

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT DRYWOOD TERMITES

Drywood termites are one of the types of termites that cause damage to buildings. They live inside wood and do not make contact with soil. They get the moisture they need to live from the wood they eat and to a lesser extent, from other sources in their environment.

Termite Colony: Termites are social insects that live in highly organized colonies. Like many insects, they have an egg, an immature, and an adult stage. There are three main types of adults colony members: reproductives, workers, and soldiers. When the colony is several years old and relatively large, it may produce another form of an adult termite called a "swarmer." Swarmers are the termite's way of sending out new kings and queens to start colonies. Normally, at least **three to four years or more will pass before any swarming or winged termites from the colony occur.**



Photo Courtesy of UNIVAR

Swarmers: are the most visible form of termites. These termites can be confused with many ants that also swarm in the spring. However, swarming ants have elbowed antennae, a narrow waist, and front wings that are longer than the back wings; swarming termites have straight antennae, a thick waist, and all wings the same length.



Termite

Flying Ant

FUMIGATION VS. LOCALIZED OR SPOT TREATMENTS

Drywood termite control:

All drywood termite control methods can be categorized as either whole-structure or localized. A whole-structure treatment is defined as the simultaneous treatment of all infestations, accessible, and inaccessible in a structure. A localized or spot treatment is more restrictive often applied to a single board or small group of boards. Homeowners should be advised to know the distinction between whole-structure and spot treatments when deciding which method to select because all treatment methods are not equivalent.

Whole-structure treatments have an advantage over spot treatments in that they are detection independent.

This means whole-structure treatments, if applied properly, can eliminate all infestations, even hidden ones. With spot or localized treatment methods, there is always some doubt as to the extent of drywood termite colony boundaries within homes. Consequently, one can never be sure that all infestations have been treated.

However, those that have been treated will be completely exterminated.



Courtesy of San Diego Fume Works

FUMIGATION AS A WHOLE-STRUCTURE TREATMENT

What is a fumigation?

Fumigation is the process, by which, insects are eliminated from a structure with the use of lethal gas. Fumigations are carried out using Vikane Gas Fumigant (Sulfuryl Fluoride) in combination with Chloropicrin (a warning agent). Fumigation leaves absolutely no protection against future infestations. Because colony growth is very slow it will be 4 or more years before any new infestations are detectable.

Drywood Termites

Infestation at fascia board winged alates. Beginning of Colonization (Accessible, Detectable)



Budding (expansion) into wood members of attic wings left as evidence (May be inaccessible and may not be detectable)



Frass and damage evident at window frame (detectable)



Frass at bottom of door jam (accessible and detectable)



Further migration or expansion of colonies into wood of ceiling joists. Wood damage and pellets. (May not be detectable and may be inaccessible)



Colony inaccessible inside wall areas (undetected)



Localized or spot treatments are considered secondary forms of treatment and leave areas that are inaccessible and/or undetectable (such as those in wall voids) in question as to the presence of infestations. (see illustration above) Undetectable, and inaccessible infestations will not be seen by your termite inspector.

YOU HAVE A CHOICE

Multiple areas of infestation can be treated successfully by localized or spot treatments. These localized treatments will eliminate 100% of the termites in the treated colonies and will continue to protect against further infestation (of those treated areas) for years to come.

As the number of areas of infestation increase, the probability of undetected infestations increase, therefore your decision as to the type of treatment best suited to your situation will need to take fumigation into consideration.