Termites work quietly, but the consequences get loud fast. Doors stick, baseboards crumble under light pressure, floors take on a soft bounce, and the whole house can start to feel out of square. I have walked into crawlspaces where sill plates looked like crispbread and beams were scalloped by galleries. In a few cases, a family had already paid for treatment, then discovered the real bill comes afterward, when termite structural repair begins. This guide pulls from years of repair work to clarify what needs attention, when you can opt for a surgical fix, and when you should plan a full structural intervention.

What termite damage really does to a structure

Termites don’t simply remove wood, they change the way loads move through a building. A 2x10 that has lost 30 percent of its cross section can still look intact to an untrained eye, but the bending strength can drop dramatically. That is why cosmetic patching over weak members fails. If you want termite damage restoration to last, you replace structural capacity, not just the surface.

In platform-framed houses, loads travel from roof to walls to beams and floor systems, then into the foundation. Termites target accessible, moist wood, so the first hits often happen at the bottom of that chain: sill plates, rim joists, and lower studs. From there, damage creeps to floor joists, beams or girders, subfloors, and the bottoms of wall studs. I have also seen serious termite attic wood repair cases where roof leaks or poor ventilation kept rafter tails and collar ties damp enough to invite a feast.

Inspection that actually finds the problem

A quick sweep with a flashlight is not inspection. Termite repair services start with access and probing. Plan to open things up. Lift insulation where it hides joist ends. Use a sharp awl on suspect wood and watch for it to sink in too easily. Sounding with a hammer tells you whether wood is solid or honeycombed. In basements and crawlspaces, check the sill plate and rim joist along the full perimeter. In slab houses, pull baseboards where walls feel wavy. In attics, look at rafter seats and along valleys, where condensation lingers.

I like to photograph and label every damaged area before demolition. It gives clients a clear baseline and helps me map a sequence for termite wood repair that will not leave the house unsupported. It also streamlines conversations with the pest control tech, the structural engineer, and the building inspector when those folks need to weigh in.

Keep in mind that active infestation and structural repair are separate projects, even if they overlap on the schedule. If you are calling around for termite damage repair near me or structural termite repair near me, confirm whether a company handles treatment, repair, or both. A proper plan coordinates both.

When to call the engineer, and when a contractor is enough

Not every case needs stamped drawings. If you are sistering two or three compromised joists with full bearing on each end and the span is short, a seasoned wood repair contractor can often work from code-accepted methods and manufacturer specs. Once damage reaches a primary beam, a long span, or multiple adjacent structural elements, bring in an engineer. The same goes when you see vertical settlement cracks, sag exceeding a half inch over a 10 foot span, or a binding door pattern across several rooms. An engineer will size LVL, PSL, or steel, confirm bearing details, and specify temporary shoring so the house remains safe during termite beam repair.

Permits vary by jurisdiction, but most places require one for anything beyond basic drywall and trim. Replacing sill plates, joists, or beams usually triggers a permit and inspection. Your termite damage contractor near me should know local requirements, but you can also check the city website to avoid surprises.

Pairing treatment with repair

Termite repair only sticks if the colony is gone. I have learned to schedule termite repair services to follow treatment by a few days to a week, depending on what the pest company uses. If foam or dust is injected into wall cavities, let it do its work before you install fresh wood. Make sure bait stations or soil barriers cover access points you open up during repair. Termite drywall repair after termite treatment is a real phrase for a reason. The timing matters, and you want one clean cycle of open, treat, verify, then close.

Safety and setup before any wood gets cut

Shoring and staging are not optional. I use screw jacks with 4x4 posts on solid blocking to take just enough load to relieve pressure, never to jack a floor in one go. A quarter turn per day is a typical rhythm for gentle lifts when we must correct sag. Dust control helps too. If we are doing termite wall repair in a house with children or sensitive adults, I seal the workspace with zipper barriers, run a HEPA unit, and set a clean path for material movement.

Electrical and plumbing often run through members that need repair. If you plan termite floor joist repair, open a clear path to reroute or protect lines. Cutting a joist with a hidden wire stapled along its bottom is not how you want to find it.

Sill plate replacement where it counts

Termite sill plate repair looks simple on paper. In reality, the work is fussy because the sill is trapped between foundation and the wall above. The process usually goes like this: install temporary walls a few feet inboard of the exterior wall to carry roof and floor loads, then loosen anchor bolts and cut out the damaged sill in sections. I prefit pressure treated replacements, notch for anchor bolts or drill new holes, add a sill sealer to reduce wicking, and reanchor using epoxy-set bolts if the originals are shot. If the termite damage reached the bottom of studs, I scab or splice those with full-height stud replacements, transferring load properly down to the sill.

Two practical notes. First, never let a new sill stop short of a corner or a major load point. Stagger joints so each segment has full bearing under solid studs. Second, check grade and drainage around the foundation while you are at it. Gutter downspouts and negative slope create the damp conditions that feed another round of termites.

