



In this fact sheet we look at termites. Who is responsible for treating and protecting the buildings at a body corporate group.

It is important to understand what comprises common property. We cover this under Boundaries on our website.

[www.unitcare.com.au/bp\\_strata\\_boundaries.html](http://www.unitcare.com.au/bp_strata_boundaries.html)

[www.unitcare.com.au/bp\\_community\\_boundaries.html](http://www.unitcare.com.au/bp_community_boundaries.html)

Both strata and strata division (1 unit on top of another) community corporations are responsible for the dealing with termites and any resultant damage.

Termites cause more damage to homes than floods, fire and storms put together. Some 40% of S.A. homes suffer termite attack. Termites are social insects living in colonies of up to a million individuals. The Queen rules the colony and is the mother of all the termites. Without her the colony has no future. Several pest species of termites nest in tree stumps, under homes, in gardens, from which the workers make subterranean tunnels to timber located in our homes within about a fifty metre radius of the colony. Most attacks on homes and timber originate from outside. They return to the nest and share gathered food with the queen and all members of the colony.

How do termites gain access? Houses and other buildings provide termites with the ideal combination of warmth, moisture and food sources. Termites can find ways to enter your house that you've never thought of. They are small enough to gain entry into hidden areas of cellars, crawl spaces, and concrete slabs, through openings as small as 0.1mm. A loose mortar joint, a small space around a drain pipe, garden soil covering air vents, or a settlement crack in the concrete slab is all they need to gain entry to the home.

Some history. Chemical barriers to prevent the access of termites into the wall and roof timbers have been applied around homes and under timber floors and concrete slabs in Australian homes since 1954. Organochlorine insecticides such as dieldrin, aldrin, chlordane and heptachlor were used as chemical barriers until 1995 with the chemical being active in the soil for ten years to 25 years. Since 1995 chemicals which have a shorter period of protection have been approved to prevent termite access into buildings with retreatment being recommended every five years.

Baits - an alternative to chemical barriers. For many years we have suggested bait boxes for client groups with active termites. These take the form of short sections of PVC sewer pipe containing poisoned tasty timber. The pipe is dug into the soil and capped with a PVC screw cap.

The traps are checked every few months. The great value of this method is that the termites take the poison back to nest and kill it off. There is now a more sophisticated and reliable method of baiting with the trade name of Sentricon. Its features are:

- ✓ In ground bait tube

Link Fact Sheets and Podcasts

[www.unitcare.com.au/fact\\_sheets.html](http://www.unitcare.com.au/fact_sheets.html)

[www.unitcare.com.au](http://www.unitcare.com.au)

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# Fact Sheet

- ✓ Active ingredient in Sentricon AG Termite Bait is called hexaflumuron.
- ✓ Insect Growth Regulator, specifically a Chitin Synthesis Inhibitor.
- ✓ Prevents the termites from completing their moulting process.
- ✓ Termites die if they can't complete the moult process.
- ✓ Bait is taken back to the nest and spread throughout the entire colony via trophallaxis.
- ✓ Rate of 5g/kg impregnated in compressed cellulose matrix (briquettes).
- ✓ Hexaflumuron at 5g/kg is undetectable by the termites.
- ✓ six months post commencement of baiting, 80% of colonies had been eliminated with a further 6% having consumed sufficient bait to gain elimination. (Range 4 to 12 months)

See our web site for a video presentation on the Sentricon treatment.

[www.unitcare.com.au/Media/Sentricon.mp4](http://www.unitcare.com.au/Media/Sentricon.mp4)

#### Hints:

Review at every annual general meeting.

If an owner/tenant facilitates the entry of termites to the building then they may be liable for some or all of the resultant damage. We suggest proper legal advice if this occurs.

See Hint Sheet on page 2.

#### Tools

Example of general meeting minute that may be useful:

Termite Responsibility: The Manager advised that any termite damages within a unit would be a strata responsibility unless the entry of termites had resulted from negligence on the part of an owner, agent or their tenant. It was also noted that damage caused by termites was not an insured event in terms of the building insurance policy.

It is recommended that termite inspections should occur annually.

Termite Inspections: Owners agreed to have the units inspected by the Corporation for termite activity & for the report to be circulated to each owner.

or

Termite Inspections: Owners agreed not to have the units inspected for termite activity this year but to monitor the situation instead.

Residents are strongly requested not to facilitate the entry of termites through the storage of newspapers or wood against the building or putting soil against the exterior of the buildings.



Gordon Russell  
Managing Director

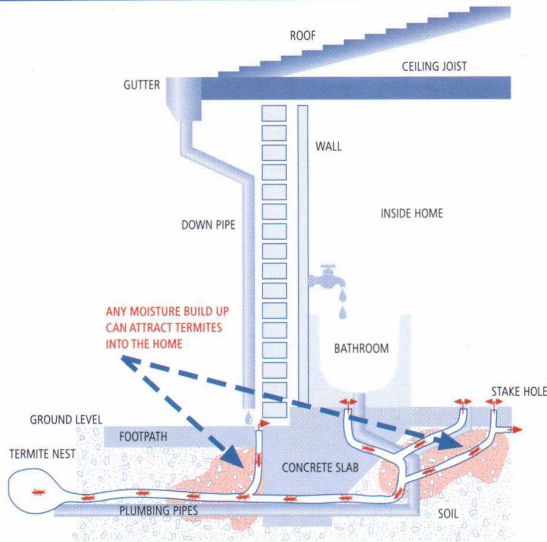
# Termite Management Tips

The following diagrams show building practices and environmental conditions that encourage termite activity in and close to your home or building.

