Termites do their best work in the dark. They move quietly, follow moisture, and tunnel through wood that looks fine on the surface. I have opened walls that felt solid under a coat of paint and found studs that crumbled like cork. Framing is a building’s skeleton, so once termites get into sill plates, studs, joists, or beams, the risk is not just cosmetic. Doors rack out of square, floors dish in the middle, roofs bow, and a small leak at the hose bib becomes an open door to a colony. Good news, structural damage from termites can be repaired. It takes a clear plan, an honest inspection, and steady carpentry with the right shoring and materials.

Where termite damage hides, and why it matters

Termites like predictable routes. Subterranean termites travel from soil to structure, usually through cracks, slab penetrations, or gaps at the foundation. Drywood termites fly in and colonize roof edges, fascia, attics, and window headers. They both follow moisture, even mild humidity pockets, which is why the worst surprises often appear near bathrooms, kitchens, laundry rooms, and low crawl spaces with limited ventilation.

I pay special attention to sill plates, rim joists, bottom wall plates behind baseboards, and the first three feet above grade. In older homes with raised foundations, the intersection of the mudsill and the first stud bay is a common entry. In homes on slabs, look at bath walls and plumbing chases. In attics, pay attention to ridge boards and rafter tails, especially under leaky gutters.

When termites eat framing, they reduce cross section. A 2x6 that has 30 percent of its thickness tunneled away has far less load carrying capacity. You might not see that until a floor starts to bounce or a crack creeps across drywall in the corner of a room. That is why termite framing repair focuses on restoring the original load paths, not just patching holes.

First step, stop the activity before swinging a hammer

Repair and treatment are two different scopes that should work in sequence. If live activity is present, handle it before the real framing work starts. That might mean a local injection for drywood or a perimeter treatment with trenching and rod injection for subterraneans. I have worked with plenty of licensed pest pros who can certify that activity is controlled. Without that step, you risk building a new runway for the same colony.

If treatment involves drilling or opening finishes, coordinate with the repair plan. For example, if a wall will be open for termite wall repair, the pest pro can access galleries directly and reduce the amount of chemical needed in the rest of the home. After treatment and drying time, repair proceeds.

Reading the structure like a map

Before I remove a single stud, I trace loads from roof to soil. Roof sheathing bears on rafters, rafters push on top plates, studs transfer that load to the bottom plate and the sill, then into the foundation. Floors carry their own loads to joists, to beams or girders, then to posts and footings. Termite damage often shows up at the points where loads change direction or concentrate, such as beam pockets, joist hangers, and wall intersections.

In practical terms, this means I sketch the affected area, mark suspected damage, and test wood with an awl or screwdriver. I look for the difference between surface honeycombing and deep structural loss. Tap the wood, listen for a dull sound that suggests voids. Probe near fasteners, which often rust when termites bring in moisture. In crawl spaces, I measure deflection with a level or laser to see how much the floor has settled.

When to call an engineer

Most termite wood repair is straightforward, but significant loss to primary elements deserves an engineer's eye. I bring one in if I see:

- More than one third of a beam's depth compromised along a continuous run.
- Major sill plate decay under a braced wall or shear wall panel.
- Joists sagging more than 1 inch over 12 feet, especially where walls sit on that floor.
- Multi-story load alignment problems, like a damaged header that carries a second floor and roof.

An engineer can size replacement members, specify LVL or PSL substitutes if you need slimmer profiles, and write a letter that smooths permitting. In many jurisdictions, termite structural repair that affects braced wall lines or point loads needs a permit and sometimes special inspection for hold downs and anchor bolts.

Temporary shoring, the unsung hero

Shoring is not optional when you remove or sister structural members. I carry a set of adjustable screw jacks, 4x4 and 6x6 posts, and cribbing. The goal is to support the load gently, not to jack the house into a new shape. If a floor has sagged 3/4 inch over time, raising it all at once will crack finishes. A quarter inch lift per day is a safer rhythm if straightening is part of the goal. For simple replacements, you often just need to take the weight off the member you are touching, hold it, and transfer load back after the new piece is in.

