



How To Choose a Professional Termite Company

By DoMyOwn staff

What should I look for when choosing a professional termite pest control company?

- Every professional pest control company should offer a guarantee of effective services. Before signing with a company, make sure you understand the terms and conditions and how long the guarantee is good for.
- Ask around for recommendations. A good reputation is an indicator of good and dependable service.
- When you have a company in mind, check with your local Department of Agriculture or Better Business Bureau to find out if they have had any substantial complaints filed against them.
- Don't underestimate the power of credentials. The company you select should be a member of your state pest control association and the NPCA (National Pest Control Association). This is good indication that the company has access to the latest pest control technologies and education.
- Don't go with the first company recommended. Obtain proposals from a minimum of 3 reputable termite control companies. A proposal is very important and should document the company's plan for chemical treatment procedures, bait station placements, repair or wood work, copies of insecticide labels, and warranties.
- Find out about liability insurance.
- Thoroughly compare bids before making a decision.
- Make sure that follow-up inspections are included in the contract. The extermination contract should also include annual or semi-annual follow-up inspections to make sure the home is protected on an ongoing basis.

What should I know about annual termite pest control contracts?

- It is a common misconception that an "annual contract" implies re-treatment by the pest control company on an annual basis. This is not how an annual contract works. Annual treatments are actually illegal under state and federal law, unless evidence of termite activity is present.
- If an annual contract is written up, then the pest control company is liable for termite treatment only if you or the company can detect evidence of termite activity.
- Termite treatments carry an automatic one-year guarantee in most cases, as do some homes. After one year, the contract may be renewed if deemed necessary.
- On average, it costs between \$75 and \$200 to renew your annual contract. The exact price will depend on the size and construction of the structure.

Do I need the annual contract?

The answer to this question is a matter of preference. Some things to consider:

- If you have plans to sell your house in the near future, an annual contract is a good idea. This ensures that if termites are discovered at the time of inspection, the pest control company, NOT YOU will be responsible for termite treatment.
- If you plan to sell your home, find out whether the pest control company allows for the transfer of the contract to a new homeowner, or if it automatically terminates.
- If you do not plan on selling anytime soon and you feel comfortable with doing home inspections yourself, you don't need an annual contract. The day that you find evidence of termite activity, however, you will need to decide if you can handle your own termite treatments or choose a professional company at that time.
- Termites are always present in nature, but that does not mean they are always attacking our homes. However, it does mean there is a chance they will attack and that every home is at risk. Bait Stations can be a great tool for self-monitoring, to lend peace of mind.

Keep in mind that performing your own soil treatment with termiticides is not a guarantee that termites will never penetrate that barrier and invade your home.

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