

# TERMITE MANAGEMENT

TRITHOR Termite Protection has been installed in your property in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Standard AS 3660 *Termite management Part 1: New building work* and the Building Code of Australia. This is an integrated system that requires ongoing maintenance by you.

## VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The Australian Standard series AS 3660 and the Building Code provide for your home to be protected against concealed entry by subterranean termites from the soil into the building. However, the Standard advises that even “a complete termite protection system constructed in accordance with this Standard cannot prevent termite attack.”

### Regular Inspections Required

It is therefore imperative that you have your home inspected on a regular basis. The Australian Standard advises that “Regular competent inspections should be carried out at least on an annual basis, but more frequent inspections are strongly recommended.” It is a condition of your TRITHOR Warranty that you arrange for your TRITHOR Authorised Installer to perform a regular, routine inspection of your property at least once every year.

### Looking after your TRITHOR Termite Protection

If the TRITHOR Termite Protection System is in any way disturbed or damaged, then concealed entry by subterranean termites is possible. TRITHOR Termite Protection can be damaged if you perform building alterations, renovations, additions including the erection of pergolas, awnings, verandas, etc. It may also be damaged if you perform any landscaping work or gardening work which involves raising the level of the soil or paths adjacent to the protected structure. Such work may bridge (cover over) the TRITHOR system. If you intend performing such work you should consult first with your TRITHOR Authorised Installer.

### Important Care of Your Property to Minimise Termite Infestation

**AIR VENTS OR WEEP HOLES** around your property must never be blocked.

#### DRAINAGE

You should ensure that the ground levels around your property are maintained to minimise water entering under the building. Where necessary sub-surface drains should be installed and maintained to assist with the drainage. On a sloping site you may need to install surface or agriculture drains on the uphill side of your property to divert groundwater away.

#### GARDENS

Placing garden beds or shrubs close to the perimeter wall of your property may look attractive. However, it might also allow concealed termite entry. Ideally garden beds/shrubs should not be planted against the perimeter walls of your home.

#### STORAGE

Bridging by termites occurs when items such as stored materials, fire wood, landscaping and gardens and attachments to buildings, such as hot water heaters, verandas, steps, pergolas, carports, etc., provide access across which termites can enter your home. If attachments to buildings are not provided with termite barriers or cannot be easily inspected, they should be separated from your home by a clear gap of at least 25 mm.

#### TIMBER FENCES AND LANDSCAPE TIMBERS

Any part of a timber fence or landscaping timber which comes in contact with the ground increases the risk of termite infestation. All timber in ground contact should be termite and decay resistant.

#### REGULAR MAINTENANCE

Minimise the presence of loose timber, wood, trash, lumber, and areas of direct wood to soil contact around your property. Fix faulty plumbing, leaks, dampness caused by poor drainage, condensation or leaks from the roof or other areas into, onto, or around the structure(s). Remove water pools adjacent to your property. Remove any dead trees and stumps since they are nesting sites for subterranean termites. Rake garden beds away from the structure to expose weep holes and the edge of the concrete slab.

If you become aware of any breaches to your TRITHOR System; or changes to the building structure such as those detailed above, you should immediately contact your TRITHOR Authorised Installer.

### What if you find live termites?

If you find live termites you should immediately contact your TRITHOR Authorised Installer. It is very important that the termite workings remain undisturbed until a method of management has been determined.

## ABOUT TERMITES

No property in mainland Australia is safe from termites. Termites are the cause of the greatest economic losses of timber in service. Australia's subterranean termite species (white ants) are the most destructive timber pests in the world. In fact it can take "as little as three months for a termite colony to severely damage almost all the timber in a home".

### HOW TERMITES ATTACK HOMES

The most destructive species live in large underground nests containing more than a million timber destroying insects. The problem arises when a nest matures near your property. Buildings tend to provide natural shelter and a food source for the termites. The gallery system of a single colony may exploit food sources over as much as one hectare, with individual galleries extending up to 50 metres or more to enter buildings, where there is a smorgasbord of timber to feast upon.

Even concrete slabs do not act as a barrier; termites can penetrate through cracks in the slab to gain access. They also build mud tubes around the slab to gain access to above ground timbers.

### TERMITE DAMAGE

Once in contact with timber, termites excavate it, often leaving only a thin veneer on the outside. If left undiscovered, the economically important species can cause many thousands of dollars damage and cost several thousand dollars (or more) to treat.

### SUBTERRANEAN TERMITE ECOLOGY

Termites are social insects usually living in large underground nests. They tunnel underground to enter the building and then remain hidden within the timber making it difficult to locate their presence. Where timbers are concealed, as in most modern properties, it makes it more difficult to locate their presence. Especially if gardens have been built up and termite protection systems are either not in place or poorly maintained.

There are about 3,000 species of termites found in the world with about 300 species in Australia. All termites eat some form of plant cellulose. Most termites simply eat humus in the soil, or grass and leaves. Very few species eat wood, and only a small number of these eat sound wood (i.e. wood that has not been decayed by fungus). Some 20 or more species cause serious economic loss to Australian buildings.



*Termite queen protected by soldiers and nurtured by workers.*

### TERMITE BIOLOGY

Termites or "white ants" are social insects that work and live together in groups called colonies. Each colony contains several 'castes' which differ in body shape, behaviour and tasks performed.

The reproductive pair (king and queen termite) mate and control the entire colony. In most species that cause economic loss in Australia the queen becomes 'physogastric'. This means she has a grossly enlarged abdomen to enable her to lay millions of eggs. She essentially becomes an egg laying machine.

The eggs hatch into the nymphal stage and through a series of moults develop into one of the adult castes described below. The worker caste has the largest number of individuals within the colony and is responsible for building the nest, tending eggs and young termites, gathering food and feeding those castes that are unable to feed themselves. Worker termites are wingless, blind and do not reproduce. Workers perform almost all the tasks in the colony except for defence and reproduction.

The soldier caste can be distinguished from the other castes by their head. The head of the soldier caste is large, dark and may have large mandibles or a 'nasute' (pointed) protuberance. Soldier termites defend the colony against predators such as ants and are also unable to reproduce.

The winged reproductive caste are the potential kings and queens of new colonies. This caste has eyes and wings and usually leaves the parent colony in large swarms. They do not fly far before shedding their wings.



*Winged reproductive termite*

**Installed by:**