

Hints *For* Homeowners

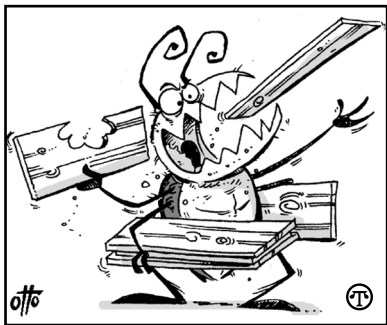
Protecting Your Home From Termites

(NAPSA)—It's obvious that homeowners would want to keep termites from eating away at their homes and also their wallets. Still, according to the National Pest Management Association (NPMA), the saw-toothed, wood-eating insects cause more than \$5 billion in property damage each year across the U.S.—and damage from wood-boring insects is typically not covered by homeowners' insurance policies.

The best way to effectively eliminate a termite infestation is through professional pest control, but there are steps homeowners can take to help keep the bugs at bay.

For instance, simple things, such as keeping tree branches and shrubbery well trimmed and away from the house can help. The experts at the NPMA also recommend these tips for controlling termites:

- Seal cracks and holes on the outside of the home including entry points for utilities and pipes.
- Keep basements, attics and crawl spaces well ventilated and dry.
- Repair leaking faucets, water pipes and AC units.
- Repair fascia and soffits and rotted roof shingles. Some termites are drawn to deteriorating wood.



Protecting your home from termites could save you some serious cash.

- Replace weather stripping and repair loose mortar around basement foundation and windows.
- Store firewood at least 20 feet away from the house and 5 inches off the ground.
- 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.
- Direct water away from your house through properly functioning downspouts, gutters and splash blocks.
- Call a qualified pest professional for additional advice and treatment if necessary. For more information on termites and other pest issues or to find a pest professional, visit www.pestworld.org.