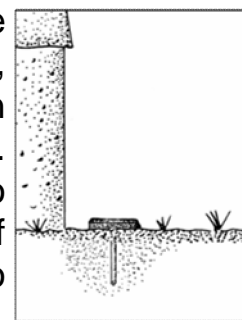


We know what they are: a wood stake that holds cardboard bait close to the soil. We know how they work: termites foraging from a nearby colony locate the stake, follow it up to the cardboard, and establish the cardboard as a food source for the colony. But we don't always know where to put them, and that can be very important. When it comes to termite monitors, form follows function, and function follows location. It can be all about location...but let's start with function.

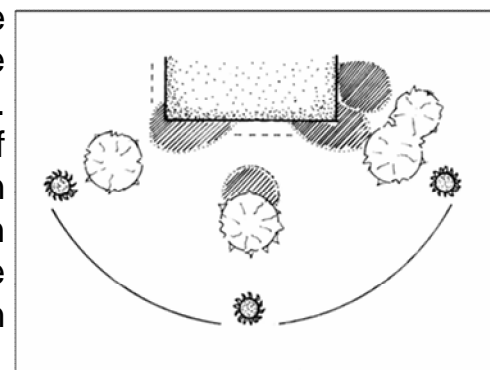
Basics. Termites are attracted to chemicals from the fungi that attack the wood stake. Soil moisture swells the cardboard at the top, and termites make their way into it from the soil. The cardboard becomes an additional food and harborage for the colony and workers will remain there. Termite monitors provide an 'early-warning' for the presence of termites close to the house, around a tree stump, outbuilding, or landscaping timbers. Absence of activity in the cardboard gives **some** assurance to the customer there is no immediate threat.



Early-warning. Termite monitors can detect the presence of termites close to the house, a tree stump, outbuilding, or landscaping timbers. This gives service technicians the opportunity to follow-up service calls with an inspection and additional treatment.

When. Monitors can be installed any time of the year, including winter—which may be the best time. The top 1-2 in. of soil may be frozen and hardened, below that the soil will soft enough to take the stake. Subterranean termites remain active during winter and will feed in moist soil where the temperature is 40° F or more. Winter installation provides foraging termites time to locate and establish the monitor as a feeding site by spring. Termites are usually more active in the spring and fall, when soil moisture is high and temperatures are favorable.

Where. Place 6-8 in. from foundation to intersect the termiticide treatment zone established by trenching and rodding, and the soil surface treated during routine perimeter applications. Sheltered and shaded locations provide extended periods of moist soil and protection from temperature extremes. In open areas, soil moisture is usually low, especially in summer when daytime temperatures are high. Dry and hot soil is not favorable foraging sites for subterranean termites. Clearly, monitors in these sites will not be as useful as those in shaded sites.



Open and shaded areas around a house during the day

Inspection. Monitors should be inspected regularly, and replaced when lost or removed. New cardboard bait should be inserted whenever it is damaged by mold, fungi, or consumed by slugs. The monitors in favorable locations: shaded sites with moist soil are likely to have activity year round. Monitors in open and sunny locations are likely to have activity in spring and fall.

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