

TITLE: TERMITES IN CITY OWNED TREES**Policy Statement**

Urban Forestry will not remove trees solely on the basis of the presence of termites. An infested tree may be removed if termite feeding has seriously compromised the structural integrity thereby making the tree structurally unsound. Dead trees or live trees with extensive rot and also the dead portions of living trees, located on City property, infested with termites will be removed. Tree stumps remaining after tree removal will be removed from the site, either by digging them out (smaller trees), or by grinding them away below the soil surface.

All termite infested wood, obtained from City owned trees, will be disposed of at a single location as determined and approved by the Director, Urban Forestry.

Protection from Termites

There is no evidence that trees are a point source for termite infestation. Removing trees which have subterranean termites feeding in them does not remove termites from the area of infestation as they nest in the soil.

Removing a living tree may benefit a termite population. Termites only feed on dead wood tissue. When a living tree is removed, the remaining stump becomes dead decaying wood. The stump and the decaying tree roots provide moist sheltered conditions that are ideal for termite feeding and nesting. Additionally the expansive underground root system of a large tree can provide an ideal transport network allowing termites to move to another location.

There is presently no safe, effective and environmentally compatible method for protecting trees from termites. Ensuring that trees are healthy and regularly maintained will provide the best defence against termites.

Application

This policy applies to all City owned trees. This policy shall apply throughout the City of Toronto.