



TERMITE MANAGEMENT FACT SHEET

The purpose of this fact sheet is to establish Council's response to the management of termites on public land with The Hills Shire.

TERMITES

Termites are an essential part of the natural environment where they play an important role in our ecosystem functions. They have a significant role in the environment, breaking down decaying wood and providing a food source for many native species. There are over 350 different species of termites found in Australia, with approximately 30 species considered to be of economic importance that may cause damage to property. Proper identification is essential - some species of termites in NSW will only attack living trees and not dry, seasoned timbers in a building, whilst others are highly destructive in a short amount of time.

TERMITES ON COUNCIL MANAGED LAND

Termites are a natural agent beyond the control of Council and the removal of a termite affected tree is not held to influence in any way the potential for termite attack on adjacent private property. The presence of termites on Council managed land including parks, bushland reserves or roadsides will not automatically prompt the removal of such tree or termite colony.

Trees that contain termites are not necessarily compromised, as termites will feed on the heartwood (deadwood) and not the living tissues that a tree requires for growth and stability. Removal of a tree with termites may in fact increase the chance of damage to property as,

once the tree or food source is removed, termites will seek out a new food source which may include timber in and around the home.

If there is concern that the structural integrity of the tree is compromised and/or a risk of injury, the tree will then be assessed according to Council's Operational Procedures for the Management of Trees on Public Land.

TERMITE TREATMENTS

Any chemical treatments used on termites must be registered for that specific use. Treatment must be carried out by a qualified and licenced pest controller and must follow all relevant guidelines as outlined in the Australian Standards and legislation.

BARRIER SYSTEMS

Barrier systems are not considered to be termite prevention systems, but early detection systems. Their effectiveness is dependent upon regular inspections and maintenance every 6 - 12 months by a licenced pest controller as outlined in AS3660.2. In high risk areas, more frequent inspections are recommended. Landscaping surrounding the home should also conform to recommendations outlined in the BCA and AS3660.1 so as not to compromise existing barrier systems. Barrier systems are of little use to asset protection if not regularly maintained and inspected. These should be used in conjunction with inspection zones as they will expose concealed termite activity, allowing for early detection and treatment of termite pest attacks on assets.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Council does not accept responsibility for damage to private property caused by termite pests. Council will inspect affected trees to ensure their structural integrity and intervene where the immediate or long-term survival of a tree is compromised or if it deemed to be a risk to safety. In these circumstances the efficacy and cost effectiveness of available treatments will be assessed and, if justified, Council will act in accordance with an integrated pest management approach. Notification will be in-line with Council's Pesticide Use Notification Plan and actions undertaken in accordance with relevant legislation. If treated, Council offers no guarantee that further termite activity will not occur, nor that all termite pests have been eliminated, as treating termites does not stop them from invading other food sources or properties

It is the responsibility of private landowners to undertake appropriate actions to adequately protect their properties from the invasion of termites/pests, including but not limited to, the installation of chemical and physical barriers, and regular preventative actions such as inspections and maintenance of such barriers.