

# SAFETY ON THE LINE

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"When I hear somebody sigh, "Life is hard," I am always tempted to ask,  
"Compared to what?"

Sydney J. Harr

## Venomous Spider in Florida



Did you know that there are five species of venomous spiders in Florida? They are:

- Southern black widow
- Northern black widow
- Red widow
- Brown widow
- Brown Recluse

The southern black widow is the most widespread widow spider in Florida. It is glossy and has a complete hourglass marking on the underside of the abdomen. The northern black widow has the same general appearance but has two red triangles resembling an hourglass and a row of red spots on top of the abdomen.

The bite of the black widow and other widows usually feels like a pin prick which disappears rapidly leaving local swelling and two tiny marks. Muscular cramps in the shoulder, thigh, and back usually begin within 15 minutes to three hours. In severe cases, pain spreads to the abdomen, the blood pressure rises, nausea and sweating develops along with breathing difficulty. Death seldom occurs if a physician is consulted and treatment is prompt though victims physical condition, age, and location of bite all determines the severity of the bite.

The brown recluse is not an established species in Florida. It can be recognized by the distinctive dark violin-shaped mark located on the head and thorax, is about ½" to ¼" in length and light tan to deep reddish brown in appearance. It's usually found in sheds, garages, and other undisturbed areas that contains a supply of insects to serve as food.

If bitten by a spider, preserve it in rubbing alcohol for positive identification. Most spider bites are not considered dangerous but if one of the widow or brown recluse spiders are suspected, get medical attention immediately

(Thanks to James Hattaway for providing this information. )

**SAFETY & HEALTH**  
A Working Relationship

This year's  
Safety and Health  
day is October 18<sup>th</sup>



Do you have questions, comments, or an article you would like to submit? Contact Alan at 867-7554, fax number 867-1120, mail code TA-C1 or e-mail him at "Safety on the Line" found in your global address list. Safety on the Line is also on the Web. Go to the KSC home page, then click on KSC internal page, then find us under NASA/KSC news.