

Preparing Public Properties for Termite Fumigation

Office buildings or commercial properties can sustain damage from termite infestation. This fumigation is similar to [apartment or condominium fumigation](#).

Occupants

If there is a refrigerator, now would be a good time to throw away all those leftovers and forgotten lunches. If you don't, you'll end up bagging all of those food items, even that coffee creamer that expired last month. For any kitchen items you do wish to save – including coffee, sugar, (non-expired) creamer, and so on – you'll need to help by doing the following:

Preparing food, feed, drugs (including tobacco products), and medicinals



Double-bag any food items that have been opened.

- Double-bag any food items that have been opened (that is, the original manufacturer's seal is broken) in special Nylofume bags, seal them tightly, and leave them in the building. This also includes consumable items such as medicines, tobacco, and pet foods. Nylofume bags are nylon polymer bags that protect food items during fumigation. If in doubt on what to double-bag, remove the items from your home.
- Only consumable items in glass, plastic, or metal bottles, jars, or cans that still have the original manufacturer's seal can stay in the home and do not need to be double-bagged. For example, a 2-liter bottle of soda with the manufacturer's seal would not need to be double-bagged.

Sealing Nylofume bags properly to protect food, feed and medicinals



Seal both the inner and outer bags.

- Double-up the Nylofume bags before you fill them, by putting one inside the other. Research has shown that these nylon polymer bags are very effective when used one inside of the other.
- Seal both the inner and outer bags after they are full. Starting with the inner bag, twist the top, double it over, and secure with tape or a twist tie. Repeat this procedure with the outer bag. Test the bag by gently pressing against the bag and checking for air leaks. No air should be able to escape. Your fumigator can provide Nylofume bags and instructions on how to use them.

For information about using Nylofume bags, including how to seal them properly and which foods should be bagged or removed from your office, please see "To Bag or Not to Bag," (PDF) available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

Preparing the rest of the building

- Remove or peel back waterproof covers on padding, sofas, chairs, and pillows to avoid trapping gas

inside.

- Open all doors and drawers to cabinets, closets, and appliances.
- Open blinds and drapes so the fumigator has easy access to windows for the aeration process after fumigation.
- Remove animals (including fish) and interior houseplants from the building.
- Give the fumigator or your facilities manager keys to all locked areas of the building. Give the fumigator or your landlord keys to all locked areas to your apartment or condo. If your car is in an attached garage that is to be included in the fumigation, please make sure you supply the keys for it, too. Cars, cabinets, safes, and other locked items or rooms will need to be unlocked throughout the fumigation process so that the fumigator can inspect them and aerate them according to label requirements. If you don't wish to leave them unlocked, provide the fumigator with the keys so that he can perform the required checks.
- The professional fumigator will check that all food items are double-bagged and that everything is ready for fumigation.

Facility Managers and Building Owners

The most important thing you must do to prepare an office building or commercial property for fumigation is communicate, communicate, communicate. Remember that tenants or employees are going to be sensitive about protecting their valuable equipment and returning to a pest-free home or workplace. Make sure they understand that fumigation is in their best financial interests. You want to eradicate the problem before it causes irrevocable damage to the building's structure, as well as its contents.

Preparing the buildings' occupants



Large public structure with courtyard, tented and ready for fumigation.

- If there are key employee meetings, make sure the fumigation project is on the agenda, well ahead of time – and update occupants frequently. If there are no central meetings or newsletter or email distributions, post preparation and fumigation schedules, frequently-asked questions (to help avoid misperceptions about fumigation) and other helpful information on a one-page poster or flyer in a prominent place in the office.
- Work with your fumigation company to provide office staff with written instructions for preparing for fumigation, as well as clear guidelines as to who is responsible for what. It would be helpful to have one representative from each office to sign the form as written consent and a responsibility waiver for the fumigation company. Make sure you leave a copy behind for reference!
- Provide your fumigator with contact information for maintenance staff, or ask them to be on-site during key parts of the fumigation process, so if there are questions or an emergency, your fumigator can get help.
- Provide extra building security. Barricades, warning tape, and even security guards will help limit traffic during fumigation and aeration. Security guards will also give occupants added peace of mind that their belongings are under protection while they're away.

Checking the interior premises

- Unplug heat sources. Vikane[®] gas fumigant is not flammable, but it is important to make sure the gas supply is turned off at the meter for the building.

Preparing the building's exterior

- Remove or cut back any plants and shrubs, and rake back gravel or mulch closer than 18 inches to the building. This may be necessary because of the tenting placed around the building. To minimize the escape of gas, the fumigator seals the tents directly to the ground with water- or sand-filled snakes. Any plants on the ground where the tent needs to be sealed will need to be removed. Awnings, trellises, or fences may also interfere with tenting. Your professional fumigator will work with you to decide what to do with these items.
- Water plants, shrubs, and ground cover near the office the day before fumigation to protect their roots.