




Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
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MEMORANDUM NO. 812

TO: All Pest Control Licensees, Certified Operators,
and Identification Cardholders

FROM: Michael J. Page, Chief 
Bureau of Entomology and Pest Control

SUBJECT: Use of Soil Termiticides (Pre- and Post-Construction)

The purpose of this memorandum is to emphasize important requirements as they relate to the use of liquid residual termiticides being applied to the soil as pre-construction and post-construction subterranean termite treatments.

Pre-construction

DACS field inspections on new construction termite treatments focus on three primary criteria when determining if an adequate treatment has been conducted. These criteria are delineated in Chapter 482.051(5) F.S., which requires that any pesticide used as the primary preventive treatment for subterranean termites in new construction be applied in the amount, concentration, and treatment area in accordance with the label. This means that soil applications performed as the primary treatment must conform to all label directions. The finished solution being applied must meet the minimum percentage of active ingredient concentration as required by the label. The rate specified by label (gal/linear feet) must be adhered to as far as the number of gallons applied to the treatment site. Lastly, all areas designated by the label to be treated based on the type of new construction must be treated. This includes the exterior vertical barrier treatment following final grade. Some termiticide labels provide for reducing the number of gallons applied with a corresponding increase in concentration of active ingredient. This is permissible as long as conditions which require this adjustment set forth by the product label are met.

It is the responsibility of licensees, certified operators and technicians performing pre-construction soil applications to be knowledgeable about the label of the termiticide products they use. Additionally, it is expected that they are familiar with the application equipment utilized and should regularly conduct output calibrations to ensure that the required gallons of material are being delivered to the treatment site. It is also important to have an accurate measurement of the size of the treatment site prior to determining the volume to be applied.

A construction site is typically a busy place and may have a number of individuals in the immediate area of an application. Termiticide labels require notification of the contractor or similar responsible party of the intended application so that they may instruct workers to leave the



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area being treated until the termiticide is absorbed into the soil. Additionally, it is important to ensure that the chemical barrier applied not be compromised by walking over the surface of the treated area.

Bureau inspectors are routinely conducting field inspections of soil pre-construction treatments for compliance purposes. The inspection process entails several steps and takes time to complete. In some cases, it may delay the technician being inspected. The Department, however, believes this is an important compliance issue and requests your cooperation and patience.

Post-Construction

Field inspections have found that post construction applications, as well as final barrier treatments in new construction, are in some cases not being performed properly with respect to label requirements for trenching and rodding or trenching. Pesticide Registration (PR) Notice 96-7: Termiticide Labeling was issued by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) on October 1, 1996. This notice set forth certain labeling statements required of soil treatment termiticide products. Specifically, under the post-construction treatment section of the label the following language appears, "*For applications made after the final grade is installed, the applicator must trench and rod into the trench or trench along the foundation walls and around pillars and other foundation elements, at the rate prescribed from grade to the top of the footing*". This is enforceable language which requires proper trenching when making applications to existing foundations. **Rodding alone, topical application or attempting to cut a trench adjacent the foundation using high pressure application equipment does not substitute for trenching.** Adequate trench preparation followed by appropriate termiticide application is critical to protecting a structure from subterranean termite infestation. Disciplinary actions will be taken where the Department determines that proper trenching and rodding techniques have not been performed according to the label's requirements.

Another issue that arises in post-construction treatment is the timing of treatment when active infestations of subterranean termites are suspected. In situations where an active infestation of subterranean termites is suspected or reported by a consumer, an inspection of the subject area should be conducted prior to the treatment in order to verify the infestation and accurately target the treatment to maximize the treatment effect. This is also necessary to comply with label directions for some products that require treatment within a specified number of feet of an infested area. This practice will avoid disputes over the extent of infestation when warranty coverage includes damage repair and requires the verification of the presence of an active infestation, and the potential for unfair denial of coverage to a consumer that could arise if a suspect area was treated prior to inspection and then a live infestation could not be verified as a result of the treatment.

Should you have questions or require further information pertaining to the content of this memorandum, please contact Bureau Headquarters at 850-921-4177.

MJP/bk