

# Fumigation Facts

## **What is a fumigation?**

Fumigation is the process whereby wood destroying pests are eliminated from a structure with the use of lethal gas. A complete treatment with a fumigant reaches every corner of the structure, including inaccessible areas, and the fumigant kills every termite, even those that are not visually detected.

## **Why fumigate?**

Insects that feed or tunnel into wood can seriously damage home dwellings and structures. Each year termites or other wood destroying insects damage approximately 2 million homes. Depending on the extent or location of the infestation, fumigation is an effective control measure proven to eliminate certain infestations of wood destroying insects.

## **How buildings are fumigated**

The structure is completely sealed prior to the inducing the fumigant. This process serves to contain the fumigant within the structure so that it can penetrate wood members thoroughly and eliminate the pests. The building will remain sealed 4 to 72 hours depending on the specifics of the job (a typical home will be covered 16 to 24 hours then aerated 8 to 24 hours). Depending on the construction of the building, the doors and windows may be sealed with tape and a plastic sheet, or more commonly, the structure may be covered with tarpaulins. Warning signs are posted around the building notifying individuals that the property is being fumigated and to keep out. After the tarp or tape is removed, a professional fumigator will aerate the structure by opening the doors and windows.

Fans may also be used to air out the building. Once the dwelling has been thoroughly aerated, the fumigator is required to measure the level of any fumigant remaining in the living space to ensure it is below the EPA approved concentration for safe re-entry by the occupants. Extremely low levels of fumigant can remain for a short period of time in dead air spaces. This can occur between walls and inside cabinets, as walls are made up of porous material. The small amount of fumigant in these areas will continue to dissipate for a few hours after the fumigation has been

completed. The levels, however, are well below the established safe re-entry concentration.

Your property/building will not be cleared for re-occupancy until it is safe to enter. How do you know it is safe to return? The fumigator will post a notice on your structure indicating the day and time for safe re-entry. Structures can be occupied only when the concentration of fumigant is 3 parts per million or less (this represents a considerable margin of safety).

### **Safety Precautions by Homeowner**

Discuss the treatment program with us in advance so that you fully understand what will be done and what you need to do. Carefully follow the instructions you are given about what items are to be removed from your dwelling. Stay out of the treated structure until it is cleared for re-entry. You may wish to increase the ventilation period.

Because our quality control standards are high, we select only the highest caliber technician. Our goal is to deliver a professional fumigation to our clients. We look forward to serving you.