

Product Information Bulletin

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Measures to Control Pest Infestation

This bulletin provides general recommendations on good building practices that builders and home owners can follow in areas where infestation by pests like carpenter ants and termites is possible. Preventing pest infestation in any structure is easier than curing it and prevention is easiest to incorporate during construction.

Building code design requirements that can protect against decay and pest infestation such as using pressure treated lumber for the sill and other areas subject to dampness must always be followed. The following summarizes some recommended good building practices that will reduce the opportunity for pest infestation.

1. Remove all stumps, roots and wood debris from the immediate area around the building. Leave a buffer zone of approximately 30 m (100 ft) between the house and surrounding vegetation, and protect against “aerial attack” by trimming back any overhanging tree limbs. Seal and periodically check all potential entry points.
2. Clear away any natural nesting materials such as dead trees and downed limbs, and store firewood well away from the house.
3. In areas that are particularly prone to pest problems such as heavily wooded areas or low shaded areas where the ground stays damp, consider utilizing baiting systems and/or perimeter soil and foundation treatments using a long-acting pesticide prior to backfilling.
4. Ensure that the landscaping around the foundation is sloped to provide adequate drainage of free water away from the foundation.
5. The finished grade should provide approximately 300 mm (12”) clearance to the underside of the base plate or framing and 150 mm (6”) to siding.
6. In termite prone areas, consider treating the soil around the house after backfilling and installing a termite shield under the sill.
7. Another good and effective practice against both carpenter ants and termites is the treatment of the wood parts of the house with borate-based compounds during the construction of the building. Borate compounds are generally considered to be non-toxic to humans and easy and effective to apply.

Reference sources available that provide additional details on *integrated pest management* strategies employing a combination of control measures include:

1. The American Wood Council publication **Design of Wood Structures for Permanence - Wood Construction Data No. 6** can be downloaded at: <http://www.awc.org/pdf/WCD6.pdf>.
2. The Canadian Wood Council publication **Termite Control and Wood-Frame Buildings** can be downloaded at: http://www.cwc.ca/NR/rdonlyres/952506A6-1572-421F-BA07-2BCFB00C9F51/0/BP_3termitecontrole.pdf.

Local building codes should always be referenced for information on locations where pest infestation may be a concern. As well, builders and homeowners should consult a local treatment expert for recommendations on long-term pest control methods applicable to specific building locations.