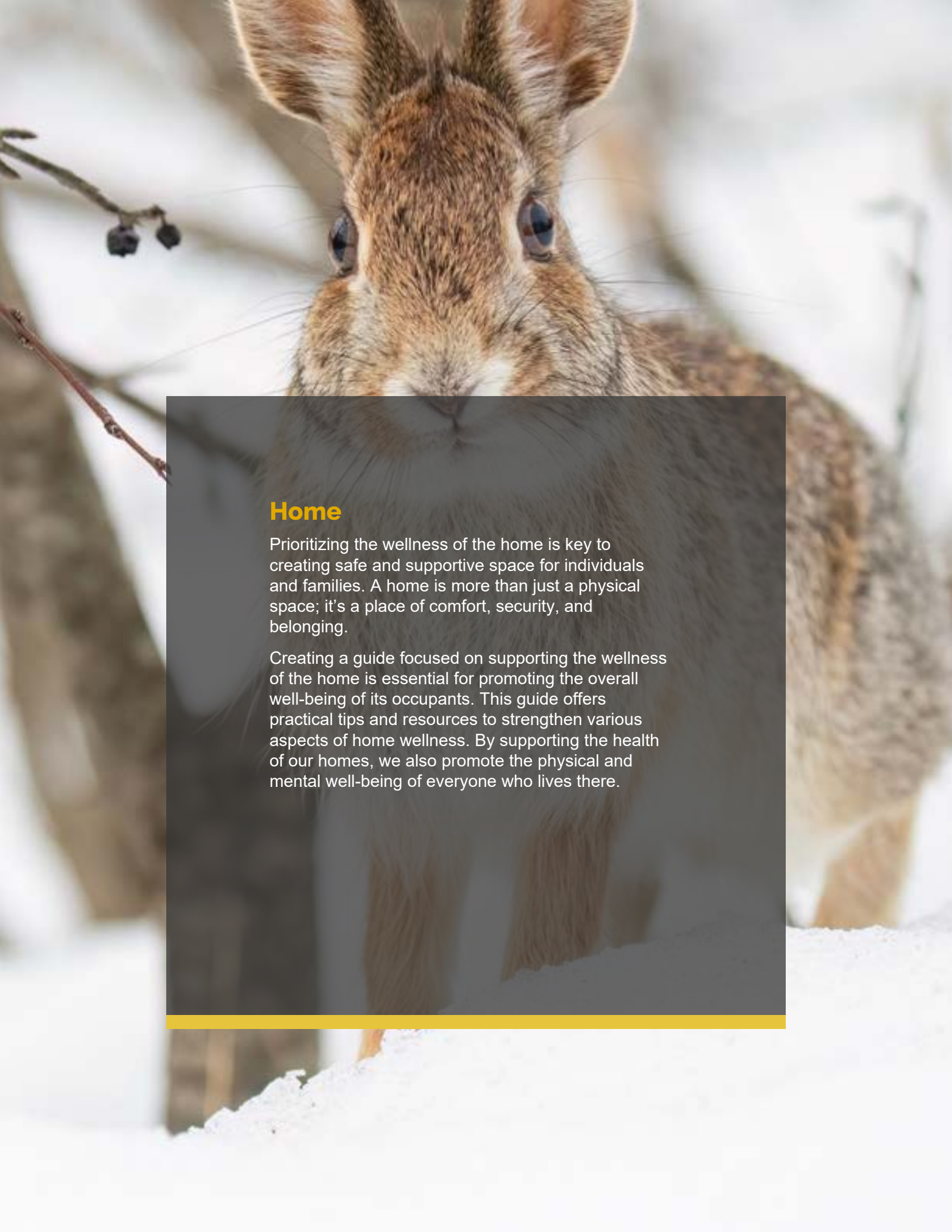
# A Comprehensive Wellness Guide for **Healthy Homes**

## **PESTS**



First Nations Housing  
Professionals Association

L'Association des professionnels de  
l'habitation des Premières Nations



## Home

Prioritizing the wellness of the home is key to creating safe and supportive space for individuals and families. A home is more than just a physical space; it's a place of comfort, security, and belonging.

Creating a guide focused on supporting the wellness of the home is essential for promoting the overall well-being of its occupants. This guide offers practical tips and resources to strengthen various aspects of home wellness. By supporting the health of our homes, we also promote the physical and mental well-being of everyone who lives there.

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## Acknowledgement

The First Nations Housing Professionals Association (FNHPA) is delighted to introduce the Housing and Wellness Program, aimed at offering crucial information and guidance to First Nations individuals residing on reserve or engaged in housing-related roles. This initiative delivers educational programs, tools, and resources tailored for First Nations housing staff, residents, and youth. Through the implementation of this program, our aim is to address housing, health, and safety concerns holistically.



