



## Media Center

## FACT SHEET

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## WESTERN SUBTERRANEAN TERMITES

- Western Subterranean termites are the most common and most widely distributed termites in the western half of North America, reaching from British Columbia in Canada, south to western Mexico and east as far as Idaho and Nevada.
- Western Subterraneans can enter structures through cracks less than one-sixteenth of an inch wide, including the minute openings found in concrete slabs, around drain pipes, and between the slab and the foundation.
- Colonies are usually located in the ground below the frost line, but above the water table and rock formations; secondary colonies can exist above ground if there is a constant source of moisture.
- Western Subterranean termites will often build shelter tubes, referred to as mud tubes, for travel between their colonies in the soil and their food sources, so that they can avoid the light.
- Damage caused by Western Subterranean termites is most commonly found in the basement and at ground level, although the termites will attack wood at higher levels.
- Development from eggs to adults may take more than five months, and workers can live up to three to five years.
- Research has shown that populations are higher in urban areas than in undeveloped habitats. These termites prefer soil temperatures between 84° to 90° F, never above 104° F.
- Western Subterranean swarms may occur four or more years after a colony is first established, during daytime hours—warm, sunny days during the fall, winter or early spring in California, and spring swarms during the absence of rainfall in the northern sections of the termites' range.
- The Termite Institute™, online at [www.TermitelInstitute.com](http://www.TermitelInstitute.com), features an interactive map with localized information on regional termite prevalence. Simply click on any state to find out if Western Subterranean termites are active there.

[www.pestcontrolfacts.com](http://www.pestcontrolfacts.com)