



INTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Tips On Pest Detection And Prevention

(NAPSA)—Many homeowners are aware of the obvious risks to their home, including damage caused by wind, fire and water.

What they may not be aware of is that structural damage caused by different kinds of pests is not covered by insurance, making pest invasion more of a problem than it is currently considered.

The pests that pose the largest threat to homes across the U.S. are termites, carpenter ants and mice. According to the National Pest Management Association (NPMA), these are the three most common structural pests to invade homes.

When termites infest buildings, they consume more than just wood. They damage lumber, wood panels, flooring, Sheetrock, wallpaper, plastics and paper products. The most serious damage is the loss of structural strength, which can collapse stairs, portions of or even a building entirely. Keep an eye out for small piles of sawdust or straw-shaped mud "tubes" near floorboards and wood beams.

Carpenter ants don't eat wood like termites; they hollow it out to create nests. This behavior is just as damaging as termite infestation, especially since their excavation creates openings for other pests to enter a home. High-moisture wood is especially prone to carpenter ant infestation. Look for small piles of sawdust, which could be where the ants have "excavated" wood.

The house mouse is the most common rodent pest because they breed rapidly throughout the year and can share nests. While some adults may be allergic to mice, their droppings and urine are



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what most commonly cause allergies in children.

House mice can also bring more unwanted pests into a home, including fleas, mites, ticks and lice.

The NPMA offers these precautions:

- Remove old tree stumps and roots around and beneath the building, and eliminate any wood contact with the soil.
- Make sure that all holes, cracks and voids are filled and sealed.
- Don't overlook proper drainage at the foundation and always install gutters or diverts, which will channel water away from the building.
- Keep branches and other plants cut back from the house.
- If you feel you have a pest problem in your home, call a local pest management professional to identify and correct the problem.

For more information on pests and prevention tips, visit www.pestworld.org.