# HOUSEHOLD PESTS

Household pests, such as insects and rodents, can cause property damage and affect your health. They can contaminate food, trigger allergies, and carry diseases. Pests are found in both urban and rural homes and often enter through small cracks, pipes, or open doors and windows. Understanding how pests enter and what attracts them can help you take steps to prevent infestations and maintain a clean, healthy home.

**Disclaimer:** This guide provides general information intended to support home wellness, safety, and well-being. Each First Nation may have its own housing policies, programs, bylaws, and community guidelines. Please refer to local policies and community resources for the specific rules, responsibilities, and supports that apply to your home.

# Identification of Household Pests

Identifying the type of pest in your home is the first step toward effective management. It can help you choose the right treatment approach and protect your home and health.

Here are some common household pests found in Canada:

## Ants

Pavement ants, carpenter ants, and house ants are commonly found in homes, especially during warmer months.

## Cockroaches

German cockroaches are common in urban areas and thrive in warm, humid spaces such as kitchens and bathrooms.

## Rodents

Mice and rats often enter homes during colder seasons. They can damage property and contaminate food.

## Bedbugs

These small insects have become more common across Canada and can be difficult to eliminate without professional treatment.

## Spiders

Most are harmless, but species such as cellar spiders, wolf spiders, and house spiders are often found indoors.

## Wasps and Bees

Yellow jackets, paper wasps, and bumblebees may build nests near or inside homes and can pose a stinging risk if disturbed.

## Flies

Houseflies, fruit flies, and cluster flies can spread germs and contaminate food.

## Silverfish

These small insects prefer damp, dark areas such as basements and bathrooms and can damage paper, glue, and fabrics.

## Termites

Found mainly in southern Ontario and British Columbia, termites can cause serious damage to wooden structures if left untreated.

## Fleas

Often brought in by pets, fleas can infest both animals and the home and typically require thorough treatment to remove.

Recognizing common household pests early can help you take the right steps to manage them before they become a larger issue. Monitoring your home regularly and addressing concerns quickly can help prevent infestations and maintain a clean, safe, and healthy living environment.



# Health Impacts

Pests in the home can affect both physical and mental health. Here are some common impacts:

## Allergic reactions

Pests such as cockroaches, rodents, and dust mites can trigger allergies, skin irritation, and asthma symptoms.

## Disease transmission

Some pests can spread disease through bites or by contaminating food, surfaces, or air with droppings or saliva.

## Food contamination

Rodents and flies can carry bacteria such as Salmonella or E. coli, increasing the risk of foodborne illness.

## Respiratory issues

Pest particles and droppings can affect indoor air quality and worsen asthma or allergy symptoms.

## Skin irritation

Bites from bed bugs, fleas, and mites can cause itching, redness, and discomfort. Scratching may lead to infection.

## Mental health impacts

Living with a pest problem can increase stress, anxiety, and sleep disturbances.

# Prevention Tips

Taking simple steps can help reduce the risk of pests entering your home:

## Maintain cleanliness

Regularly clean floors, countertops, and dishes. Avoid leaving crumbs, spills, or clutter that may attract pests.

## Store food properly

Keep food in airtight containers made of glass or plastic. Avoid leaving pet food out overnight.

## Seal entry points

Seal cracks, gaps, and openings around doors, windows, pipes, and utility lines using caulk or weatherstripping.

## Remove standing water

Fix leaks and empty trays under houseplants to reduce moisture and pest breeding areas.

## Maintain outdoor spaces

Keep lawns trimmed, clear away debris, and store firewood away from the home.

## Install screens and vent covers

Use window and door screens and install mesh covers on vents to help block pests.

## Dispose of garbage properly

Use sealed trash containers and empty them regularly. Keep outdoor bins away from the home when possible.

## Inspect items before bringing them inside

Check luggage, packages, and second-hand items for signs of pests such as bed bugs or cockroaches.

## Do regular inspections

Look for signs of pests and address concerns early to prevent infestations.



# Pest Detection

Pests can damage your home and affect your health, and early detection is key to stopping an infestation before it spreads. Different types of pests leave different signs, so knowing what to look for can help you act quickly and effectively.

Here are some common signs that pests may be present:

## Droppings

Look for feces or urine stains near baseboards, cupboards, or food storage areas.

## Nests

Check hidden areas such as attics, basements, or behind appliances for nests.

## Damage

Rodents and some insects may chew or damage materials, leaving visible signs on walls, wiring, or food packaging.

## Footprints

You may notice grease marks, small tracks, or ant trails along floors, walls, or surfaces.

## Foul odours

Strong or musty smells may indicate mould, rodent activity, or decaying pests.

## Unusual sounds

Scratching, scurrying, or other noises, especially at night, may indicate pests inside walls, floors, or ceilings.





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