

Household and Structural

Department of Entomology

SELECTING A TERMITE CONTROL SERVICE

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1. *Do not panic.* There is no need to become frightened or unduly alarmed if you learn that termites are, or may be, attacking your home. These insects work slowly, and your house will not be ruined or collapse over night.
2. *Take your time.* Do not permit anyone to rush you into purchasing termite control service. Delay of a few weeks or months will not make any difference. There is always time to purchase this service wisely and at your convenience.
3. *Purchase your services from a reliable firm.* Buy termite control service with the same care and discrimination that you would use in the purchase of any other service for your property. Always be sure you are dealing with a reliable firm that has an established place of business. Here are some of the ways you can **investigate before you invest**:
 - (a) Indiana now has a pesticide use and applicator law under which all commercial pest control firms must operate. You may check a firm's credentials with the Office of the State Chemist, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana, Phone; 765-494-1492 or <<http://www.isco.purdue.edu/>>.
 - (b) If a firm offers references for work done in the past, take time to check these references carefully.
 - (c) If the firm is located in your own town or city, check to make sure it is a responsible firm and that it has an established place of business. This can be done through the Chamber of Commerce or Better Business Bureau.
 - (d) If the firm is out-of-town, it is even more important that you make sure it is reliable. Check to see that it has an established place of business in the town where it is said to be located. Most fraudulent operators work in communities where they are not known. Ask for references and check them carefully. Reliable firms welcome this approach.
 - (e) Purchase value, not price. If the price quoted seems too high or too low, don't hesitate to secure other estimates.
4. *Beware of firms that:*
 - (a) Profess to have a secret formula or ingredient for termite control.
 - (b) Have no listed phone number.
 - (c) Show up unexpectedly and use evidence of termites in trees, etc., as an excuse to inspect the house.
 - (d) Cater to elderly or infirm people who are living alone. (Relatives and neighbors should inform elderly people to beware of persons who knock at the door and propose to do service work, including treating the house for termites.)
 - (e) Claim to be endorsed by Purdue University.
 - (f) Play up fear that your house is collapsing.
 - (g) Claim to have excess chemical left over from another job and offer a reduced price if they can do the treatment immediately.
5. *Association membership.* Membership in the Indiana Pest Management Association, Inc., <www.ipma.us> or the National Pest Management Association <<http://www.pestworld.org>> is evidence that a firm has an established place of business. Membership lists of these associations may be found at the websites listed above.
6. *Know the terms of the contract.* Ask your termite control specialist to provide you with a written statement of the work he proposes to do and the cost. He will give you time to consider his estimate. It is customary to guarantee termite control work, either on a year-to-year basis, or for a five-year period. Make sure you know exactly what guarantee is offered by the firm. Determine if a

yearly charge will be levied during the guarantee period or whether these charges are included in the initial price of the job. Remember that a guarantee is no better than the person or the firm who gives it to you. A guarantee is not evidence that a firm is reliable. Most fraudulent operators use a showy contract and guarantee as part of their sales promotion. You will probably be asked to sign a work order when you engage a firm. Understand clearly what obligations you are assuming and what you are getting in return.

7. *Most firms are reliable.* Remember that most pest control firms are reliable and legitimate business organizations who are respected in their communities. The information presented in this publication will help you to avoid individuals who are not employed by such companies.

READ AND FOLLOW ALL LABEL INSTRUCTIONS. THIS INCLUDES DIRECTIONS FOR USE, PRECAUTIONARY STATEMENTS (HAZARDS TO HUMANS, DOMESTIC ANIMALS, AND ENDANGERED SPECIES), ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS, RATES OF APPLICATION, NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS, REENTRY INTERVALS, HARVEST RESTRICTIONS, STORAGE AND DISPOSAL, AND ANY SPECIFIC WARNINGS AND/OR PRECAUTIONS FOR SAFE HANDLING OF THE PESTICIDE.

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