



Pat Johnson

**UNFAZED:** Jerry Malangone would just add deer to the menu of dead animals he's removed for clients (he also captures live nuisance animals humanely) if his pest and animal control company wins a local bid.

## Dead Deer Removal Is a Dirty Job Yet Two Companies Are Vying for It

When the state announced that as of Oct. 1, 2006, it would no longer be picking up dead deer carcasses from county and local highways, Tuckerton resident Jerry Malangone saw it as a job opportunity.

Malangone already disposes of animal carcasses as part of Balance of Nature, his termite and pest control business that he runs from his Tuckerton Estates home in the borough. He's the guy to call if something furry has decided your home's crawlspace is the perfect last resting place.

Deer would just be bigger carcasses to remove.

So he wrote to Tuckerton, Little Egg Harbor and Eagleswood, offering his service.

"I'm local and I'm on call 24-7," said Malangone. "I'd just come out with my truck and throw it in the back and take it to a landfill."

Not all landfills will take dead deer, but there are at least two that Malangone knows of, one in Tinton Falls and one in Pennsauken, he said.

But despite his enthusiasm, he may have a hard time competing with the county's offer.

Ocean County Road Supervisor Steve Childers said the county freeholders have contracted with a company based in Cream Ridge to pick up all deer from county roads for \$40 per carcass.

That seems like a low-ball bid to Malangone. He figures \$65 to be a fairer price, what with gas prices and all, but he has yet to finalize his bids to the towns.

Meanwhile, the freeholders

have extended their contract to the local municipalities.

At a recent Tuckerton Borough Council meeting, Borough Clerk Grace DiElmo told the mayor and council that she had two offers to pick up the dead deer, one from the county and one from Malangone. She didn't care who does the picking up, "as long as it's not me as some of the council have suggested."

Childers explained the county's offer. "It's a co-op program; they can jump on the contract. They would do a bid purchase order like we do, do a bid purchase for X amount of deer, and when it gets used up, do another."

He did not have the figures on how many deer have been picked up by Kelly Winthrop LLC so far. "But this is the time of year for it. During hunting season they are running out in front of cars; during the summer they hide in the woods."

Malangone said his "ace in the hole," so to speak, is that he is very local and can get the job done quickly. "And some companies won't pick it up if it's off the road. Some deer will get hit and run 50 feet off to the side. I won't play any games; if they call me out, I'll grab it and take it away, take it and be done with it."

"I'm always available. A holiday doesn't go by that I don't get a call to remove an animal. This year was the first Thanksgiving and Christmas where I didn't get called out."

Malangone doesn't just remove dead animals. He also does nuisance wildlife control. "I relocate animals humanely: raccoons, skunks, groundhogs, squirrels; bats

are my favorite.

"When people call they are usually pretty upset," said Malangone in his matter-of-fact tone. "I calm them down."

For bats, he finds the entryways into the house and plugs all of them but one. On this one access point he fits a bat cone, basically a plastic cone that points down. "Bats slide right down it but they can't crawl back in because it's too slippery for them. Some guy in Connecticut invented it."

Malangone learned about the bat cone during a seminar. This February he's attending a wildlife/animal control convention in Atlantic City. "People are coming from all over the country."

Malangone also removes pets that have died. "I take them to be cremated at Popcorn Park Humane Society. I'm the middleman, just like a veterinarian is."

"I've had calls from people with livestock, horses and cows that have died, and I can't help them. They're just too big."

But Malangone is a deer hunter and knows his way around butchering a deer if necessary.

He doesn't find it a grim occupation. "Someone needs to pick them up."

Last year, the state had also tried to dispose of its responsibility to remove deer carcasses from state highways, but the courts ruled it has to continue to contract for that service. Deer carcasses along Route 9 should be reported to the state Department of Transportation or the state police, who will contact the DOT.

— Pat Johnson