

## Conducive Conditions for Pests

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Here are a few common things you can check in your home or a home you are about to buy:

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A detailed pest inspection can have 12 or more recommendations for repair, replacement, and elimination of conducive conditions.

- Make sure your attic is properly ventilated.
- Periodically check your slab line for the presence of water or moisture.
- Remove old rotted wood in areas around your home.
- Keep wood debris off the ground and away from areas around your home.
- Avoid stacking firewood close to the home.
- Slope the soil around the home away from the structure for at least five feet.
- Keep soil and beauty bark six inches away from wood siding or skirting.
- Make sure kitchen and exhaust fans are installed and have properly sealed ducts that terminate outside.
- Make sure the dryer vent properly terminates to the outside and has a tightly sealed duct.
- Remove or cut back plants and shrubs planted too close to the exterior of the home. There should be at least 12 inches of clearance from the home to plants or shrubs
- Make sure the gutters are clean, and in a good state of repair, and that water from the downspouts is directed away from the home.
- Look for plumbing leaks under the kitchen and bathroom sinks, around toilets, under your washing machine, under the dishwasher, and around the outside of your home.

### INSPECTING YOUR HOME FOR TERMITES - EXTERIOR

Exterior inspections are important, particularly for houses built on slabs. They may provide your only chance to catch termites before they invade your home. Check the exterior foundation, siding and wood carefully.

Check the exterior foundation for mud tubes. This is particularly important for houses built on slabs, since this is one of the few inspectable areas.



Siding should be a minimum of 6 inches above the soil level so that you can inspect the foundation for termite tubes.



Look for cracks in the foundation that may indicate a crack in the footer. Termites can use any gap of only 1/32 inch to gain entry into your home.



Check for areas where the siding appears to be "blistered", particularly where siding and steps meet. Over time, caulking shrinks and cracks, allowing water to penetrate wood and siding.



Inspect entryways, particularly around door frames and porch supports



Check window and door frames, particularly around garage doors, for moisture or termite damage. Moist wood is vulnerable to termite attack.



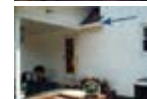
Water damage to roof areas can create conditions that may lead to a secondary or above-ground termite infestation that is not detectable in a regular inspection.



Decks can hide termite tubes or damage to siding. Inspections of areas under decks are critical.



Areas where there are no gutters may be subject to moisture problems.



Landscape timbers, even pressure-treated timbers, may decay and be attacked by termites over time. Probe timbers with a screwdriver for signs of damage. Replace damaged timbers with new pressure-treated ones.



Flower boxes made of wood or masonry attached to the house may provide termites with access to the house without being seen. Pull soil away from the foundation and check for termite tubes.



### EARTH-FILLED PORCHES



Water splashing on porch steps can lead to decayed siding.



Caulking gaps between porch and siding helps.

### DAMAGE TO DOOR FRAMES



Rain can seep into unprotected wood in doorframes.



Probe wood to check for decay or termites.

### DAMAGE TO ROOF AREAS



Water-damaged fascia can lead to termite problems.

### ATTACHED DECKS



Decks can be difficult to crawl under; however it is important to inspect foundation & siding areas covered by them.

### LANDSCAPE TIMBERS



Termite & decay damaged landscape timbers.

### SIDING

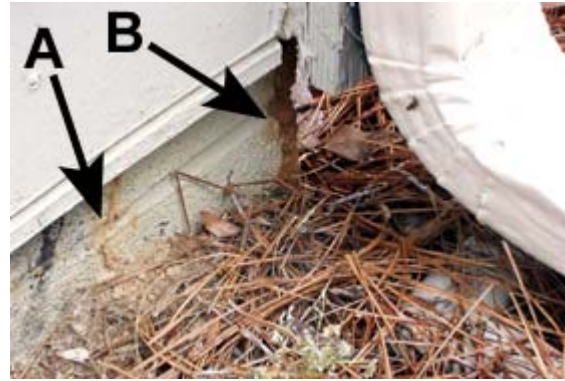


Siding covered with soil is subject to decay. Termites may invade the house unseen.