In tight crawl spaces, I pre-build low shoring frames and slide them into place. For walls, a temporary stud wall set a foot or so away from the work zone takes the load from ceiling joists while you replace studs and bottom plates. Never trust a bottle jack alone. Always crib under jacks with stable, flat blocking.

Sill plate work, the foundation of the repair

Termite sill plate repair sits at the heart of many jobs because the sill ties the structure to the foundation. In raised-floor homes, termites often enter at this line. If the plate has lost bearing surface, anchor bolts are loose, or compression has crushed the wood, plan a sectional replacement.

Here is how I typically handle it:

- Set up temporary shoring inside, right off the foundation line. Use wide blocking to distribute load over undamaged floor framing.
- Cut and remove a manageable section of damaged plate, usually 3 to 6 feet at a time. Avoid removing anchor bolts from more than one section at a time to keep lateral stability.
- Clean and treat the top of the concrete. If moisture wicking contributed to the problem, grind high spots and make room for a proper sill sealer.
- Install pressure treated plate stock of the same dimension, predrilled for new expansion anchors or epoxy set bolts where the original bolts are no longer viable. I like to add oversized washers to meet current code where possible.
- Reattach studs to the new plate with proper nails or structural screws, and add metal hold downs if the wall is part of a shear line.

Small trick from the field, label studs before you cut the plate so they return to their original plane. It avoids waves in the wall and misalignment with sheathing.

Studs and wall framing, replace or sister

For termite wall repair, I open the wall from the nearest corner or utility bay to minimize patching joints, then follow the damage. If the stud is hollowed out for less than half its depth and the load above is minor, a full height sister stud glued and screwed to the original, plus metal plates over perforated zones, can restore plenty of strength. If the stud carries a header or is next to a point load, replace it full height from plate to plate.

Headers deserve special attention. Termite beam repair at window or door headers may require a temporary support across the opening with a pair of angled shores. If a header is severely tunneled, replace with like size or consider an LVL pair with a plywood spacer to match thickness. Always re-flash the opening if you disturb the exterior, otherwise moisture will invite termites back.

Floor joists, deflection tells the story

Sag and bounce underfoot are the first clues that lead me to termite floor joist repair. In basements or crawl spaces, you can often see the galleries along the bottom of joists, especially near plumbing. If more than a quarter of the joist depth is missing or the damage runs across a concentrated load area, sistering with a full length member from bearing to bearing is best practice. Glue, nail, and bolt in a pattern approved for structural composite lumber if you use LVL. For traditional dimension lumber, a staggered nailing and structural screw pattern works well.

When there is not enough room to slide in a full-length sister, you can use two overlapping sisters that each reach bearing, with the overlap in the middle third of the span. If joist ends at the sill are chewed up, consider end repairs with steel brackets or a ledger detail, but verify every fix with local code. In bathrooms where subfloor edges are friable, termite subfloor repair is part of the package. Replace with tongue and groove plywood, glue to the joists, and block the seams.

Girders and beams, respect the spans

Girders that carry joists and partition loads take a beating when termites find them. A beam with severe loss is not a candidate for filler. Replace in kind, or sister with engineered lumber per an engineer’s plan. If the crawl space is tight, sometimes the most efficient move is to add intermediate posts and footings to reduce span and load on the damaged section. I use pre-cast footings only for temporary shoring. Permanent work calls for poured footings sized for soil bearing, with post bases that hold wood up off the concrete. That small air gap blocks moisture wicking that termites love.

Attic repairs and roof edges

Termite attic wood repair often centers on rafters at the eaves and on purlins. If minor, epoxy consolidants can help with non-structural fascia or trim. For structural members, replacement or full length sistering wins. Rafter tails that carry gutters are often worth replacing outright. While you are up there, check for soffit ventilation and drip edge. If water backs under shingles, it will keep attracting pests.

