

A GUIDE TO TERMITES

Steve's Pest Control, Inc.

Professional Pest and Termite Elimination Services



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Did you know the total weight of termites in the world is more than the weight of humans? Considering their size, that means termites make up the majority of our Earth. Wreaking havoc on our property if not accounted for, termites can quickly cause thousands of dollars worth of damage. While we may not always know they are present, up to 20 million termites can live in one acre of land in Missouri. Explore our termite guide to learn more.

Our Guide to Termites is here to help you understand what termites look like, the extensive damage they can cause and how to prevent them. Having performed countless inspections throughout Missouri, our expert exterminators work to quickly and safely remove termites from your home or commercial business. If you are concerned about termites invading your property, call Steve's Pest Control today to schedule an appointment!

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Termite Basics

Termite Appearance

Similar in size to ants, termites' bodies are approximately one quarter to a half an inch in size. While there are many different species of termites, their colors may range from white to a light brown. With soft bodies and straight antennas people often confuse termites with ants. Explore our pest library to learn more about the various termite species.

Termite Behavior & Habitats

Termites are known for their destructive behavior and profound colonies. By digging underground and gnawing on wood, they create tunnels made of mud and saliva. A typical colony can be anywhere between 100,000 to 1,000,000 termites with 150 ft worth of tunnels.

Experts in creating interconnected sites, termites move both above and beneath the soil. As they feed on cellulose, a structural component in plants and wood, the termites can move freely about using their mud tube highway system. Entering homes through cracks in the foundation, the worker termites search for food then return to their underground home via the mud tunnels.

Termite Life Cycle

Reproduction of termites

The termite life cycle begins with the swarming flight in spring. During this flight, the winged reproductive males and females leave their colonies in search of a mate. Once the swarming has occurred the termites will land, shed their wings and begin forming a new colony. The reproductive termites at the fertilization and forming of a new colony have now become the king and queen termites of that colony. During this time, only a small number of the termites survive to create the new colony.

Eggs and Colonization

The queen will lay her eggs in a moist site close to wood called the royal chamber. Once the queen lays her eggs it takes between 25 to 30 days for the young termites to hatch. The young termites, called larvae, become the workers, soldiers and primary or secondary reproductive termites. Unlike ants, termite colonies have the ability to last many years due to the multiple king and queen termites per colony. Having both primary and secondary reproductive termites allows for the colony to grow quickly and last for many years.

Termite Fast Facts

- There are over 40 species of termites in the United States and 2,700 species in the world.
- Termites live in eusocial or caste systems. Meaning each caste has a different role in the termite colony. For example, there are worker termites, soldier termites and the queen and king.
- Termites build extensive colonies by never sleeping. Working 24 hours a day, the termites spread their colonies in any direction in search of food.
 - The main enemy of termites is ants.
- Approximately 5 million dollars worth of property damage is caused by termites each year.
- The termite queen determines which caste role her young will grow into by feeding them specific pheromones.
 - Termites use vibrations to communicate with one another.
 - Termite queens have the longest lifespan of any insect.
 - Queen termites can produce up to 10 million eggs per year.
- The earliest termites were said to have lived over 250 million years ago.
 - Single colony of termites can eat up to 1,000 pounds of wood.
- Scientists believe termites release over 150 million tons of methane gas into the atmosphere each year.





Common Termite Species in Missouri

While there are many termite species around the world and even varying kinds in the US, the main species in Missouri is the subterranean termite. A subterranean termite is the most common species in the US and can be found throughout the entire midwest, south and west.

Subterranean Termite

Infesting dead wood and structural wood, subterranean termites can be found in nature, homes, sheds and other buildings. The soldiers of the subterranean colony are smaller than other termite species allowing them mobility and the ability to fit into various crawl spaces. This species creates mud tubes to get from the soil to other wood, such as homes, decks, sheds, etc. While their colony resides several feet below ground, their tunnels can be far reaching.

