Termites rarely announce themselves with drama. Most of the time, we find their work when a door sticks, a tile hairline opens, or a baseboard feels spongy. By then, the insects are usually gone or already treated, but the structure may be quietly sagging. When I walk into a home for termite structural repair, I never start with the damaged wood. I start with the loads. Wood is just the pathway. If you do not map how the weight travels from the roof all the way down to the soil, you risk fixing a symptom and missing the cause.

Why stabilization comes first

There is a temptation to rush into termite wood repair the day after termite treatment. The roofline dips, the kitchen floor bounces, everyone wants fast relief. But wood is a system of compression and tension members that share work. Remove a compromised sill plate without shoring, and you can crack plaster throughout a home in a single afternoon. Sister a termite floor joist without correcting a settled pier, and the sag returns within months.

Stabilization is the plan and the temporary support that hold a building still long enough to repair it safely. It protects occupants, saves finishes, and keeps the repair geometry true so doors, windows, and cabinets still fit when the jacks come out. When done right, stabilization looks unremarkable. The big moments are the ones you avoid.

How termites affect load paths

Termites do not just chew random wood. They soften the thin webs of I-joists, hollow the heart of beams, and eat the lower third of a sill where moisture lingers. I have opened walls where the stud looked normal at the paint face, then collapsed like stale bread when I squeezed it. In crawlspaces, it often begins at the mudsill or sill plate, then moves into the rim joist, joist ends, and sometimes the girder. In garages and porches, posts with concealed bases rot or are eaten at grade line, transferring loads unevenly to slabs or soil.

The danger is not the missing wood alone. It is the uneven transfer of loads to adjacent members and to soils that may already be marginal. Once load shifts off a compromised member, neighboring studs crush their bottom plates, nails pull, and the building takes a new set. That set is what we are stabilizing against.

First look: reading the house

On a typical call for termite damage repair, I start outside, scanning the roofline and siding gaps. Then I walk inside with a 4 foot level and a bright flashlight. I sight down door heads and baseboards, bounce a step or two, and tap drywall seams that sit near suspected termite wall repair zones. In crawlspaces and basements I test posts and beams with an awl to gauge depth of decay. If I see sand tubes, frass, or active tunnels, I confirm that pest treatment has been completed before any structural work.

When the house is a century old, I assume some sag is historic. I am not in the business of making an old structure laser straight unless the owners want a whole house relevel. Stabilization here means freezing the current geometry while we replace what termites took, then selectively lifting where it helps performance without inviting widespread cracking.

A quick field checklist

- Doors or windows that suddenly bind after heavy rain, especially above crawlspaces
- Sagging or bouncy floors over a central beam, or tile cracks that mirror joist lines

- Baseboards or trim separating from walls near corners or stair openings
- Exterior cracks that run through mortar, not just along joints, close to known termite areas
- Posts or sill plates with a screwdriver penetration deeper than half their thickness

Choosing the right temporary support

The right shoring method depends on what is damaged. If termites ate a sill plate under a load bearing wall, I install wall shores that catch ceiling joists and rafters, combined with screw jacks on a beam that runs parallel to the wall. For a termite beam repair, I shore from slab or soil up to the beam on both sides of the replacement section. For termite floor joist repair, I set a temporary beam running perpendicular to joists and pick them up with several adjustable columns spaced 4 to 6 feet apart. In tight crawls, the low profile of laminated 2x10 temporary beams makes life easier.

The aim is uniform pick up, not point loading. I would rather use several small jacks than one heroic bottle jack. Every time I see a cracked tile field, I ask how the lift was done. Usually, it was one jack under one joist, way too fast.

What the engineer brings to the table

There are many straightforward termite repair services that a seasoned contractor can handle with standard details. Still, once damage crosses a beam splice, involves multi story bearing walls, or requires underpinning, an engineer earns their fee. Expect load calcs, temporary support notes, and a repair detail set that includes species and grade of lumber, fastener schedules, and any steel plates or flitch assemblies. For homes with expansive soils or chronic moisture, we sometimes include helical piers or micro piles as part of the stabilization plan so we are not jacking against a sponge.