Drywall and finishes, restore clean lines

After treatment and framing work, you will likely need termite drywall repair after termite treatment. Patch seams on studs that are plumb and true. Where sections of drywall are removed, square up the cuts to studs, and add 2x backing if necessary so that both edges of the patch fasten properly. Use setting compound for the first coat

over larger patches. It sets chemically, which reduces shrinkage and speeds sanding. Align texture thoughtfully, a heavy orange peel next to a light hand trowel finish will telegraph even if the framing is perfect.

What can be saved, what should be replaced

Homeowners ask if we can just fill cavities with resin. Consolidants have a place in decorative trim and in non-structural elements, but termite structural repair is a different animal. The rule of thumb is simple, if the piece carries load, and the loss is significant in either depth or length, replace or fully sister. Epoxy dowels and steel flitch plates can augment repairs, yet they must be designed, not guessed at.

Moisture control, the long game

You reduce termite pressure by removing moisture and access:

- Fix gutter overflows and splashback. Downspouts should discharge several feet away from the foundation or into proper drains.
- Vent crawl spaces to code, and use a sealed vapor barrier on soil. If humidity remains high, consider a dehumidifier rated for continuous duty.
- Isolate wood from soil. No fence boards or planter boxes should touch siding. Keep a visible inspection strip at the base of stucco or siding.
- Seal slab penetrations with polyurethane sealant, and maintain exterior caulking at utility entries.
- Use borate treatments on replacement framing in susceptible areas, especially sill plates and first course of studs.

These small choices protect your investment in termite damage restoration and keep the next inspection boring, which is what you want.

A short, realistic workflow for a typical job

- Confirm treatment status and scope with the pest control operator, photograph conditions, and pull permits if needed.
- Shore affected areas, mark and open finishes, and expose clean margins of sound wood.
- Perform termite framing repair, starting with primary members like sills, beams, and headers, then move to studs, joists, and subfloor.
- Replace insulation and install new drywall or plaster. Prime, texture, and paint to blend.
- Final walkthrough, moisture checks, and a short maintenance plan for the next 12 months.

That is the arc I follow on a mid sized job, say a living room wall and adjacent floor with moderate damage. Larger projects, like whole perimeter sill replacement, add staging and sequencing but share the same bones.

Costs and timelines without sugarcoating

Prices swing with access, region, and the extent of damage, but a few ranges help set expectations. Localized termite wall repair where a few studs and a section of bottom plate are replaced might land in the 1,200 to 3,500 dollar range including finishes, provided access is easy and there is no shear panel work. Termite floor joist repair in a low, tight crawl space can push costs higher per joist because labor slows down. Think 800 to 1,800 dollars

per joist if sistering and subfloor patches are needed. Sill plate replacement varies widely, from 150 to 350 dollars termite exterminator per linear foot when you factor shoring, anchor work, and exterior touch ups.

Timelines range from a single day for a surgical stud replacement with minor drywall repair, up to a week or two for multi room framing and finish restoration. Complexity grows when plumbing or electrical rides inside damaged framing. Never cut a notch in a sistered joist for a pipe without approval. Reroute the service or use engineered solutions that maintain structural integrity.

Materials and fasteners that age well

Pressure treated lumber for any member that directly contacts concrete is a baseline. I like kiln dried after treatment for plates if finish flatness matters, it shrinks and twists less. For interior studs and joists, use straight, dense stock. Structural screws designed for framing have replaced much of my through bolting, especially in tight quarters, but nails still matter for shear transfer. Galvanized hangers and Simpson style connectors should match the treated lumber you use. Do not mix incompatible metal and treatment chemicals.

In high risk zones, treating replacement lumber with borate solution before installation adds a safety net. Apply to all six sides, allow to dry, and seal cut ends in the field. For subfloors, exterior grade plywood or OSB rated for the span with tongue and groove prevents squeaks and keeps edges solid.

