

WOOD DESTROYING INSECTS

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Wood destroying insects play an important role in nature; termites, carpenter ants, carpenter bees, and powder post beetle are part of nature's "recycling team." When a tree dies or loses a limb, the insects come to break down the debris and replenish the environment. Unfortunately, these wood destroying insects do not know the difference between a stump and a house.

WHERE CAN WOOD DESTROYING INSECTS BE FOUND

Conditions such as high moisture levels, earth to wood contact, and inadequate ventilation are conducive to wood destroying insect activity. Elimination of these conditions may reduce the likelihood of infestation. Storage of firewood next to or in the house is not recommended. Wood debris in the crawl space next to the house should be removed.

TERMITES

Here in the Northeast, we only have to worry about the eastern subterranean termite, even though there are many different types of termites. These insidious and ravenous insects live in the soil and attack from the foundation up. Termites do not generally like light air; a homeowner is not likely to know that they have an infestation without a professional inspection. Termites do more damage to the United States than fires, tornados and hurricanes combined. They can do up to 3 linear feet of damage per year.



CARPENTER ANTS

Carpenter ants are a polymorphic species; this means that there are different sizes of ants, all of which are carpenter ants. Although the majority of carpenter ants are black, they may have red or brown coloration. A colony will have between 6 and 25,000 individuals. A nest can relocate very quickly from one site to another when they are disturbed. Carpenter ants do not eat wood, they only excavate the wood to create nesting sites. Sawdust-like "frass" may be observed.

CARPENTER BEES

Carpenter bees can easily be confused with bumble bees. They are capable of making holes in peoples homes. The hole is 3/8 to 1/2 inch round and may appear to have been made by a drill. They will generally attack fascias, eaves, porch ceilings, posts, or other unpainted or stained wood. Carpenter bees will frequently re-infest past areas.

POWDER POST BEETLES

Adult powder post beetles are rarely seen, and are usually found in a home by the presence of small exit holes noted in sills, joists, or the sub-floor. A homeowner may also notice piles of fine powdery frass under those holes. The life cycle of a beetle may take up to a year and they are considered to be the second most destructive wood destroying insect. They may be found infesting chairs, paneling, furniture, and other wood articles.