Floor joist repair that restores capacity

Termite floor joist repair often means sistering, but sistering is only as good as the bearing and fasteners. For a joist with localized end damage, I cut back to solid wood, then carry the load with a full-length sister that bears at least 3 inches on the sill or beam. Nails alone are not enough for heavily compromised members. I prefer a mix of structural screws and adhesive, spaced per engineering tables. For spans over 12 feet or for significant section loss, I favor LVL sisters rather than dimensional lumber. They stay straight, take fasteners well, and let me match the required capacity without guesswork.

Open-web joists and I-joists require their own playbook. Manufacturers publish repair details for flange and web damage. You cannot improvise here. A quick hunk of plywood and a tube of glue will not save a chewed I-joist. If the damage is severe, replacement beats repair, even if it means opening more floor.

Beam and girder solutions

Termite beam repair sits at the top of the decision tree. When a primary girder is eaten, floors sag, interior doors go out of plumb, and cracking telegraphs through finishes. I like to shore on both sides of a damaged beam with evenly spaced posts, then evaluate whether to scab, box, or replace. Boxing with LVLs bolted to each side can work when the original still has solid core material and there is full bearing at the supports. If not, a full beam replacement is cleaner, though more disruptive. In tight crawlspaces, splicing beams in two segments with a midspan post on a new footing can be a smart compromise, especially in older homes that never had adequate support.

Every beam case benefits from a load path check. If you add a heavier LVL, make sure the posts below can take the load, and that their footings are not floating in mud. Structural termite repair near me often includes at least one new pad footing where the original builder rested a post on compacted soil or a red brick.

Subfloor and finished floor repair

Termite subfloor repair depends on where the weakness sits. If damage is widespread, pull the finish floor and replace sheets back to the centers of good joists. When the finish floor is worth saving, localized patching from below can work, but you still need solid blocking to catch the edges of new sheathing. I use tongue and groove subfloor, glued and screwed, to prevent squeaks. Where bathrooms and kitchens have seen moisture, I switch to a high performance panel and add proper underlayment before reinstalling tile or vinyl.

If a hardwood floor has cupped or warped because the subfloor rotted, I explain to homeowners that sanding will not fix a moving target. Repair the structure first, give the wood time to acclimate, then finish. It is slower, but it sticks.

Walls, studs, and drywall after treatment

Termite wall repair ranges from sistering a handful of studs to rebuilding whole sections. When damage climbs within the stud field, I pair new studs with the old from sole plate to top plate, fastening along the length and tying both ends to sound plates. If termites have chewed the plates themselves, I sequence repairs from bottom to top, replacing plates and transferring loads to temporary walls as needed.

Drywall repair after termite treatment is more than mudding over holes. After the pest tech foams the cavities, give it time. Once we close, I like to use mold resistant board in damp-prone areas and set backer where future access might be needed, for example near plumbing manifolds. A clean patch with taped seams and a feathered finish returns the room to normal without constant reminders of the problem behind the paint.

Attic and roof framing

Termite attic wood repair usually focuses on rafter tails, ceiling joists at the perimeter, and occasionally collar ties. These repairs tend to be easier to stage, but you still need to manage ventilation and moisture to keep repaired members dry. I have scarfed in new rafter tails that match historic profiles on older homes, sealing end grain and adding drip kerfs so water sheds properly. For ceiling joists, full-length sisters or overframing do the job, but only if bearing at both ends is solid.

Matching materials to the job

Pressure treated lumber belongs wherever wood meets masonry or sits near grade. For sill plates and exterior rim repairs, it is standard. Inside the house, I use kiln dried dimensional lumber or engineered members sized to the task. Termites dislike borate-treated wood, and in concealed spaces like crawlspaces and basements, I often apply a borate solution to adjacent sound members as a belt and suspenders approach. Seal cut ends of treated wood with end-cut preservative, and never sandwich wet treated lumber between two dry materials without ventilation. Trapped moisture breeds trouble.

Fasteners matter too. Structural screws give better withdrawal resistance than nails in many repairs, and they make tight spaces **professional termite inspector** easier to manage. Through-bolts with washers are nonnegotiable for beam boxing and for any load that depends on bending performance of the sistered assembly.



Cost, timelines, and what affects both

Homeowners ask for a single number to repair termite damage to a house, but the range is wide. A localized termite sill plate repair along one short wall might land in the low four figures, especially if access is clear. Sistering a handful of joists and patching subfloor might add a few thousand more. Once beams enter the picture, budgets jump. I have seen full perimeter sill replacement with scattered joist sisters and drywall repair tally in the mid five figures by the time paint dries. Add engineering, permits, and pest treatment, and the total can climb. Access drives labor more than anything. A clean, tall basement is fast. A 14 inch crawlspace with ductwork everywhere is slow.

