

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Termites: The Silent Destroyer

(NAPSA)—While you're relaxing in your backyard or at the park enjoying the onset of warm weather, be aware that intruders could be quietly invading your home. These trespassers can sneak past any locked doors or watchdogs, and are almost too small to spot—they are termites.

Termites, which can live in colonies of up to several thousand, have proven to be one of homeowners' greatest adversaries. Battling termites can be a pain for you, your family and your wallet. These pests have been around for more than 250 million years and can be divided into two groups: those that live entirely in wood (drywood) and those that tunnel underground (subterranean), making proper identification and treatment essential.

"A termite queen can lay several hundred eggs a day," notes Paul Hardy, senior technical director for Orkin, Inc. "Termites' abilities to reproduce so quickly and enter houses undetected make them a formidable pest for homeowners."

Termites never sleep and are stealthy, silent invaders. Any house or building can be vulnerable to termite attacks. Whether your home is stucco, brick or wood, once termites enter, they work night and day and eat anything made of cellulose, including plants, cotton and wood. Watch out for these signs of an infestation:

- Wood that sounds hollow when tapped
 - Pencil-sized mud tubes on exterior walls
 - Distorted, cracked or bubbling areas of paint on wood surfaces
 - Swarms of winged insects
 - Discarded wings of "swarmers."
- With the ability to adapt easily



Termites can threaten the very roof over your head. Proper preventive measures can protect homeowners from this kind of loss.

to changing environments, termites are a problem nationwide—no one is safe from a termite invasion without proper preventive measures. Use the following information and prevention tips to protect your home against these relentless soldiers:

- Seal any places that termites might enter, including small cracks and crevices. Termites can enter buildings through cracks as small as $\frac{1}{32}$ of an inch.
- Termites love to swarm around sources of food, water and moisture, including tree stumps and roots, mulch, firewood and leaves. Remove the accumulation of water and wood sources around the exterior of your home.
- Keep gutters and downspouts clear, and trim siding or stucco to at least two inches above soil level.
- Contact a pest professional at the first sign of an infestation.

For more on termite prevention, visit www.orkin.com. Free inspections are also available by calling (800) 800-ORKIN.