

# HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

## Don't Let Termites Eat Away Your Investment

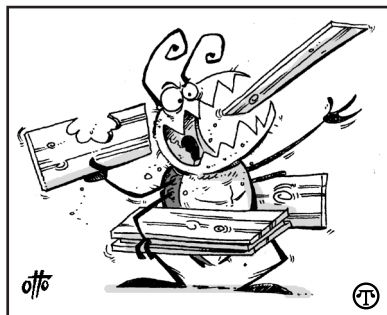
(NAPSA)—Homeowners can protect themselves from termite infestation, a silent but costly plague on homes both old and new. In fact, each year termites cause \$5 billion in property damages—a cost homeowner's insurance will not help recover. In the United States, there are two main species of termites—subterranean and drywood.

Subterranean termites live in underground colonies that can be found in all 50 states. They build mud tubes to ensure a safe path, free from heat and cold, into a home. These cream-colored pests are only about  $\frac{1}{8}$  of an inch in length but are the most destructive species of termite—eating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Unlike subterranean termites, the drywood species does not require a moist environment. This species of termite is darker in color, light brown and longer in length, about an inch.

The National Pest Management Association (NPMA) urges homeowners to take precautionary steps to ward off these damaging pests:

- Keep water accumulation away from your home's foundation using downspouts, gutters and splash blocks.



- Quickly repair house damage from a leaky roof or window, as termites can thrive in this moisture.
- Reduce humidity in crawl spaces with proper ventilation.
- Prevent shrubs, vines and other vegetation from growing over and covering vents.
- Never bury wood scraps or waste lumber in the yard.
- Remove old tree stumps and roots around and beneath the building.
- Maintaining a one-inch gap between the soil and wood portions of the building is ideal.
- If you see signs of infestation or to schedule regular home inspections to ensure your home is termite-free, contact a pest professional.

For more information on termites and other pest issues, visit [www.pestworld.org](http://www.pestworld.org).