

# Termites eat away at house values

Preserving house prices and maintaining the value can be eroded by the silent destroyer, the white ant. Sign of inhabitation is often discovered after the damage has been done to the property.

The South African Pest Control Association (SAPCA) says modern termiticides are more environmentally friendly and offer five year protection guarantee. The older compounds like DDT and Chlordane are banned because of the harmful effect on humans and the environment. Documented health problems include child cancer, leukemia, infertility and neurological disorders, says Mark Enslin, president of SAPCA. "Any pest control company offering a 10 year guarantee is either using banned substances like Chlordane, or not using the termiticides at the prescribed dosages, in accordance with the label and as prescribed by SABS 0124. The banned compound



contaminates the air of homes by diffusion through concrete flooring, ceiling drywall or out-gassing from previously treated indoor areas.

"I understand that one cannot expect the building contractor to play the watchdog, but they should arm themselves with information regarding termite treatment. The cost of registered treatment is between R3 to R8 m<sup>2</sup>, excluding labour and transport costs. It's unrealistic to pay less than R10 m<sup>2</sup> for preconstruction termite proofing. Quotes below this price should be scrutinised."

Contractors try to short cut and it can be costly, one contractor was forced to

spend R2million to repair the damage and ultimately lost money on the project.

SAPCA motivates developers and industry to use registered pest control operators. SAPCA members adhere to a strict code of conduct, which prohibits using unregistered chemicals. Members are registered with the Department of Agriculture. Property owners should insist on proof that the termite proofing was done in accordance with National Building Regulation.

For more information visit [www.sapca.org.za](http://www.sapca.org.za) and get in touch with The South African Pest Control Association on 0861 114 556.