Formosan Subterranean

A type of subterranean termite, the Formosan termite creates the largest colonies of termites in North America. With up to 15 million termites in one colony, the Formosan termites chew not only dead wood, but also live trees. Between the size of their colonies and their ability to eat 24/7, a formosan termite infestation is catastrophic to homes and buildings.



Common Signs of Termites

As a mid-Missouri business or homeowner knowing the signs of termites can prevent you from costly damage later on. While there are a variety of signs indicating termites are near your home, calling a professional to inspect is always the best option. Due to their secretive behaviors, termites can live in walls and doors for many years before being spotted. Inspect your home for the following signs and call our expert exterminators if you suspect termites.

Termite Droppings

A termites feces also known as frass can be a sign of termites near your home. The termite droppings resemble sawdust due to the amount of wood the termites consume.

Swarms

The name for large swarms of winged termites that emerge from a nest in spring in search of a mate. Usually the swarms will fly around the property close to their nesting site.

Mud Tubes

The highway system for termites to get from one point to another. Termites use mud and saliva to build the tubes to travel from soil to wood.

Hollowed Wood Sound

If you are inspecting your home for termites, finding hollow beams and other structures around your home is dangerous. If you hear a hollow sound when tapped, call a professional immediately. Even if the exterior of the wood shows no signs, termites can produce tremendous amounts of unseen damage.

Galleries or Damaged Wood

Termite galleries are small holes running along the grain of the wood to allow for easy movement for the termites. If you find damaged wood in your home, it is more than likely you have a termite infestation. Calling a professional is crucial if you are suspecting termites because examining termite galleries can be difficult for those not trained.

Prevention Tips

Due to the speed of termite reproduction and Missouri's geography, the chances of you encountering termites as a homeowner or business owner in Central Missouri is very likely. Follow our prevention tips to proactively protect your home and business from termites.



Methods to Prevent Termite Damage

Access

Termites are determined creatures that can enter your home in a variety of ways and through cracks smaller than 1/32nd of an inch. To prevent your home from termite infestations seal gaps around water and gas lines that may be excellent entry points. In addition, avoid deck posts extending beneath the soil grade.

Subterranean termites follow the wood. Eliminating wood-to-ground contact can reduce the termite highways into your home. Our team suggests 2-4 inches of building foundation to extend above the soil grade so the brick and other siding does not come into contact with the soil.

Food Source

Similar to other pests, termites are motivated by food. And in this case their source of food is wood, often found throughout a home's structure and exterior design. To prevent termites it is crucial to remove excess wood material from your home rather than storing it in crawl spaces such as attics or basements.

In addition, our experts advise removing cellulose or wood materials from around the exterior of your home. Whether it is mulch, woodpiles, landscape timbers, foam

board or wood scraps, termites find these areas to be great ways into the rest of your home. If you are concerned about your landscape, call an expert to evaluate.

Moisture

To successfully build tunnel networks, termites seek damp, moist ground. Prevent termites from colonizing your home by taking action on areas with moisture problems. Whether it is fixing leaky plumbing, gutters, air conditioning systems, or spigots, controlling the moisture of the ground around your home can save you thousands of dollars in termite damage.

In addition, prevent water from pooling around the foundation of your home or building by creating drainage systems that move the water away from your property. Not sure if your water systems are leaking and creating ideal environments for termites? No worries, call the experts for a termite consultation today.

No matter how many preventative measures you take, sometimes infestations cannot be stopped. If that's the case, we recommend you call the experts at Steve's Pest Control. Using the Sentricon System, our team can stop the destruction before it even starts. Contact our team to learn more.



Elimination Process

Proper treatment is important to ensure your home or business does not experience costly damage in the future. With as many as 20 termite colonies taking residence in one acre and up to 1 million termites per colony, termite infestations can get out of hand quickly if not treated properly. Contact our expert termite exterminators if you are concerned about termites taking over your Central Missouri home or business. Experts in termite biology, inspection and treatment, our team will work hard to ensure your property is termite free in no time.