Hidden problems that piggyback on termite repairs

Open walls and floors and you find things. I have uncovered ancient knob and tube wiring hidden in insulation, corroded angle stops that were a month away from leaking, and dryer vents terminated into crawl spaces. Build a little contingency into your plan. It saves hard conversations halfway through. If lead paint or asbestos are present, factor in testing and abatement, especially in mid century homes. Safety is not negotiable, and inspectors do not look kindly on quick covers.

Working with inspectors and permits

Many jurisdictions focus on life safety and lateral resistance. If your termite framing repair touches braced wall panels, sill anchor bolts, or headers wider than a typical door, expect questions at plan check. A simple sketch and a letter from an engineer, when warranted, turn friction into a handshake. Take photos as you go. Inspectors appreciate seeing shoring, fastener patterns, and anchor details before they are covered.

DIY or hire a pro

Handy homeowners can tackle small termite wood repair, like sistering a non bearing stud or patching a small subfloor area after treatment. Once you touch structural members that carry real loads, or you need significant shoring, bring in professionals. Search for termite repair services with a track record of structural work, not just patching. If you are typing termite repair near me or termite damage contractor near me, filter for licenses that cover general carpentry and, where required, specialty framing. Local termite damage repair pros will know your soil type, common entry points, and the inspectors who will sign off your work. If the damage affects beams, braced walls, or multiple stories, look for structural termite repair near me and check whether they collaborate with an engineer. A seasoned wood repair contractor termite damage near me listing often hides the best small firms who do careful, quiet work at fair rates.

A couple of real world snapshots

A three bed ranch from the 1960s, crawl space, red clay soil. The homeowner called about a spongy hallway. We found subterranean termites had chewed the sill plate and first two inches of several studs along a 16 foot exterior wall, plus the first foot of four joists under the bath. Treatment had already been completed. We shored the wall inside, replaced the sill in 4 foot sections with treated stock and epoxy set bolts where old ones were corroded, swapped out five studs and sistered two more, then installed end repairs on the joists with steel bearing brackets and added solid blocking. Subfloor under the toilet was replaced with 3/4 inch tongue and groove plywood, seams glued and screwed. Drywall patches, baseboards, paint. Five workdays start to finish, 6,800 dollars all in. Six months later, we returned to add gutters and splash blocks that the house always needed.

Another, a stucco two story with a big picture window. Drywood termites had tunneled through the double 2x10 header and into adjacent king studs. The floor above had a slight dip and hairline cracks in the corner ceiling. We set a temporary wall, eased the deflection out by 3/8 inch over two days, and replaced the header with a pair of LVLs designed to match the old depth but carry the extra load. New straps and Watsonville termite inspection specialists hold downs brought the opening to current code. Exterior stucco repair blended at the corner, interior trim matched with a custom blade profile. Permit passed on the first inspection. The homeowner later told me doors upstairs stopped sticking.

What success looks like

After proper termite framing repair, the structure should feel quiet underfoot, walls should be plumb and straight enough that trim joints close without persuasion, and doors should latch with a light touch. Moisture readings at sills and vulnerable studs should sit in the safe range, typically below 15 percent in most climates. Most importantly, the next annual inspection from your pest company should be uneventful. Termite damage repair is not just fixing what is broken, it is bringing back the original intent of the building, load paths that move cleanly from roof to soil, with no detours for water or insects.



Parting guidance for homeowners starting the process

If you are at the beginning, gather three things before you call for bids. One, a copy of the termite inspection with treatment notes. Two, a few photos of the areas you are worried about, in good light, showing context. Three, a sense of your tolerance for opening finishes, since minimal opening usually equals longer detective work and higher uncertainty. Share these with the contractor. You will get better, more honest pricing and a realistic plan.

Repairing termite damage to a house can feel fraught because much of the harm hides behind neat drywall and tidy trim. With a measured approach, the right shoring, and careful carpentry, the work restores confidence in your home. If you want help and are searching for termite damage repair near me or local termite damage repair, look for firms that talk as much about moisture and load as they do about paint and patch. The prettiest repair is the one you never notice, because the structure is doing its job in silence.