

# Close To Home

Inspection Tips From *Fraysier Home Inspections*

October, 2002

## Your Questions Answered Here!

"Close To Home", the newsletter for Fraysier Home Inspections, will take on a new emphasis beginning this edition. In addition to having news and company announcements, Close To Home will have a question and answer format. In it company President, John Fraysier, will answer questions he's been asked about home and pest problems. Look for the "**ASK JOHN!**" column in this issue.

This is **your** chance to ask those questions that have been on your mind and get helpful answers to them. Simply write or call John and he'll include your question in a future issue.  
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### Team Inspections

A great benefit of being associated with a group of home inspectors is the ability to inspect homes with a team! To cut down on inspection times for our clients, Fraysier Home Inspections will inspect larger homes with two experienced inspectors. Clients receive the same quality, thorough inspection at the same price, but in less time. We are happy to double up on any home you ask us to inspect, but it is especially helpful on the larger ones. Just ask for **the team** when you call to schedule! These team inspections are becoming popular among realtors, too!

### The Hidden Enemy

Subterranean Termites have been called the hidden enemy because of their penchant for dark, out of the way places. Their secretive nature makes them difficult to detect by the inexperienced inspector. There is no

substitute for the experience gained from treating for termites in a structure. Termites have consistent patterns for attacking homes that are best learned with the experts that battle them.

Recently termite evidence (shelter tubes, damage) was found in a small crawl space. In our report, treatment was recommended, not because live termites were found (they weren't), but because there was no evidence of a previous treatment. Nothing had been done to break the underground passageways termites had made to this home.

A short time later another pest inspector "cleared" the house of active infestation for FHA because no live termites were found. The damaged wood was replaced with new lumber.

One can almost see the sign on the front lawn of this home, "**Termites, enter here! No road construction needed. Plenty of fresh lumber to feast on.**"

Though termites were hidden to the inspector (and home buyer), they will likely appear in the home within a few years, barring any treatments.

**REMEMBER:** When you call us for your pest inspection, you receive:

- An **inspector experienced** in termite treatments for twelve years.
- An **objective inspection**. We do no treatments. We'll recommend a few good companies at your request.
- A **Full Pest Inspection**.

Accompanying each pest inspection is a separate report on "Non-Wood Destroying Pests". Clients want to know what pests are present in the home, and what can be done to prevent future problems.

### ASK JOHN!



**Q:** Why do home inspectors make such a big deal about aluminum wiring in general lighting circuits?

**A:** Aluminum wiring has been used in home electrical wiring for decades. It is unusual to find no aluminum wiring in an electrical panel. It is commonly used in main entry cables servicing the panel, and in major appliances like water heaters, ranges, and electric heating.

Aluminum wiring for general lighting circuits (15 amp circuits) was installed in homes between 1964 - 1975. Aluminum wiring **heats up** and **expands** more than copper wiring. Also, **oxidation** can occur where aluminum wiring attaches to receptacles and switches. These and other factors contribute to **poor connections** and a greater occurrence of fires.

It is recommended that when aluminum wiring is found in general lighting circuits, a licensed electrician examine the connections and make any necessary adjustments for safety.

**Q:** During a recent home inspection, the inspector found a sizeable pile of dog food pellets under insulation in the basement. He said rats were responsible. What do you think?

**A:** Rats, Mice and Chipmunks all gather foods and store in piles in a home. Mice tend to store seeds and grains in small piles in a variety of places. Rats go for larger piles near their nest, and especially like dry pet foods and bird seed. Chipmunks rarely nest in a house, but will bring seeds in close to a resting place.

Rats become suburban problems when there is a ready food supply at hand. Bird seed at feeders is the most common source. Burrows begin to appear in the lawn and rats can be seen when the colony gets large enough. They easily enter homes through openings the size of a quarter, bringing food with them or finding a ready supply of bread or pet food in the kitchen.

The pile of dog food under the insulation? It sounds like rats to me. Time to start trapping!

Voles are another structure infesting rodent. They look like mice with a short tail.

They make small holes in and around garden shrubs. Voles are also known for making large piles of droppings in small areas where they nest. Their foods are primarily plant matter, so they enter homes for shelter.

Voles prefer to nest under insulation in the basement. Trapping is the best way to eliminate these pests.

Remember, send your home and pest questions to John and he'll include them in a future **Close to Home** letter.

## Fraysier Home Inspections

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## Fraysier Home Inspections

*Helping home-buyers make  
wise decisions*