Sentricon System Termite Treatment

The experts at Steve's Pest Control eliminate termite colonies fast with the Sentricon System Treatment. Compared to other termite removal systems, the Sentricon System is proven to consistently eliminate termite colonies throughout Missouri. With multiple bait stations implanted throughout the active areas, the Sentricon System eliminates entire colonies in 28 to 90 days. The devices can last anywhere between 3 to 5 years unlike liquid barrier treatments. For more information about Steve's Pest Control's termite removal process call our team today.

Benefits of Sentricon System

- Begins eliminating colonies immediately
- Non-intrusive solution that requires no disruption of landscape
- Life-time warranty when you use Steve's Pest Control*

*The Sentricon System service by Steve's Pest Control, Inc. has a life-time warranty with a paid annual renewal. From the beginning, if any other termite protection is ever needed at any time during the course of our service, it will be performed at no additional charge. For more details call our team today.

Frequently Asked Questions

How long does it take to get rid of termites?

Using Steve's Pest Control's Sentricon System the elimination of colonies begins immediately. With a team of experts inspecting your property and it's exterior for the most active areas, our team can implant bait stations and begin to see entire termite colonies be eliminated as quickly as 28 to 90 days after placement. If you are interested in learning more about the AG bait stations and how they work call our experts today!

Can I treat termites myself?

Termites are rarely seen by property owners unless they are swarming in the spring. Due to their ability to create massive colonies without much notice, treatment can be difficult for home and business owners. Calling a professional to examine the various areas of your property and determine where termites are colonizing is in your best interest. Save yourself thousands of dollars in damages when you call an expert termite exterminator in mid-Missouri.

How can I tell the difference between swarming ants and swarming termites?

Both swarming ants and swarming termites emerge in spring. It can be easy to confuse the two, so look for the following differences to determine whether you have a termite infestation or not.

Antennae: Termites antennae are straight while ants antennae are curved.

Wing Structure: Termites have the same length of wings while ants have different wing length.

Body: Termites have a straight waist while ants have a pinched waist.

In addition, since the termite wings are temporary and

used only for reproduction, some wings may fall off during the flight. If you find discarded wings near windowsills or doorways, termites are near.

How much does it cost to treat termites?

Every case is different depending on the size of the property and the extent of the termite colony. However, not treating your termites is more costly! On average the cost of damage for termites is between \$3,000 and \$11,000 for home and business owners throughout Missouri. Work with our team today, to ensure you aren't paying for costly damages in the future.

What are the signs of termites in my home or business?

While termites are hard to spot on your own, knowing common termite signs can help you take action in calling an exterminator. Explore the following signs and read more in our guide on common termite signs.

- Termite Droppings
- Swarmings
- Mud Tubes
- Hollowed Wood
- Damaged Wood or Galleries

Is termite damage covered by insurance?

While termites may cause more damage annually than natural disasters, the damage is rarely covered by insurance. That's why calling an expert to inspect your home is crucial to preventing costly damage. The University of Missouri conducted research showing by the age of 40, 70% of the structures in Central Missouri have termites. That includes your home or business! Call today to schedule an evaluation and estimation today.

Contact Our Professional Exterminators

The experts at Steve's Pest Control have been eliminating termites and other mid-Missouri pests since 1988. With state-of-the-art technology we eliminate your pest problem quickly. We know the damage termites can quickly cause, so our team offers termite protection services throughout mid-Missouri. Experts in termite biology, inspection and treatment you can trust our team to quickly eliminate your termite infestation before it causes costly damage to your home or business. Call us today at (844) 896-4868 to learn more.

Affiliated with The Board of Realtors and National Pest Management Association our team have performed thousands of termite inspections throughout Central Missouri. Contact us for more information or to schedule a free pest evaluation.

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