

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Bob Vila Helps Homeowners Tackle Termites

(NAPSA)—It's officially termite swarm season, that time of year when hordes of hungry termites—nearly 50 billion each year—silently begin invading homes across the U.S.

Each year, termites infest nearly one million American homes causing more than \$2 billion in damage.

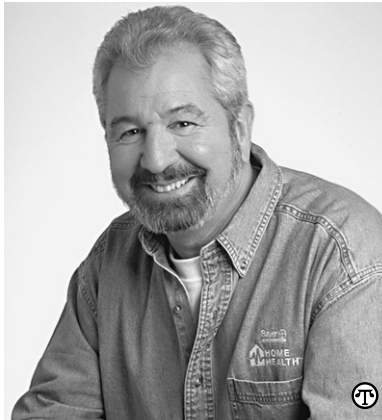
"A major reason termites cause such devastation is because these insects are nearly invisible invaders," said home improvement expert Bob Vila. "Unlike other pests, sunlight and air can be deadly to termites, so they burrow underground and hide in out-of-sight areas. This makes them extremely difficult to detect in your home."

To help homeowners find these invaders and fight back, Vila has teamed up with Bayer Corporation to create these termite-detering tips.

- Seal your (home's) fate. Make sure there are no cracks in a home's foundation. Termites can sneak into your home through an opening as small as a pinpoint.

- Put wood in its place. Wood is an avenue into your home for termites. These pests can make their way in through any exposed wood on the ground near your home, so make sure to store all firewood away from the foundation of your home, and set all outdoor wood stairs and posts on concrete.

- Leave termites high and dry. Termites need moisture for survival, so keep your gutters clear, and check that the ground around the house slopes away from the home so water doesn't pool around your foundation.



Bob Vila

- Check your spaces. Examine your storage spaces for rotted wood or damage to cardboard boxes. These are signs that termites may have already invaded your home.

- Beware of swarming strangers. Beginning in the spring, reproductive termites swarm near homes in the early evening or after rainstorms. These swarms are another sign that termites could be inflicting damage behind the scenes.

- Trust the professionals. While these tips can help homeowners identify existing infestations and perhaps even prevent future ones, for real peace of mind contact a licensed Pest Management Professional and schedule a professional inspection. Visit www.nobugs.com to find the Pest Management Professional (PMP) nearest you, and help ensure that what may be your largest investment—your home—is protected for years to come.

Vila is touring the country to educate consumers about the damage termites silently inflict.

Through the campaign, called the Bayer Home Health™ One Million Checkup Challenge, Vila hopes to encourage a million homeowners to check their homes for warning signs of infestation.

"If one million Americans check their homes for basic termite signs this year alone, we can collectively save up to \$2 billion in potential damage," Vila said. "Spending just a few minutes checking around the house and scheduling an inspection with a pest management professional can provide homeowners with years of reassurance."

These tips and more information on ensuring your home's health are outlined in a free brochure. To get a copy of the *Bayer Home Health One Million Checkup Challenge* brochure visit www.nobugs.com, or call 1-800-4-NO-BUGS.

TERMITE TIDBITS

Below are some little known termite facts:

- Termites have existed for more than 250 million years—that's longer than dinosaurs. The first dinosaur appeared on earth a mere 230 million years ago.
- If you put all the world's termites together, their total weight would exceed that of the total weight of humans on earth.
- No building is immune to termite problems. These pests have been spotted as high as the 20th floor of high-rise apartments and hotels in large cities nationwide, and in 49 of the 50 states.
- Termites can enter a home through an opening as small as the head of a pin.

