

OUR INSECT ENEMIES

Closing The Door On Termites

(NAPSA)—If your walls could talk, what would they say? If you're like thousands of other homeowners, they might tell you that you have termites. These discreet insects are SBD—silent, but destructive—and can often remain undetected while causing severe structural damage to homes and commercial properties.

Known as 24/7 pests, termites have hard, saw-toothed jaws and eat 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Typically feasting on foods that contain cellulose, such as wood, flooring, sheetrock and wall-paper, termites are also attracted to materials containing glucose, which can also include many plastics and fabrics.

They have power in numbers. With some colonies of subterranean termites consisting of up to 2 million members, the effects of an undetected nest can be devastating. In fact, termite infestations cause homeowners a staggering \$5 billion in property damage each year in the U.S.—an expense traditionally not covered in homeowners' insurance policies. The only way to eliminate a termite infestation is through professional pest control services.

Protecting Your Home

Homeowners are urged by the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) to take preventative measures to ward off these structural villains:

- Avoid moisture at the foundation of your home, and repair leaking faucets, water pipes and AC units.



Photo credit: Courtesy of NPMA/Gene White

There are a number of ways to protect your home from termites.

- Divert water away from your property through properly functioning downspouts, gutters and splash blocks.
- Reduce humidity in crawl spaces with proper ventilation.
- Keep firewood and lumber away from direct contact with your home. Also, dispose of nearby stumps and wood debris.
- Routinely inspect the foundation of your home for signs of mud tubes (used by termites to reach a food source), cracked or bubbling paint and wood that sounds hollow when tapped.
- If you see signs of infestation or want to schedule a regular home inspection to ensure your home is termite-free, contact a pest professional.

For more information on termites and other pest issues or to find a pest professional, visit www.pestworld.org.