## Important notes

- > Moisture attracts termites and is essential for termite survival, it is the building owners responsibility to ensure that moisture is kept to a minimum beneath and around the building.
- > Termites feed on all products containing cellulose (timber paper, etc). Ensure that you minimise any cellulose product in contact with the ground.

## Waste water drainage 1.1



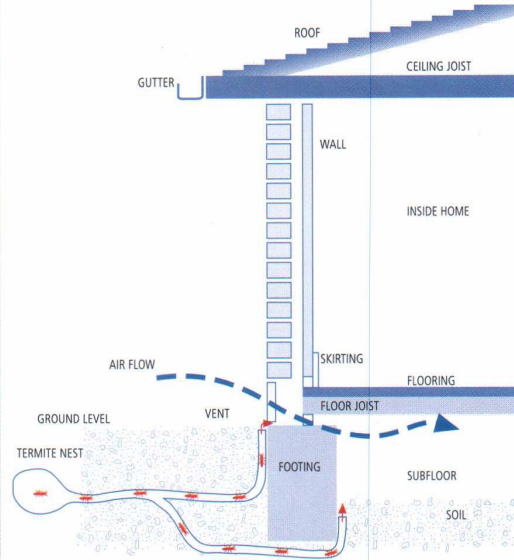
### Termite risk

- > Waste water not directed away from the building will attract termites as there will be a continuous moisture supply under or next to the building.
- > Termites follow plumbing pipes into buildings and enter via service (plumbing, etc) penetrations through the concrete slab under a bath, shower, toilet, etc.

### Management solution

- > All waste water services (including downpipes, showers & baths) must flow correctly, not leak & be directed into the appropriate drainage system (sewer or piping to the road).
- > Seek advice from a plumber.

## Subfloor ventilation 1.2



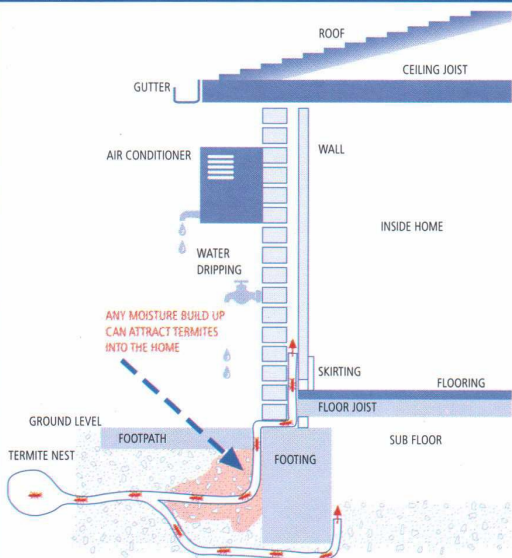
### Termite risk

- > Inadequate ventilation causes moisture buildup, fungus growth, odour, rot, increased termite activity, insects, slugs & snails.
- > Subfloor dampness will increase the likelihood of a termite infestation.

### Management solution

- > Suitable sub-floor ventilation is essential. Ensure ventilators provide 7300 mm<sup>2</sup> of airflow per lineal metre of external wall.
- > Seek advice from a builder.

## Air conditioner waste water 1.3



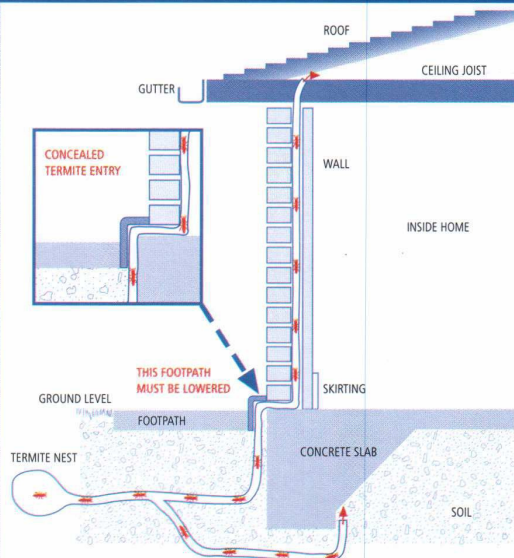
### Termite risk

- > Water continually dripping from airconditioning units is caused by condensation.
- > Waste water drips onto the ground causing moisture build up mainly during the summer period when the airconditioner is in use.
- > Waste water can sometimes be a reliable source of moisture for termites during the summer period thus attracting them to the building.

### Management solution

- > Waste water must be directed into a drainage system.
- > Seek advice from a plumber.

## Bridging of slab edge 1.4



### Termite risk

- > The slab edge is breached (covered) by a footpath, soil, etc or is rendered and allowing concealed termite entry.

### Management solution

- > Lower footpath, soil, etc to leave 75 mm slab edge exposure to allow for an uninterrupted visual inspection.
- > Remove render from slab edge to allow for an uninterrupted visual inspection.
- > Install a termite management system.



## Common Problems:

Here are some common examples of termite damage inside a unit

