

Termites cost us millions each year

Subterranean termite (white ant) infestations cost Australian home owners millions of dollars each year with nearly one in five homes falling victim to the tiny and invisible army of hungry invaders.

The scary thing is there are often no warning signs because termites shun sunlight to feast on timber from the inside out, only leaving a thin coat of surface paint behind.

In fact, most people don't even realise they're being eaten out of house and home by these destructive and uninvited guests until the damage is done, and it only takes six months for a colony of termites to cause considerable household damage.



However home owners can be proactive in preventing termite attacks by conducting their own early detection searches, and by engaging appropriately qualified and licensed professionals to regularly carry out inspections and maintain chemical treatments.



The Building Services Authority, in conjunction with industry and Government, have formed a working party to coordinate efforts to counter the termite menace.

Queensland builders are now legally bound to present new home owners with an acknowledgement notice

which clearly details both chemical and physical treatments, and a timetable for on-going maintenance procedures.

However, home owners need to be cautious not to compromise the chemical treatment or disturb the physical barrier by, for example, placing pine bark gardens up against outside walls or paving over mesh barriers.



Insurance entitlements may be affected in Such Circumstances.

If home owners find evidence of termites, they are urged not to disturb the nest but call a licensed pest controller immediately.

They should inform the neighbours as well because one colony can infest several homes.



If the dwelling is less than six years and six months old, the home owner should also contact the BSA.

If the builder or original pest controller is at fault, they will be directed by the BSA to rectify.

If the contractors of the home owner are not considered responsible for the termites gaining entry, then BSA

insurance will be activated to help with the repair bill.

Home owners searching for evidence of termites should check internal areas, such as skirting boards, architraves, an door and window timber trim frames. Look for blistered, bubbly paint, rippled or bulging wall sheeting, brittle, honeycombed timber and coarse sandy pellets known as 'frass' (termite excreta).

Use the handle of a small screwdriver to lightly tap timber surfaces, and listen for a hollow, drummy sound. Externally, check for mud galleries (gateways) against the walls and tell-tale paths leading up the foundation posts into the home.

