

Termites

Because of the serious damage they can cause to wooden structures, termites are among the pests most feared by homeowners. However, swarms of flying termites do not always mean your building is infested. A careful inspection of the structure is required to confirm an infestation. People also frequently mistake swarms of flying ants for termites. If you suspect that your house is infested, call a professional. Do-it-yourself sprays cannot be relied on to reduce a damaging infestation. Common termites in California are the subterranean termites that build nests in soil, dampwood termites that nest in moist wood and soil, and drywood termites that nest above ground in dry wood. Management of each termite species is different.

Distinguish flying ants from termites:

- ▶ **Check the antennae, wings and waist to confirm that pest insects are termites (please refer to ant vs. termite drawing on back.)**

Design your building to keep termites out:

- ▶ **Keep a 12-inch barrier of smooth concrete, sand, or other material between the soil surface and substructure wood beneath a building**
- ▶ **Choose termite-resistant wood for fences or other structures that must contact soil**
- ▶ **Remove wood piles, untreated fence posts and buried scrap wood near structures**
- ▶ **Provide adequate ventilation to substructures and keep them dry**
- ▶ **Immediately repair foundation cracks**

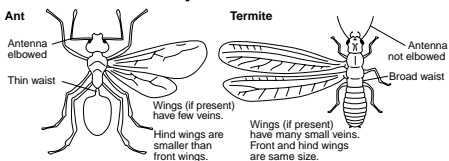


If termites are invading your home:

- ▶ Destroy shelter tubes that subterranean termites build between soil and wood structures
- ▶ If dampwood termite nests are accessible, remove infested wood and eliminate excess moisture
- ▶ Drywood termites can be controlled with heat, freezing, electricity, microwaves, fumigation or spot treatments of chemicals
- ▶ For any infestation, contact a professional for help. Pesticides licensed only for use by a pest control operator are usually necessary to control subterranean and dampwood infestations.

Using pesticides for termite control:

- ▶ Pesticides may be injected into the soil by professional applicators through drilling or rodding. Special procedures must be followed to prevent contamination of ground or surface water.
- ▶ For soil injections, ask your applicator to use a product other than chlorpyrifos. Newer types of products such as pyrethroids and chloronicotinylns are safer for your health and the environment.
- ▶ Baits can be effective in some cases, but may take several months to control the problem and must be followed up with constant monitoring



Be sure to read product labels carefully and follow all instructions on proper use, storage and disposal of pesticides.

Minimize or avoid the use of products that contain diazinon and chlorpyrifos – these materials are polluting our waterways.

For more information contact the UC Master Gardeners at (916) 875-6913, Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. to noon, and 1 - 4 p.m., or visit the UCIPM Web site at www.ipm.ucdavis.edu.



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