

Carpenter Ants

Carpenter ants excavate galleries in wood and are considered wood destroying organisms because of this habit. Carpenter ant colonies are usually constructed in areas with excessive moisture, such as areas where your roof or pipes have leaked. Colonies are difficult to locate because they are located in difficult-to-reach sites and are often supplemented by separate, smaller satellite colonies (sub-colonies away from the main colony). Foraging ants are regularly seen in homes and buildings but this does not necessarily indicate an active carpenter ant infestation within the structure. Many times carpenter ants foraging within homes are originating from outside sources, such as woodpiles and trees.

BIOLOGY AND BEHAVIOR:

- These are large, black, shiny ants ranging between 1/4 and 1/2 an inch long.
- Polymorphic: meaning ants of the same colony can vary in size.
- Excavates galleries in wood but does not use the wood as a food source.
- Chewed up wood pieces and dead insects indicate presence of nest(s).
- Carpenter ant nests are found in areas of excessive moisture or water leaks.
- Can be found in solid, sound wood but prefer water-damaged wood.

CARPENTER ANT PREVENTION TIPS:

- Identify nest locations. Nighttime inspections are best.
- Keep shrubs, vines and tree limbs trimmed away from the structure.
- Mulch should be less than 3 inches deep and gravel perimeters around a structure are best.
- Remove garbage daily and store refuse-holding containers outside.
- Fill window and door frame gaps, utility openings and cracks with a sealant .
- Remove leaf litter and yard wastes from around a structure's foundation.
- Don't stack lumber, firewood, bricks or other debris next to the foundation.