Engineered details also streamline permits and inspections. Many jurisdictions will not sign off on structural termite repair near me queries without stamped drawings when primary framing is involved.



Sill plates, rim boards, and bottom-of-wall repairs

Sill plates fail in predictable ways. Termites like the hidden space between concrete and wood, especially if the original builder skipped a proper sill sealer or the anchor bolts sit in a moisture pocket. When I perform termite sill plate repair, I stage wall shores on both sides of the wall as needed, separate drywall carefully at the base if it

is too tight to the plate, and lift the wall by an eighth of an inch at a time. Rushing cracks more than patience saves.

Most sill replacements are made in 4 to 8 foot sections. I cut out the unsound plate, clean the concrete, set new pressure treated plate with modern sill gasket, and install new anchors that meet code spacing. If the rim joist was also chewed, I pair the sill work with a sistered or full height ledger that ties back to the joists with structural screws or hangers. Where stucco or brick veneer sits close, access rules the day. Sometimes the best path is from the inside, paired with termite wall repair where we have to open to re-insulate and add a proper air barrier.

Beams and girders: splice logic and safety

For termite beam repair, I prefer full length replacement when access allows. In finished basements, that is not always realistic. A well engineered splice with a bolted fishplate or a flitch assembly can work, provided the remaining beam sections are sound. Watch for hidden decay where metal hangers meet wood - rust stains there often telegraph deeper damage.

On site, the threshold question is whether the beam is supporting more than one story or a heavy concentrated load such as masonry or a soaking tub. If so, I double up on shoring with redundant support and drop lines to measure movement every lift. A 1 to 2 degree twist introduced during jacking will haunt you later in door swings and drywall joints.

Joists, subfloors, and the rhythm of small lifts

Termite floor joist repair often looks simple. Sister a new joist, glue and screw a new subfloor, done. The catch is the load you add to the new sister. If the old joist is 3 quarters compromised at midspan, the new joist will shoulder almost all the load without the benefit of bearing pockets that match perfectly. I pre-crown the sister, use construction adhesive liberally, and stitch the members together with structural screws in a stagger that avoids splitting. When the bearing pocket is ugly or the joist end is ragged, I slide a steel bearing plate onto the mudsill or add a Simpson seat to give the new wood a true seat.

For termite subfloor repair, I weigh patch size carefully. Anything larger than a couple of square feet benefits from blocking on all sides, not just along one joist. T and G subfloor should be tied to new blocking with adhesive and screws on a 6 inch schedule along edges. If a kitchen island sits on the patch zone, I often pull the island, shore locally, and rebuild beneath before resetting cabinets. Patching around a heavy island is a lesson in cracked grout lines.

Attic framing, rafters, and truss rules

Termite attic wood repair is a quieter job with big consequences. Rafters and ceiling joists manage both vertical and lateral loads, and trusses are sacred geometry. If termites chewed a truss plate area, you need an engineered repair with gussets that restore the original load paths. Cutting or altering trusses without a proper repair detail is a fast way to make an insurer very unhappy. For rafters in stick framed roofs, we can sister or scab with like species lumber across two adjacent bearing points, and match the original birdsmouth. I also look hard at collar ties and rafter ties that may have been compromised, since those keep the roof from spreading and pushing out walls.

Walls and finishes: what fails and what can be saved

Termite wall repair is part structure, part surgery. Where studs are hollowed at the base, I cut plates and studs in sections so I can install new king and jack studs that carry headers properly. Old plaster can be saved with patience, especially if you stitch cracks early and do small lifts over several days. Drywall is more forgiving. After termite treatment and structural work, termite drywall repair after termite treatment usually means cutting back to clean, square lines, replacing bottom sheets, and re-taping. Prime with a good sealer to block any old staining or tannin bleed that might telegraph through fresh paint.

Moisture, grading, and future proofing

You can repair termite damage to house framing perfectly and still see trouble return if moisture stays high. I check for negative grading, missing downspout extensions, crawlspace humidity, and irrigation that wets the foundation edge. Termites love a constantly damp sill, so do fungi. A 2 to 3 degree soil slope away from the house, 6 inches of slab or stem wall visible above grade, and downspouts that dump at least 6 to 10 feet from the foundation go a long way.

