



**Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services**

**CHARLES H. BRONSON, Commissioner**

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**CONSUMER INFORMATION BULLETIN**

Alternative Methods of Treatment for Drywood Termites

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Bureau of Entomology and Pest control has been receiving telephone calls from consumers asking about alternative treatment methods for drywood termites. On some occasions, consumers are reporting that company salesmen refer them to our office for endorsement of a particular method.

Chapter 5E-14.104, Florida Administrative Code, prohibits; (1) a licensee or its employee from claiming that inspections or treatments are required, authorized or endorsed by the Department, (2) any reference made in any manner suggesting approval, endorsement or recommendation by the Department.

For real estate transactions, the traditional method of control for drywood termites has been tent fumigation. This process uses a fumigant (Vikane<sup>®</sup> or Brom-o-Gas<sup>®</sup>) in concentrations that may be hazardous to man within an enclosed space to eliminate drywood termites from all areas within the enclosed area (normally, the entire structure). This method of treatment requires the evacuation of common or contiguous structures. Frequently, condominiums and townhouses have difficulty in complying with the evacuation requirements.

Recently, alternative termite control methods for use in single family homes and multi-unit structures such as townhouses, condominium units, apartments and shopping centers, appear to be more convenient for consumers. Alternative methods now being performed by licensed pest control companies include: the electric gun, freezing with liquid nitrogen (The Blizzard System<sup>®</sup>), heating (Clean-heat<sup>®</sup>, Heatwave<sup>®</sup>), and chemical drill and injection control with termiticides and wood preservatives.

All alternative methods have advantages and limitations which each pest control company should be willing to discuss with consumers. Consumers should be aware that these alternative treatments are considered spot treatments since the entire structure is not treated regardless of the warranty terms offered. This is not to imply that these alternative methods may not be effective, but only to alert the consumer that these treatments cannot assure 100% treatment of the entire structure.



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Therefore, before you agree to any treatment, a licensed pest control company must:

- 1) Provide a written contract describing the work to be done, warranty information, and other specific information as required by Section 5E-14.105, Florida Administrative Code.
- 2) Specify all areas in, on or under the structure to be treated. (Spot treatments included)
- 3) Not perform any work or accept payment until contract terms have been accepted or rejected by the consumer. Remember, once you have accepted contract terms, the ability of the Department to assist you in the future limited to those terms as specified.

It would be in the best interest of the consumer to obtain an inspection, treatment proposal, and cost estimates from at least two or more licensed companies, and to compare their written proposals and contract terms. After reviewing this information, the consumer should be able to make an informed decision about which service is most appropriate for a specific situation.

Please contact this office if we can be of further assistance.

NOTE--The use of any trade names or products in this bulletin does not imply endorsement of or approval by this Bureau and does not exclude other products of a similar nature by their omission.