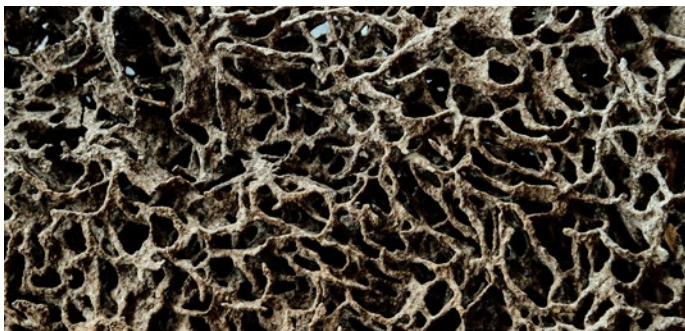


Industry Insights: The PestWeb Podcast Episode 7

HOW TO AVOID TERMITE TREATMENT FAILURE



While termites are relatively common, they can also be notoriously difficult for PMPs to manage effectively. In this episode, Dr. Bob Davis returns to explain the most common termite treatment pitfalls — and how to avoid them.

Dr. Bob brings deep termite expertise as a longtime technical services representative at BASF. Listen as he explains the history of termite control, tips for marketing preventative services, and the truth about spot treatments.

How has termite treatment changed over the years?

Professionals primarily relied on chlordane from the late 1940s until the late 1980s, when it was pulled from the market due to pressure from the EPA.

The focus then shifted to using organophosphates and pyrethroids. However, those products produced re-treatment rates of around 20%. Customers were unsatisfied, leading some pest control businesses to drop their termite control services.

Then the Premise product entered the market in the 1990s, dropping re-treatment rates to around 5%. And with the introduction of Termidor in 2000, those rates dropped further to only 1%.

Why are there seemingly fewer termite swarms now than in the past?

While pyrethroids are effective when they're wet, termites avoid barrier treatments when they're dry. Technically, swarms can still exist between treated areas.

But with the introduction of non-repellant products and baiting systems, those colonies are being suppressed enough to prevent swarming populations. Also, whenever homes get refinanced, inspections sometimes lead to swarm-preventing services.

However, some areas are actually seeing an increase in swarm events. Florida and Hawaii in particular have been experiencing large, invasive termite populations.

What are the biggest challenges when it comes to termite treatments?

Termites are very good at foraging for food and moisture sources, and their behavior can be cryptic. Even with the best tools, effective treatments start with having the right people.

Professionals need proper training in termite behavior, conducive conditions, and proper tool usage. They should also know their way around construction tactics. Many homes feature wood-to-soil contact, as well as tight spaces with foam insulation setups, making it difficult to find and solve termite issues.

What are the most common termite treatment mistakes PMPs make?

- 1. Not conducting a thorough inspection.** Make sure to find as many areas of activity as possible. Put together a thorough treatment plan that considers the structure itself, including bath traps and plumbing installations.
- 2. Neglecting to look for conducive conditions.** Keep an eye out for wood to soil contact. Use moisture meters to identify potential issues. If the area is prone to Formosan termites, be sure to check higher up for carton nests.
- 3. Not having the termite treatment tools.** The previously mentioned moisture meters are essential, as well as a flashlight and a screwdriver (or other probing tool). A sounding tool, such as a rod with a rubber ball at the end, can be helpful for tapping wood to identify damaged areas. Some businesses are also seeing success with infrared cameras...

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Scott Loarie, iNaturalist.org

Creature Feature

Boxelder Bugs

Boxelder bugs are pests of the boxelder tree, a species of maple native to the Midwest. As the boxelder tree was introduced to other areas of the United States and Canada, boxelder bugs followed. The western boxelder bug is present from New Mexico, Utah and Idaho westward to the Pacific coast and up into British Columbia. The boxelder bug is present east of this region in Canada and the United States with some overlap between the two regions. **These two boxelder bugs look similar except the western boxelder bug has more red veins on the upper membranous half of its forewings.**

Since boxelder bugs prefer to feed on seeds, they are mainly found on female boxelder trees. They will also feed on other maple and ash trees. However, they are not considered major pests because they don't tend to cause significant damage to

valuable ornamentals or agricultural crops. **Boxelder bugs are mainly a structural pest in the fall when adults aggregate outdoors on the sunny sides of buildings in search of overwintering sites.** On warm winter days and at the start of spring, adults may be found inside buildings as they try to make their way outdoors again.

