

Organic Pest Control for Termites

by Fern Fischer, Demand Media

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Different species of termites may require specialized eradication treatments, but pest control experts can use safe, organic treatment options for many termite colonies in existing buildings. Infestations in new construction may be prevented simply by using lumber treated with environmentally safe processes. (See References 1)

Standards

Green or organic standards for termite control are not defined, so you need to ask your pest-control professional about the options available. To be effective, treatment must take into account your individual situation, including the species of termite present, the extent of the infestation and your home's construction and general condition. Be sure you understand any residual effects or repeat treatments that may be necessary. (See

References 2)

Botanical Treatments

Orange oil contains the active compound d-limonene, which kills drywood termites on contact. Orange oil is most effective on drywood termite colonies that have defined boundaries, so you can be sure that the entire colony has been treated and eradicated. Neem oil, from the Asian neem tree, is another effective botanical treatment. Slow-acting neem oil must be applied to the wood; the termites must ingest the oil itself to have an effect. Repeat applications may be necessary. Neem and orange oils are nontoxic to humans and pets. (See References 2)

Borates

Sodium borate, also called borax, is a salt of the element boron. Either sodium borate powder or a solution of sodium borate and water kills subterranean termites. Borax is nontoxic to humans and pets. You can spray or paint borate solution onto wood surfaces of new construction to prevent termite infestation. When treating a termite colony in an existing structure, knowing if borate powder infiltrates the entire colony can be difficult. Spraying the colony with a liquid solution may give better coverage. Repeat borate treatments to ensure that the entire termite colony has been exterminated. Borates are commonly used in conjunction with other termite treatments. (See References 3)

Heat and Cold Treatments

Extreme cold or heat treatments may be used for drywood termite infestations. You must remove certain items from your home to prepare for a heat treatment. During a heat treatment, hot air of 120 to 140 degrees Fahrenheit is forced into your sealed structure. The temperature of the space where the termites live must reach 120 degrees Fahrenheit for 35 minutes to kill the pests. Extreme cold of 15 degrees Fahrenheit for four days also kills drywood termites. Extreme temperatures can damage furnishings and interior surfaces, though, and temperature treatments offer no protection against future infestations. (See References 4 and 5)

Biological Controls

Biological controls for termites include reliance on their natural predators. Microscopic species of nematodes, or simple worms, live in soil and feed on termite larvae. They are harmless to humans and pets. The proper species of nematodes can be introduced into the soil around your home as treatment for subterranean termites. (See References 2)

Temporal Thermometer Accurate temperature with a gentle forehead scan. Doctor recommended. www.exergen.com

Aircraft-Bed Bugs killed Commercial Airline Solution Heat Treatment Experts www.ga-ps.co.uk

House and Logic Ecofriendly products. Improve your home. www.houseandlogic.com

Mouse & Rat Datalogger Infra-Red Activity Monitoring Highest Precision with add data www.infra-e-motion.de

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References

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5. [Termites: Cold and Heat Treatments for Termites](http://www.termites.com/control/heat-electronic-treatments/how-to-get-rid-of-termites-with-heat/)(http://www.termites.com/control/heat-electronic-treatments/how-to-get-rid-of-termites-with-heat/)

About the Author



Fern Fischer is a freelance writer with more than 35 years' experience. Her work has been published in various print and online publications. She specializes in organic gardening, health, rural lifestyle, home and family articles. Fischer also writes about quilting and sewing, and she professionally restores antique quilts to preserve these historical pieces of women's art.