

Company exterminates bugs, pests naturally

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Business Report Correspondent

NIWOT — It is disturbing enough to have ants, cockroaches or rodents running through your home. But it's even more disturbing to see what chemicals are used in traditional pest control products.

Insects are a natural part of our world, but the harsh chemicals commonly used to correct the problem are not. Xact Impact Natural Pest Management LLC solves bug problems using natural, organic, botanical and low-impact materials.

"People were having physical reactions to the pest control which uses chemicals," said Ken Rubin, chief executive officer of Xact Impact Natural Pest Management LLC. "We know people do not want to live with these pests and do not want the chemicals in and around their homes either. People would tell us sometimes the solution was worse than the original problem."

After seeing the success of his brother Mark Rubin, inventor of the natural pest control service, Ken Rubin and his wife Jenine, vice president of marketing for Xact, decided to join forces and become a privately held tri-ownership. The business is headquartered in Niwot with a second location in Florida.

The company began in Florida in the mid-1980s as A Nature's Best Pest Management. In April 2006 after an extensive rebranding they came up with the name Xact Impact Natural Pest Management LLC, and also completed the process to be able to franchise. Ken considers Boulder to be the natural products and services capital of the U.S., though as of now there are no local franchises or clients.

Both Ken and Jenine have business backgrounds and could see the potential profit in being the sole local provider of natural pest control.

According to Fairfax-based National Pest Management Association, professional pest control is a \$6.5 billion business. Ken's goal is to gain 1 percent of that business.

"It is very reasonable to achieve over the next three or four years," he said. "We know what we have works and many customers have been with us for years."

Xact provides a safe, natural solution proven effective in thousands of Florida homes at a cost comparable to traditional pest control. The company uses no synthetic pesticides; instead its treatment methods include interior baiting, void-injection dusting and exterior granular bait applications.

Void injection is used to treat enclosed spaces where pests may live, hide and travel. Once the access points in walls are identified, a special machine places a layer of electrostatically charged naturally occurring low-toxicity boric acid or limestone-based dusts in the voids. This dust is not harmful to walls, foundation, electrical wiring or plumbing of homes or offices.

Baits use a combination of one or more types of foods toxic to pests, but have little or no toxicity to people or pets. Baits



JONATHAN CASTNER

Ken Rubin, chief executive officer of Xact Impact Natural Pest Management LLC, and Jenine Rubin, vice president of marketing, are bringing organic, botanical-based insect and pest control to Boulder County. The company, headquartered in Niwot, currently operates just out of Florida, but the principals foresee great potential for chemical-free pest management in this health-conscious community.

are placed precisely where they are available to pests, but not to people and pets. Baiting entices pests to feed on the bait and not wander around homes and offices looking for food or water. After feeding, pests either die or return to their nest and feed the bait to other members.

Xact does not use chemical spraying inside the home and leaves no chemical drift or residue. In addition, the company does not spray liquid chemicals outside of a home or office where pets and children may be playing.

"I started out with a large corporate pest control company to get rid of my insect problem, and they did not provide the service I was expecting," said Rhonda Murphy, a Florida resident who has been using Xact for more than five years to rid her house of pests.

"We have four kids and pets so we wanted to try a product that was organic and good for the environment. I was skeptical because I did not know if something other than chemicals would work, but they were willing to prove themselves to me. The problem was solved using baits and I would swear by them."

The system is based on three zones of protection, the interior, exterior perimeter (plants and shrubbery near the

home) and the lawn. The client gets a seven-step process to eliminate the bugs. That includes inspection and identification, environmental modifications, interior service, exterior perimeter service, lawn service, communication about the results and finally quarterly service to monitor progress.

In November 2005 Xact established a distribution company for products called GreenWorks Professional Pest Products LLC. Early next year the company plans to begin manufacturing its own line of products.

Jenine and Ken self-funded the business with more than \$200,000. They continue to run their own franchise operation in Florida for revenue. The cost to become a franchise is between \$40,000 to \$83,500, depending on if a work vehicle is bought or leased.

"There are so many companies in this area which pursue natural wellness," Jenine said. And because this community is so health conscious, "It is exciting to have something effective that is not harmful to kids or pets and does not hurt the environment."

For more information, visit the company Web site at www.xactimpact.com.