



Carpenter Ant Inspection (Find the Nest!)

The key to carpenter ant control is to find and treat the nest. But that is easier said than done! The first step is to talk to your customer...ask questions. Where are ants most often seen? Do you have any moisture problems--leaky roofs, pipes, etc.--or have you had them in the past? (Moisture and carpenter ants go together like bacon and eggs.)

Then, look for the signs of carpenter ants:

frass--made up of wood shavings, bits of soil, dead ants and parts of insects is often piled up outside of nest openings.

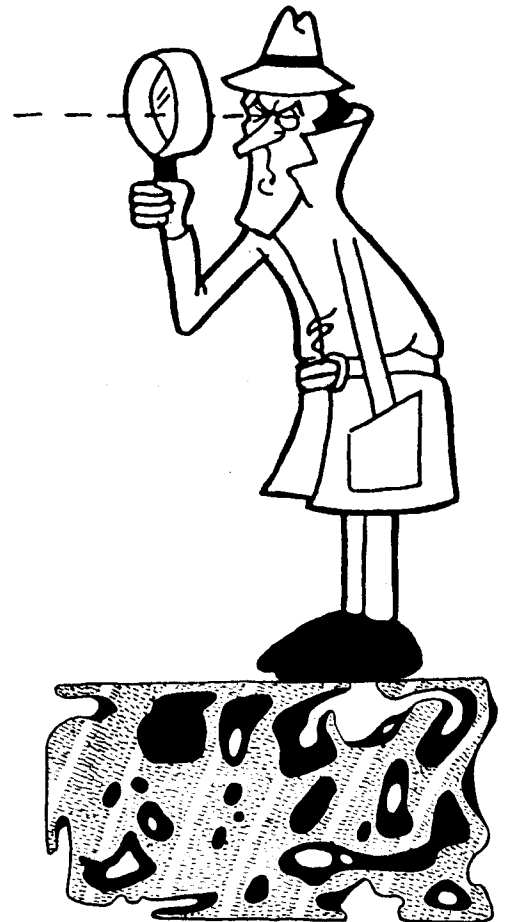
"windows"--small slit-like openings that carpenter ants cut into infested wood.

swarmers--the winged reproductives that often swarm in the spring. Look for them trapped in spider webs, on window ledges, or in light fixtures...they are good clues to nest location.

workers--carpenter ants are active mostly at night, so you may not see any activity during normal working hours. Even if you do, it does not mean that the nest is nearby. Worker ants can travel up to the length of a football field looking for food.

clicking--rustling or clicking sounds can sometimes be heard coming from carpenter ant nests. If you identify a potential nest site, try tapping against it with your screwdriver. You may hear a response--the clicking of alarmed ants.

damage--carpenter ant damaged wood contains galleries that feel "sandpapered"...very smooth and clean.



Carpenter Ant Inspection Checklist (Think Moisture!)

BASEMENT OR CRAWLSPACE

- () sill plates (especially behind steps and fireplace)
- () behind insulation (gently move aside to inspect)
- () casement windows



LIVING AREAS

- () perimeter of floor (look down!)
- () hollow ceiling beams
- () overhead lights
- () door frames
- () hollow doors
- () bathtub access panel
- () washing machine (under, behind)
- () wall voids behind sinks
- () wall voids near fireplace
- () false ceilings (look up!)
- () hollow curtain rails
- () window frames
- () kickplates
- () patio door sills
- () bulkheads
- () dishwasher
- () firewood

ATTIC

- () leaks in roof
- () under insulation
- () storage boxes
- () dead ants on top of insulation (check directly above)
- () intersection of different roof levels (good spot for leaks)
- () around chimney
- () dormer windows
- () eaves

OUTSIDE

- () porch steps
- () garage doorjams & faceplates
- () skylights
- () leaky rain gutters
- () flagstones
- () wood piles and firewood
- () tree stumps
- () porch support posts
- () decks
- () chimney flashing
- () leaky downspouts
- () fence posts
- () railroad ties
- () tree holes

OTHER HINTS: Look for water damaged wood (often stained brown) or wet wall voids. A moisture meter is useful. Meter readings of 20% or more mean moisture problems that could have attracted carpenter ants. Remember, carpenter ant nests are not always in wood. Dusts or aerosols containing pyrethrins can flush ants from suspected nest sites.