In crawlspaces, a continuous vapor barrier, sealed vents in humid regions, and a small dehumidifier set to 50 percent relative humidity can flip the script entirely. If customers ask why a new pressure treated sill still needs moisture control, I remind them that even treated wood can warp and move when it cycles wet to dry. Stability is a moisture story as much as a termite story.

Lifting strategy: gentle wins

Lifting is where stabilization meets finesse. I have seen experienced carpenters split a ceiling beam because they were in a hurry to make the level read perfectly before lunch. Wood fibers take a set over years. If you try to reverse that set in an hour, something else gives. My rule is incremental, measured lifts: an eighth of an inch, then wait, then another eighth. For bigger corrections, we space lifts over days. I use story poles or laser lines set on reference points to track actual movement, not just what a jack tells me.

When owners hear that we may not go back to dead level, I show them why. A house with plaster crown molding that has lived 70 years with a half inch of dip can be made stronger without forcing every finish to relearn its place. The goal is sound structure and a comfortable, quiet floor, not a perfect bubble.

Helical piers, micropiles, and when to underpin

Occasionally, the soil under a bearing line is too far gone to trust, especially under old porch additions or interior beams on expansive clays. If a termite beam repair coincides with chronic settlement, you do not want to push against compressible soil. This is where helical piers or micropiles pay off. A helical pier is basically a steel screw that threads into stable strata, then locks in place to carry load through a bracket that cradles the foundation or beam. Micropiles are small diameter drilled piles filled with grout and often a reinforcing bar, excellent in tight access.

We bring in a specialty crew for these, and we certified drywood termite exterminator set piers before structural lifts so we are jacking against something solid. Expect a few test probes to confirm torque or capacity. It is not a cheap line item, but it cuts risk. The decision is rarely about termite damage alone, but the termites may have exposed a weakness the soil was already exploiting.

Adhesives, epoxies, and where they fit

Homeowners sometimes ask about epoxy injection or consolidants as a shortcut. In my experience, those products have a smart but narrow role. Epoxy is great for stabilizing minor checking or for bonding a shear crack that has clean, accessible faces. It does not restore the full capacity of a chewed stud or beam web. If more than about 20 percent of a cross section is gone, I replace or sister with like lumber or steel. For heritage elements where replacement would destroy historic fabric, an engineer can specify reinforcement with steel plates and structural adhesives. That is the exception, not the rule, for termite damage restoration.

Costs, schedules, and the real world

People want numbers. I share ranges and make clear the variables. Local termite damage repair that covers a short sill section and a couple of joist ends might run into the low thousands. Add a main beam splice and a half dozen jacks for staged lifting, and a job can land in the mid to high thousands. Helical piers can add several thousand per pier. Termite attic wood repair varies by access and whether it touches truss work. Termite drywall repair after termite treatment is often a smaller line item, except when kitchens or baths with tile are involved. Most projects stretch from a few days to a couple of weeks, with longer durations when we plan slow lifts.

The big drivers are access, scope creep as we open things up, and finish protection. A careful contractor will talk about contingencies and keep you looped in as hidden damage appears. Good photos and daily check ins beat surprises.

Working around families and finishes

We often work in lived-in houses. Stabilization means noise from jacks and shoring, dust from cutting plates, and a parade of materials into tight spaces. I seal off rooms with zipper walls, add negative air when we are cutting plaster or old subfloors, and pad floors along traffic routes. Pets get their own plan. I also coordinate with pest companies to ensure we are not disturbing treated soil right after barrier applications. If the home has hardwood, I place sensors to track humidity so temporary openings do not buckle boards.

Coordination with pest treatment

Structural work should happen after termites are treated, not before. Otherwise you may chase live colonies from old galleries into new wood. I like to see a report showing active treatment and follow up inspections scheduled. For subterranean termites, perimeter soil treatments or bait systems are common. For drywood termites in attics, whole structure fumigation or localized injections may come first. Once the insects are handled, we can safely proceed with termite framing repair and any associated finishing.