Pesticide applications are most effective in the fall and should be directed to openings boxelder bugs can use to enter buildings. These openings should be filled or screened for a more permanent solution. Pyrethroid product labels may allow surface treatments for aggregating pests on areas exposed to rainfall above permeable surfaces. Otherwise, boxelder bugs can be physically removed both indoors and outdoors with a vacuum.

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Pro-active approaches to Bed Bugs

Dr. Nina Jenkins, ConidioTec

Increasing numbers of PMPs are realizing the importance and advantages of a pro-active approach to bed bug management in multi-family housing. Dr. Rick Cooper's groundbreaking "mark-release-recapture" study, conducted in 2014, demonstrated the extent and speed of movement of bed bugs between apartments in multi-family housing. This study confirmed what many PMP's had suspected for years, treating just one apartment in multi-family housing is not an effective strategy, regardless of the products utilized.

Unfortunately, housing managers have been far more reluctant to accept this, preferring to cling to a reactive approach in their flawed attempts to save money on pest control. Not only does this result in higher pest control costs over time, it also drives bed bug infestations in their properties. This approach is also detrimental to PMPs who are frequently blamed for the perceived failure to bring bed bug issues under control. Fortunately, current knowledge on bed bug behavior and movement, inspection and monitoring methods, minimal resident preparation requirements, and the availability of new products with long-term residual efficacy, provide PMPs with the opportunity to offer a more effective, proactive approach to bed bug management, while reducing the overall cost of annual pest control.

Offering a pro-active service contract requires customer education to ensure that housing managers understand the following key points:

1. Relying on tenants to report bed bug infestations only identifies a fraction of the existing infestations in a building.
2. Bed bugs are highly mobile between apartments, including those above, below, to the sides, and across the hallway from an infested unit.
3. Treating one apartment in isolation cannot bring an established bed bug infestation under control when there is a constant risk of re-introduction from surrounding units.

Once these points are understood, the benefits of a more holistic pro-active approach will become clear.

An economic and effective pro-active service contract utilizing the long-term (up to 3 month) residual efficacy of Aprehend® is outlined below:

1. Initial visual inspection of all apartments in the building (monitors and/or canine detection can also be offered).
2. Report infestation incidence to management.
3. Treat units with medium to high infestation levels. First, use a vacuum to remove all visible bed bugs. Then apply 'Primary'



Aprehend barriers around the bed and living room furniture and 'Secondary' barriers where additional harborages are suspected ex. base boards, outlets, etc.

4. In all remaining apartments (with low level infestations and no detected infestation), apply Primary barriers around beds and seating areas only.
5. Return and inspect **infested** apartments **30 days later**. Re-treat only if live bed bugs are present.
6. Treat all remaining apartments in the building with primary barriers every 3 months.

Initial inspection provides management with a full understanding of the infestation status and facilitates accurate costing of the contract. However, for quarterly follow-ups, simply apply Primary Aprehend barriers in all apartments. This takes less time than inspections, and is more effective, as it ensures that any bed bug introductions cannot lead to infestations between services.

When calculating contract pricing, estimate technician time to conduct the initial inspections (approximately 10 mins per 1 bedroom apartment), application time for Aprehend® (15 mins for medium to heavy infestations, 5-10 mins for all other apartments), cost of goods (3 oz Aprehend® for pro-active and low infestations, 5-8 oz for medium to heavy infestations). Initial inspection and treatment can be done during the same visit. Annual contract cost will include quarterly applications for all apartments (10 mins per apartment, plus 3 oz Aprehend).

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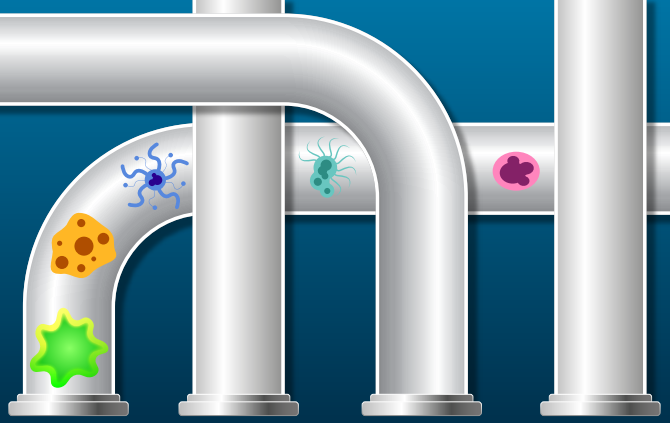
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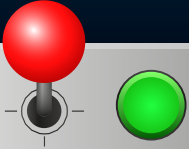


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