

Subterranean Termites

SIGNS of infestation:

- swarming termites on the window or near indoor light
- termite wings on window sills or in cobwebs
- shelter tubes, which are tunnels constructed by the termites from soil or wood and debris
- wood damage

Examine wood which sounds dull or hollow when hit by a screwdriver or hammer. Check areas you think may have termites with a sharp, pointed tool such as an ice pick to find the termites or their damage.

CONTROL measures:

- inspection
- prevention of termite entry
- application of chemicals for remedial treatment

The equipment needed for an inspection include a flashlight, ice pick or screwdriver, and protective clothing.

Outdoors

- Check the foundation of the house and garage for shelter tubes coming from the soil. Look closely around porches, patios, sidewalks, areas near kitchens or bathrooms and hard-to-see places.
- Check window and door frames and where utility services enter the house for termites or wood decay.
- Look behind shrubbery or plants near walls.
- Check any fences, stair carriages or trellises where earth and wood meet.
- Open and check any exterior electrical meter or fuse boxes set into the walls, a common point of infestation.

Indoors

- Check all doors, window facings, baseboards and hardwood flooring.
- Inspect where plumbing or utility pipes enter the foundation or flooring.
- Also examine the attic for shelter tubes, water leakage, wood rot or wood damage.
- Stains on walls or ceilings may mean that water is leaking and can decay wood and aid termite infestation.

PREVENTION

Most termite problems can be prevented. The most important thing to do is deny termites access to food (wood), moisture and shelter.

- Have at least a 2-inch clearance between the house and plants.
- Eliminate all wood-to-soil contacts such as trellises, fence posts, stair casings and door facings (they can be put on masonry blocks or on treated wood).
- Use wolmanized wood (pressure-treated wood) so that rain will not damage it.
- Seal openings through the foundation.
- Remove wood scraps or stumps from around foundations.
- Have at least 12"-18" clearance between floor beams and the soil underneath.

CHEMICAL TREATMENT

Termite treatment often requires specialized equipment, that is why it is recommended that you always use the services of a pest control operator.

Contact your local county Extension office for more information on how to select a termite control service.