Installation Guidelines for the Basaltic Termite Barrier: A Particle Barrier to Formosan Subterranean Termites (Summary)

by

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The Formosan subterranean termite, *Coptotermes formosanus* Shiraki (Isoptera: Rhinotermitidae), is the most economically important insect pest in Hawaii, and an increasing problem in North America. For many decades, the principle means of preventing infestations by subterranean termites has been through application of soil insecticides. More recently, however, physical barriers have been developed as substitutes for insecticide applications. The first particle barrier to be developed commercially was the Basaltic Termite Barrier (BTB), which was commercialized in Hawaii in 1987 (Tamashiro *et al.* 1987, 1991). However, a number of factors have kept the popularity of BTB as a substitute for termiticides from reaching its full potential, as has been discussed by Yates *et al.* (2002). The lack of understanding of installation requirements for this barrier on the part of architects and building contractors has resulted in several failures, unrelated to the basic efficacy of the material. Our subsequent evaluations of these faulty installations identified key problem areas and led us to develop installation guidelines for termite-resistant particle barriers in both pre-construction and post-construction applications. These guidelines are described in detail by Yates *et al.* (2000), and a video tape is also available in the State of Hawaii illustrating BTB installation (Yates 1997). The reader is referred to earlier publications by Grace & Yates (1999), Grace *et al.* (1996) and Yates *et al.* (1999, 2000, 2002) for further information on the use of the Basaltic Termite Barrier and other physical methods of excluding the Formosan subterranean termite from buildings.

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