

“Super” Termites Invade Tampa!

By Russ Frank – Florida Bug Inspectors – www.inspection-termite.com

Pirates invade Tampa once a year.

“Super” Termites invade all year.

What’s a homeowner to do?

Frequent [termite inspections](#) and immediate treatment appear to be the only answer. Parts of **Hillsborough County**, including **Tampa**, are undergoing a slow, silent invasion of what one expert calls a “super termite.” And it’s not just **Tampa**, or even **Hillsborough County** at risk, it’s communities near the coast throughout the state. The Formosan termite has now been found in at least 14 other Florida counties.

The dreaded Formosan subterranean termite made its first appearance in **Tampa** back in 1991 near Tampa International Airport. By 1999 they were established in **Temple Terrace**, and a regular **termite inspection** found them in a warehouse on South Westshore Blvd in Tampa. In 2003, they were discovered on Harbor Island, also in Tampa. There’s no doubt new colonies are forming. They just haven’t been found. That’s where increased vigilance comes in. Regular **termite inspections** performed by professionals can help. (more urgency) proactive

Dr. Nan-Yao Su, an entomologist at the University of Florida, worries that **Tampa** “...could eventually become like the one in New Orleans, where more than **90% of the buildings in the French Quarter are infested.**”

Why are they called “super termites?”

There are a number of good reasons:

- 1) Formosan termites are responsible for **\$300 million annually** for control and repair costs in New Orleans alone and are considered the single most economically important insect pest in the state of Hawaii. They have an amazing appetite for wood. An average native subterranean termite colony will consume 7 pounds of wood in a year. A Formosan colony will ingest more than 1,000 pounds. The reason is mostly due to the size of the colony. Native subterranean species rarely exceed a population of more than 1 million termites. **Formosan colonies often exceed 10 million termites.**
- 2) Formosan termites attack a wider variety of food sources, including furniture, books and even living trees. They are incredibly persistent in finding entry points, and, unlike other species of termites, can chew through thin lead, copper sheeting, PVC, foam insulation boards, plaster, asphalt, rubber, and some plastics to find wood. But they can find even the smallest (1/16”) cracks through concrete.
- 3) Once established, Formosan termites have **never been eradicated** from an area.

How can we control, or even better, prevent this problem?

While fumigation, also known as tenting, is an effective treatment against drywood termites, Formosan colonies aren’t seriously affected by tenting because they have both above ground and underground nests. They lose some workers, but as soon as the gas clears, the termites return. Tenting should **never be the primary treatment** for Formosan termites.

Termite bait stations have been around since the mid 1990's. In the hands of a trained termite professional like Russ, they've proven their worth and taken over a large share of protecting and treating existing homes. They work by using very small amounts of slow-acting poison over many months. Russ however, is using a more modern quicker acting, non-detectable type of bait station. These bait stations can act in a matter of weeks rather than months.

The bottom line is...

Tampa, and in fact all of Hillsborough County is an area of heavy infestation. The only reasonable remedy includes **annual termite inspections** by a professional, and underground bait stations with periodic monitoring. Russ and **Florida Bug Inspectors** have considerable training and local experience dealing with termites, even the dreaded Formosan subterranean termites. Protect your property. Contact Russ today.

[Florida Bug Inspectors](#) serves customers in Hillsborough, Pinellas, Polk, Pasco and Manatee counties, including the communities of Tampa, Brandon, Temple Terrace, Plant City, Ruskin, St Petersburg, Clearwater, Largo, and Wesley Chapel. Contact Russ at 813-727-4758 or at Russ (at) inspection-termite.com