

## Fact Sheet – Subterranean Termites



*Coptotermes*

### Description

Commonly but incorrectly called a "white ant". Southern Australian species are typically a few millimetres long, with a snout or mandibles for chewing. All have straight antennae, differentiating them from ants. They are most active during summer.

### Habitat

Subterranean termites exclusively live underground or concealed, near moisture and a cellulose based food source. Their concealed nests may be in a wooden stump, underground or in a structure. They must continually seek moisture and are rarely seen foraging. Common house infestations are found in skirting boards, timber window frames, timber reveals as well as bathroom, kitchen and laundry cupboards where moisture is found.

### Biology

Small insects with workers tending to a large immobile queen continually laying eggs. Will venture a large distance (up to 150 metres) from the colony in search of food and moisture.

### What you can do to limit infestation:

- Clear any obstacles or debris from building perimeter to enable ongoing visual inspection of the "visual inspection zone" around the home.
- Remove all wood, tiles, bricks etc. stacked up against external walls of the house that may allow concealed entry.
- Rectify leaking taps, condensate discharge from air conditioners, hot water system overflow discharge, etc. to reduce termite access to free water sources.
- Review lawn and garden reticulation to direct watering away from the house perimeter; only water during daylight hours.
- Where possible, remove any potential termite food sources – scrap timber, compost heaps, wooden garden stakes, wooden landscaping features (sleepers), etc.
- Install termite monitoring/baiting system – check regularly.
- Remove garden mulch from the building perimeter and relocate flower and garden beds away from the house walls.
- Have regular inspections undertaken by our accredited Technicians. These should be annually or more often where termite pressure is high.