

Home Maintenance Crucial to Preserve Value



After a long, dark winter, the bright sun and the warm winds of spring are, well, a breath of fresh air. The only downside? Termites and other pests in and around your home are ready for business as well.

Termites have been swarming, Carpenter Ants are seeking out homes to build new nests and Carpenter Bees are drilling into soffits and trim boards. All manner of pests are awakening to begin their life's mission of feeding, nesting and reproducing in our home environment. These annual rites of spring should fill us all with a sense of awe at the beauty of the natural world around us but should also remind us that some pests can damage our homes and, in some cases, our health if not properly controlled.

“Regular maintenance is the key to proper pest management” says Gena Lupini, President of the Virginia Pest Management Association. “Early detection and treatment of pest problems save homeowners and businesses literally thousands of dollars in damages and treatments costs. Sadly, our member companies discover aggravated termite and pest problems every day where extensive measures could have been avoided if problems had been noted earlier. In nearly every case the structure in question has not been inspected or maintained regularly by either the homeowner or a professional pest management firm.”

“Termite damages in the U.S. this year will top 5 billion dollars” added Lupini. “Add to that the treatment and repair costs of Carpenter Ants, Carpenter Bees,

Bed Bugs, rodents and other pests and the case for regular maintenance becomes compelling”.

There are many things that homeowners and business owners can do themselves to avoid pest problems:

- Seal cracks and holes on the outside of the home including entry points for utilities and pipes.
- Keep tree branches and shrubbery well trimmed and away from the house.
- Keep basements, attics, and crawl spaces well ventilated and dry.
- Store garbage in sealed containers and dispose of it regularly.
- Repair fascia and soffits and rotted roof shingles; some insects are drawn to deteriorating wood.
- Replace weather-stripping and repair loose mortar around basement foundation and windows.
- Store fire wood at least 20 feet away from the house and five inches off the ground.
- Call a qualified pest professional for additional advice and treatment if necessary.

VPMA is a professional organization of approximately 250 member companies employing over 3000 people throughout Virginia and generating over \$280 million in annual revenues. It is dedicated to promoting the interests and general welfare of the pest management industry and to supporting scientific, technical and business research in the areas of pest management. For more information, please call our Executive Director, Andrea Coron, at 877/875-8722 or visit our website at www.vpmaonline.com

