



NEWS - OCTOBER 2013

## Have you had your Annual Termite Inspection? . . .

**It's something we all need to be wary of, that little sound of 'munching' as termites internally excavate our homes. When conditions are humid, termites love to come out to play, or eat, as it may be. They will attack brick as easily as weatherboard homes - in short, nobody is safe from these tiny terrors. With spring now here, it's only a matter of time before they get active, and we do what we can to protect our properties from costly damage.**

Termites can be tricky to find, because they often build up little walls around themselves which conceal their presence. Some things to look out for are the munching sounds that can sometimes be heard when termites are active in your home, and mud tubes built up against your property's existing structures.

Of course home owners living in the house will be more likely to notice any significant changes as they arise, but if your home is tenanted, these things may easily be missed. Typical termite damage can include:

- Earthen masses on architraves of doors, walls, stairs or skirting boards.
- Blistering, bulging or staining of paint on windows, door architraves and skirting.
- Damp areas on walls may betray the presence of moist earthen material in which termites live.
- Electrical failures causing fire by shorting electrical wiring

in subfloor areas and roof cavities.

- Earthen masses in the subfloor area under moist situations such as the bathrooms and kitchens where they act as termite "half-way" properties or in roof cavities and walls.
- Damage to flooring bearers and joists of properties with pier and wall construction.

An average treatment by a professional can cost around \$1,500. While this in itself is a hefty price to pay, it pales in comparison to the debt you may find yourself in if required to rectify extensive termite damage. It can also prove very costly when trying to sell your home. Countless sales have fallen through when buyers receive building inspection results and some buyers have managed to negotiate thousands off the sale price - thousands that we're sure you'd prefer to keep in your own pocket!

An annual termite check-up is like home insurance, an essential way to maintain your greatest investment. Is your home due for its annual termite inspection?

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# The 5 Simple Steps to Selling your Home.

If you're thinking of selling your home and are not quite sure where to start, you're not alone. Many people find the process of selling daunting, and most don't quite know where to start, so we thought we'd put together a bit of a strategy for you; a step-by-step guide to selling your home.

## What's your Home Worth?

You may feel like you've heard it all before. If a property is priced too low, buyers may think there's a problem with the property and be scared away; if it's priced too high, it'll price its way out of contention. As a home owner we understand how tricky the pricing situation can be - you want to get the best price possible for yourself, but you also don't want to make your home unattractive to buyers by striving for a price that's too high. So how do you find that magic number?

The first four weeks of a listing campaign are crucial! This is when you'll receive the most enquiry and attract the most number of inspections. We know a lot of residents ask for a few opinions from various real estate agents when putting their home on the market, and often we see people selecting to list with whichever agent tells them their home will get the highest price. This is extremely risky! Property pricing certainly isn't brain surgery, but it is somewhat of a science. While it's impossible for a real estate agent to tell you exactly what price your home will achieve (unless they're planning to buy it themselves), knowing what comparable properties have recently sold, and what is for sale now that would form your home's competition on the market, will allow them to create a sound pricing strategy for your property.

Beware the agent who plucks a price from the air. If you're thinking of selling your home, by all means educate yourself and ask for opinions. But make sure when it comes to listing your home you use an agent who deals in facts and results, rather than one who solely tells you what you want to hear. Price your home to be competitive, and enjoy the bidding war you create.

**1** • Choose a real estate agent to list and market your home and sign a listing agreement.

**2** • Have a chat to your agent about suitable inspection times and the marketing strategy that will best suit your home.

- If you haven't already, get your spring cleaning gloves on and start decluttering, scrubbing and polishing your home.

- Make any necessary repairs, and arrange for a building and pest inspection to make sure you're not going to find any nasty surprises later that could potentially cause a contract to fall over.

- Communicate regularly with your agent, and be open to all feedback.

- A good agent will be able to negotiate with buyers to earn you the most possible. Work with your agent to help secure the sale you deserve.

**3** • Once the price and conditions have been negotiated and a written offer has been made, you'll be in the position to sign your beautiful property over to new owners. Just remember that most contracts will have a five business day cooling off period.

- Once the cooling off period is over, your home is officially sold! Congratulations!

**4** • Your settlement period will depend on what was negotiated at the time of the offer being made. You can use this time to start packing and making arrangements to move to your new home.

- Make sure your home is empty and thoroughly cleaned out by the time of settlement, with the key ready to hand over to the excited new owners.

**5** • Put your feet up and relax. You've done it!



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