Keep siding clear of soil and other debris. You should be able to see the foundation on all sides of the house.

### INSPECTING THE FOUNDATION



Look for termite tubes on the exterior foundation wall. The picture on the right shows a termite tube (arrow "B") hidden behind a downspout. The tube is coming up from soil, on foundation wall and under siding. Arrow "A" shows an old tube that has dried and crumbled. This picture illustrates why it is important to keep mulch from covering the foundation wall.

## FIREWOOD

**Never** stack firewood against the side of your house or on a slab, such as in your garage or an earth-filled porch. Termites will use the stack as both a food source and a way to enter a house unseen. Keep firewood stacked off of the ground (up on blocks) and away from the house, preferably 10-20 feet away.

Termite-infested firewood that is brought into the house is highly unlikely to cause an infestation indoors. If you find termites in pieces of firewood, you can burn that piece of wood immediately or knock the termites from the wood (outdoors or indoors) and simply squash them. Do not spray the wood with an insecticide. Burning pesticide-treated wood in your home could present a serious health hazard.



Termites tubed up through a gap between the foundation wall and the floor of this earth-filled porch, and then into a pile of firewood stacked on the porch.



## MULCHES AND LANDSCAPING

All mulches, regardless of their composition, help to maintain moist soil conditions and to reduce weeds. Moisture in the soil may attract termites to the area and some mulches may actually be eaten by termites. This doesn't mean you should avoid using mulch around your home and in your gardens. Never spread mulch so that it touches the foundation or lowest course of siding on your home. While it may have a nicer appearance this way, it also allows termites to use the cover of mulch to invade your house undetected.



Siding should always be above the grade or soil line, preferably by 6-12 inches; otherwise, you could have decay problems as well as termite problems. Flower beds and other gardening should never touch the foundation. Never dig up the soil up within **12 inches** of the house. This is the area that was treated for termites. Digging up the soil or putting new topsoil on top of this area allows termites access to your foundation. You need to be able to inspect the foundation for signs of termite activity.



**When planting shrubs, think ahead to how large the plants will be in 10-15 (or more) years.**

Do not plant shrubs too close to the foundation. Shrubs that are too close to the house may hide termite (and other pest) activity. Prune shrubs to prevent them from blocking airflow through foundation vents.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Consult a professional about grade and above ground moisture problems. If grade is not solved, these buildings will have continuous E-Subs and other insect problems.

Grade (soil), mulch and fences in contact with structure must be corrected in order to control E-Sub termites. Lawn care management program can provide border system to keep grade and debris levels below slab line. Maintain soil and mulch six inches away from structure. Remove or cut back plants and shrubs that are too close to exterior walls. There should be at least 12 inches of clearance from the building. Flower beds and other gardening should never touch the foundation. After treatment never dig up the soil within 12 inches of the structure. This is the area that will be treated for termites. Digging up the soil or putting new soil on top of this area allows termite's access to the foundation and blocks the slab line for future inspections. Wood repairs should be made if possible, with hardy plank or treated lumber. All moisture problems must be fixed in order to control termite infestation.

Watering systems should not spray on buildings due to causing above ground moisture source in walls. Tree limbs, shrubs and bushes should be maintained for future inspections. Tree limbs touching builds are also conducive conditions for carpenter ants infestation.

It is recommended that at least 4 to 6 inches of clearing be developed between grading and the wall siding. This will minimize surface water entry between the foundation and the wall material, promoting wood decay.

Poor drainage can result in saturation of the surficial sands and development of a perched water table. The sands, once saturated, can lose their load carrying capacity. This can result in foundation settlements and bearing capacity failures.

In general, gutters are recommended all around the roof line. The gutters and downspouts should be unobstructed by leaves and tree limbs. In the area where expansive soils are present, the gutters should be connected to flexible pipe extensions so that the roof water is drained at least ten feet away from the foundation. In areas where sandy soils are present, the gutters should drain the roof water at least 5 feet away from the foundation.