

## 5 Signs You Have Termites!

- **Swarming** - Swarms are what tip most homeowners off to an infestation. This is probably the most visible indicator that you may have a termite problem. Swarms usually happen in the spring, when some of the termites take flight from the colony in an effort to establish a new colony. A homeowner with a termite problem will often find their bodies lying on sashes and below windows where the termites have tried to exit.
- **Shelter tubes** - Subterranean termites need moisture to live and they need the protection of tiny spaces. Therefore they build pencil thick tunnels of mud and earth across exposed areas. To see if these tubes are active, break one off and see if it is rebuilt.
- **Bugs** - Simply pull back mulch around suspicious areas of the house or rotting wood near the house and look for termites.
- **Hollowed wood**- Probe suspect wood with a knife or flat-blade screwdriver to see if it's been hollowed. Severely damaged wood may sound hollow when tapped.
- **Dirt in wood** - Homeowners sometimes get confused about what is water damage and what is termite damage, since water and termites are often related. The best way to differentiate termite damage from moisture damage is that termites bring bits of dirt up into the wood.

**Do You Have Termites?  
Not Sure Give Us A Call!**

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**ABCO TERMITE & PEST CONTROL  
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**Fact Sheet**



**Termites!**

The time to treat is NOW! If subterranean termites have infested your home, there is no best time to treat for them. Summer, winter, spring or fall, subterranean termites can be active all year round in heated buildings.

Subterranean termites will not just disappear or go away. If they have infested your home or business, the only thing that will stop them is proper treatment. If you do nothing, the termites will continue to eat and cause damage. At some point, structural damages could occur.

### Into Home Repairs?



If you are battling formosan subterranean termites, your entire home could be destroyed in as little as a year and a half.

Nothing puts fear into a homeowner like finding termites. Termites annually cause about five billion dollars in damages to U.S. buildings, according to a National Pest Management Association estimate.

### How much is your home worth?

Nobody is immune: Termites live in every state except Alaska. Even the White House and Statue of Liberty have had termite problems in recent years. This was reported by Mike Potter, a professor and urban entomologist at the University of KY.

Termite colonies are sporadically spread, they can range from 10,000 insects into the millions - and could have reached over from your neighbor's yard a half-acre away.

There are three different types of termites in

the U.S. that damage homes: subterranean, drywood and dampwood termites. The first two are the most damaging to dwellings. Subterranean termites are the most widespread, so the advice here focuses on them. (Drywood termites, which live above ground, are mostly a problem in coastal areas, especially in parts of states such as Florida, California, Louisiana and Texas).

### Help prevent them from returning!

- **Empty crawl spaces** - Reduce moisture by laying down 4 - 6 millimeter polyethylene sheeting over about 75% of the soil surface and remove any temptations such as stored wood. Building codes usually call for 1 sq. foot of vent opening per 150 square feet of crawl space area. Keep vents dirt and debris free.
- **Remove earth to wood** - Where possible remove soil where it comes in contact with wood siding. Remove decorative wood lattice work, wood doors and window frames that come close to the ground. Twelve inches of separation is recommended by the University of California's Integrated Pest Management Program.
- **Stop all leaks** - Anything that doesn't allow water to flow away from the structure needs to be repaired. Subterranean termites need moisture to survive. Clean gutters and down spouts. Check faucets to insure they aren't leaking, leaving wet spots around the house.
- **Mind your mulch** - Don't mound your mulch up against the foundation or deck beams. A common misconception with homeowners is that pea gravel will not attract termites like mulch. Anything that will hold moisture will be a huge attractant. This includes soil.
- **Choose Sand** - Recent research has shown that putting sand (10-16 mesh size) instead of soil around a foundation and in the crawl

space is effective in warding off termites. Termites can't build tunnels in the sand in order to get at the home's wood.

- **Dehydrate barrier** - The use of diatomaceous earth, a natural, light, powdery "s oil", which is crushed-up fossilized algae like plants, sucks the moisture out of termites. It works as a natural repellent.
- **Treat your boards** - Applying a coating of sodium borate on the wood in the crawl space will kill termites when they try to eat the wood.
- **Choose Termite-proof** - Is new construction in your future? Build it more termite-proof. Where termite problems are more acute, it's not a bad idea. Builders can incorporate Termimesh, a stainless-steel wire mesh that wraps around foundations and other entry points and acts like a mini-barrier.
- **Be choosy about your wood** - There are woods that termites don't like as well as others. Be choosy. Douglas fir is moderately resistant to termites. Most structural lumber is usually Douglas fir, hemlock or spruce. Ask before you buy.

### Termites or Ants?

It is also possible that you are not dealing with termites at all. Carpenter ants look very similar to swarming termites due to the fact that both reproductive stages have wings. If you find signs of winged insects, don't panic and assume that they are automatically termites. Look for the most common sign - the color. Subterranean termite swarms are solid black, drywood swarms are solid red, while carpenter ants are usually red and black or dark brown. Treatment for carpenter ants is different from termites. If you are unsure what you have, please give us a call and we will send out a qualified technician to inspect your findings and determine the best type of treatment.