Case notes from the field

A bungalow near the coast had a kitchen floor that felt like a trampoline. The rim joist and three joist ends were eaten where a downspout had been dumping for years. We staged a 12 foot temporary beam under the joists, lifted the floor by a quarter inch over two days, replaced the rim and sill with pressure treated, added two new joists with full bearing, then relaid a two layer subfloor - 3/4 inch tongue and groove plus a 3/8 inch underlayment to match old heights. The homeowners kept the original cabinets. We cut the bottom drywall, re-trimmed, and the tile setter came in behind us. No cracked tiles, no stuck doors, and two years later the floor still reads flat across a laser.

A split level with a sagging garage corner told a different story. The post at the corner looked fine at eye level, but the base was powder, hidden behind a decorative wrap. The sill plate and a portion of the beam above were

compromised. We installed wall shores, opened the wrap, and discovered the slab had settled half an inch at that corner. The answer was a pair of helical piers with a bracket carrying the beam, new post with a proper elevated base, and a spliced sill section. We lifted the corner by three eighths of an inch, then stopped to avoid telegraphing cracks across the stucco facade. The homeowner got a straighter garage door track and a quiet second floor hallway. Sometimes restraint is the win.

How to stage the work

- Confirm termite treatment and moisture controls are in place
- Map load paths and mark bearing points before touching wood
- Install shoring and jacks with redundant support where loads are high
- Replace or sister damaged members, then transfer load back slowly
- Verify with levels or lasers, then close walls, insulate, and finish thoughtfully

Permits, inspections, and documentation

Cities vary, but anything beyond cosmetic termite damage repair usually triggers a permit when structural members are affected. Inspectors want to see clean bearing, proper connectors, anchors set to depth and spacing, and treated lumber where it meets concrete. Photographs of hidden conditions before you close walls are gold. They help with future resale and with insurance if questions come up. I keep a simple binder for each job: pest report, engineer notes if any, permit, inspection cards, and before and after photos.

Picking the right team

Searches like termite repair near me or termite damage contractor near me will throw plenty of names, but look for a contractor comfortable with both structure and finishes. Ask how they plan to stabilize, what their jacking schedule looks like, and how they protect the home during lifts. If the scope includes a beam or sill in a tough spot, ask for a sketch of the temporary support. For larger homes or complex loads, make sure they have an engineer they trust. The best wood repair contractor termite damage near me options will be clear about what they know and when they will bring in help.

Local termite damage repair crews also tend to know regional soil and moisture patterns. A contractor who has worked through one wet spring after another will steer you to small fixes that pay off - from a $20 downspout elbow to a dehumidifier that keeps a crawlspace from ever becoming termite paradise again.

Materials and connectors that last

Not every stick of replacement lumber needs to be pressure treated, but anything that touches concrete or is within the splash zone should be. I match or exceed the original species and grade for structural pieces. Fasteners matter. Structural screws with tested shear values beat generic lag bolts. Modern connectors sized for dimensional lumber avoid the wobbly fit you sometimes see with old rough sawn members, and manufacturers publish clear tables. For sills, I like oversized washers under anchor nuts to spread load and reduce crushing. Dialing in these small details adds up to a quiet structure.

Finishing touches after structure is right

After stabilization and termite structural repair are complete, the finishing work sets the tone for how the project feels. Trim should meet cleanly without forced joints. Floors should not telegraph ridges where subfloor seams meet old decking. Paint hides a lot, but it does not fix bad geometry. I budget time for small tune ups: planing a door edge, resetting a strike plate, or swapping a cracked tile that took a hairline during lifting. These touches cost little and show respect for the home.

A word about expectations

Every house has a memory of its loads and seasons. The goal of termite beam repair, termite sill plate repair, or any termite framing repair is to restore strength, reestablish clean load paths, and protect against future damage. Perfection is not the right measure. Stability is. When the project ends and the family stops noticing the floor under their feet, that is the mark of good work.

If you are staring at a soft baseboard or a spongy step and wondering where to start, begin with the basics: confirm treatment, protect the house with smart shoring, and repair in a way that respects loads and materials. Whether you find a seasoned local crew through a termite damage repair near me search or a neighbor’s referral, look for a plan that reads the whole house. Stabilization is not the flashy part of the job, but it is the part that lets every other piece of the repair last.