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Termite Lawyer Pete Cardillo Offers Tips on How to Protect Your Homes This Swarming Season from Critters – and Crooked Pest Control Outfits

TAMPA, Fla. – (April 14, 2009) - Florida's termite swarming season has arrived, and homeowners should use care to avoid being victimized by termites – or by unscrupulous pest control companies.

To make sure your home doesn't become a buffet for bugs, Florida termite lawyer Pete Cardillo offers the following tips on protecting your home from termites as well as from dishonest pest control outfits:

Protecting your home from termites:

- If you see lots of bugs flying inside or around your house, that may be a sign of a termite swarm. Keep in mind that flying ants are often mistaken for termites. A quick way to tell the difference is that termites have straight abdomens; ants have a narrow "waist" between segments.
- Look for sagging or bowing walls inside your house, which could be a sign of termite damage hidden behind the wall. Look for the small, transparent wings that termites shed.
- Small drinking-straw-width tubes of mud on the outside of walls also may be evidence of termite infestation.
- Wet or deteriorated wood, or curious dust around windowsills, can also be a telltale sign of termite activity.

Protecting your home from unscrupulous pest control companies:

- Small companies don't often have enough experience, or may be fly-by-nighters (here today, gone tomorrow). All the guarantees and warranties in the world won't matter if your pest control company goes out of business.
- Many large, national pest control firms are focused more on sales than on servicing existing clients.
- A good, medium-size, regional company that's been around some years and is well established in the community is your best bet.
- Actually read your contract. This includes looking at the back of the contract. Here's often where you'll find disclaimers of liability and arbitration clauses, which can make it difficult or impossible to sue the company for incompetence or fraud.
- Make sure you get a repair guarantee. This is critical. Even seemingly minor termite damage can cost thousands to repair. Extensive termite damage can even require a house to be torn down and rebuilt.
- Make sure the contract spells out a mandatory routine inspection of your property – inside and out. Don't agree to anything less frequent than an annual inspection.
- Make sure the contract stipulates that your property will be treated with the liquid chemical pesticide Termidor, which is far superior to traditional "bait station" approaches.

Pete Cardillo is the founder of Tampa-based Cardillo Law Firm, which focuses exclusively on the prosecution of termite damage claims and is a noted authority in the area of termite claims litigation. The law firm represents condominium, apartment, commercial developers and homeowners who have termite damage claim disputes with their exterminator or their insurance carrier. www.CardilloLaw.com

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