Timelines follow the same logic. A tight crew can complete many termite structural repair jobs in three to ten working days. Beam replacements, masonry work for new footings, and extensive interior demo can stretch into several weeks. Factor in the calendar with termite treatment so you are not closing walls before chemicals set.

Moisture and ventilation, the quiet partners

Every strong repair includes a moisture plan. In crawlspaces, ground vapor barriers reduce humidity that termites love. Encapsulation with sealed vents, a dehumidifier, and insulated foundation walls can transform a dank space into one that preserves wood. In basements, correct downspout discharge and slope the soil away from the house. In bathrooms and kitchens, proper exhaust fans keep humidity from soaking studs and plates. I have revisited jobs years later where these basics stayed neglected, and guess what came back. Termites follow the water.

How to choose the right help

You can search termite repair near me and find a dozen names, but not all are equal. Ask for projects similar to yours, not just general carpentry photos. A good local termite damage repair outfit knows how to stage shoring, interact with pest control, and communicate with inspectors. If you need termite damage contractor near me because structural members are compromised, confirm that the company has a relationship with a licensed engineer or one on staff. For larger homes or historic structures, experience counts double. If your house has balloon framing or nonstandard lumber sizes, talk through how the contractor will adapt.

The best pros explain the sequence before they touch a board. They show you where temporary walls go, what gets removed, and how they will confirm capacity is restored. They discuss finishes too, since termite damage restoration often ends with paint and trim.

A practical, field-tested sequence for a typical joist repair

Use this streamlined checklist to understand the flow when one room’s floor has softened due to termite damage.

- Map damage from below, mark joists to sister, and identify utilities that cross the work zone.
- Treat the infestation, then wait the recommended window so chemicals do their job.
- Shore gently with screw jacks and posts, transferring just enough load to relieve the joists.
- Install full-length LVL or dimensional sisters with adhesive and structural screws, ensuring proper bearing at both ends.
- Replace affected subfloor, fasten with glue and screws, then restore finishes after a short acclimation period.

A short story from the crawlspace

We repaired a 1950s ranch where a persistent gutter leak had rotted the front sill and the first three feet of joists in the living room. The owners had already paid for treatment and were bracing for a long, messy project. Access was decent, so we staged two temporary walls, pulled 16 feet of sill in three sections, and replaced it with pressure treated, adding foam sill sealer. Three joists got LVL sisters that ran back to solid bearing. The subfloor patch tied to blocking, and the oak floor received a careful tooth-in repair. We upsized the downspout, cut a swale to pull water away from the foundation, and left two discreet access panels in the closet for future inspection. The entire termite structural repair took six working days. Two years later, I stopped by the neighborhood. The fascia looked crisp, the grade still pitched away, and the living room felt like it had always been solid.

Edge cases and judgment calls

Not every damaged member needs full replacement. If a joist has superficial galleries along the bottom but retains nearly full cross section and passes a probe test, a conservative sister can be a wise middle ground. Conversely, if damage is concentrated at bearing points, even small losses matter because stresses peak there. I would rather replace the first 18 inches at the end of a joist and add proper bearing than leave a questionable toe to carry the whole span.

Historic houses force a different calculus. Original sawn joists might not match today’s dimensions, and the framing may rely on plaster stiffness more than modern sheathing. In those cases, I aim to preserve visible

elements, reinforce discreetly with engineered members, and consult an engineer who understands old buildings. Termite framing repair in a 120 year old home should not erase its bones.

Preventive touches while the house is open

While walls or floors are open, take the easy wins. Add capillary breaks between new wood and masonry. Seal exterior penetrations where utilities enter. Where we perform termite wall repair, we often slip in insulation or fire blocking that the original builder skipped. In crawlspaces, tack up labeled markers that show where repairs were done so the next inspector knows what to look at. A small borate application across adjacent members takes minutes and buys cheap insurance.

When drywall and paint finally return

A strong structural job ends with finishes that look effortless. I like to run a bright light across new drywall to catch ridges before paint. Baseboards often need a touch wider profile to cover patches, and that is fine as long as the look stays consistent. Homeowners sometimes ask if they should expect new cracks because we stiffened the structure. Minor hairlines can appear as loads redistribute, but if doors still bind or a gap reopens at a ceiling corner, call the contractor back. Real repairs settle in, they do not keep moving.

Final thoughts for homeowners planning repairs

You do not have to become a carpenter to shepherd a successful termite damage repair, but a working understanding helps. Structural repairs are sequences. Each step prepares the next, and every connection matters. If you take the time to line up a qualified team, coordinate treatment with repair, manage moisture, and insist on genuine load restoration, the house repays you with decades of quiet floors and square corners.

Whether you type local termite damage repair into a search bar or ask neighbors for a referral, look for proof of similar work and a plan that makes sense on paper. The right team will replace what termites termite exterminator took in a way that feels almost invisible. That is the best compliment a structural repair can earn.