

# HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

## Are You Using Current Technology To Protect Your Home From Termites?

(NAPSA)—From windows and insulation that provide moisture, vapor and UV control to state-of-the-art sentry systems to monitor and control air quality, innovative products represent significant advances in home protection.

Since buying a home is the single largest purchase most people make, it's important to use the latest technology to protect it from damage, including damage from harmful pests like termites.

Until recently, nearly all termite treatments involved a pest management professional trenching and drilling in and around the foundation of a home and filling these areas with a liquid chemical termiticide to form a chemical barrier around the house. This process worked well as long as the barrier was not disturbed. Even a small break could create an unintentional entry for these destructive wood-loving pests.

"Treating a home with liquids is like building a fort around the house," says Jim Kolkana of Palm Beach Exterminating, a professional pest management company in Florida. "One of the problems with liquids is you can't see inside the slab or foundation, so you never know if there are defects in construction or places where the barrier is broken and termites can get in. So you may have to go back and sometimes re-apply the chemical."

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has removed a number of liquid termiticides from the market over the years. As one liquid chemical was eliminated, another was introduced to replace it. Recently, in a movement toward more environmentally sustainable practices, new "bait systems" were developed that were



**Bait systems are the method many homeowners and insurance companies prefer for permanent protection against termites.**

less hazardous to humans, pets and the environment.

Compared with basic liquid termiticide treatments, most bait systems can be installed and monitored without entering the home.

The baits exploit the social behavior of termites, who share the "food" in bait stations with others in their colony until the entire colony is eliminated. Plastic stakes containing a piece of wood are placed around the home. Professionals check the stakes regularly. No termiticide is added unless termite presence is detected and then only a few grams are needed.

Many pest management professionals, however, still use liquid termiticides. They follow the same time-tested process of drilling foundations and pumping up to 200 gallons of diluted liquid chemicals in and around homes. While effective, these liquid chemicals can create exposure risk as they are designed to persist.

Bait systems, such as Advance, Firstline and Sentricon, use just a few grams of active ingredients to

address the termite infestation. Once the termite colony has been eliminated, the bait is removed and on-going monitoring assures future colonies will be detected and controlled.

One pest control operator in Texas uses bait systems exclusively. "Some companies offer liquids for those who don't want to buy the best protection," says Steve Johnson, a Ph.D. and entomologist, whose son owns Adams Exterminating in Denton, Texas. "If someone wants a whole-house liquid treatment, we walk away because we can't guarantee it will completely eliminate termites."

Home sellers and buyers may want different types of treatments for termite protection. The seller may only want to do a liquid spot treatment as a temporary fix, but the buyer wants a bait system for permanent protection, notes Johnson. Insurance companies prefer the bait systems.

"We get a discount on our insurance rates because we only use the Sentricon bait system," Johnson says. "We haven't had one termite claim since we started the business in 1996."

Sentricon Colony Elimination System was the first termite treatment to earn the Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Award and the first product approved under the EPA's Reduced Risk Pesticide Initiative.

Today, hundreds of thousands of homes and buildings including the White House, historical sites and national landmarks such as the Statue of Liberty use the latest bait system technology as an environmentally friendly, sustainable and effective means to protect from termite damage.