

## **The PINKSTON EDUCATION FACILITY for STRUCTURAL and URBAN PEST CONTROL at OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY**

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The need to progressively improve structural and urban pest-management training for state regulatory officials, pest-management professionals, and extension educators has led to the development and implementation of a limited number of university-based training schools in the United States. In Oklahoma, pest-management professionals seeking certified applicator or service technician status needed a centralized facility to provide classroom teaching sessions as well as realistic hands-on field training. The goal of the Pinkston Education Facility for Structural and Urban Pest Control (PEFSUPC) at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater is to provide this training relative to subterranean termite management under a variety of standard and unique building materials applications and construction practices found in Oklahoma and contiguous states. A variety of wall and foundation types, wooden and concrete steps, concrete patios and walkways, wooden decking, and a concrete-slab wooden carport have been constructed. These structures are used for demonstration and training in proper treating and application techniques for control of subterranean termites. The facility is expandable and will address new and emerging technologies and equipment as they become available.

Since 1990, the number of pesticide applicators certified under Oklahoma Categories 7a-General Pest and 7b-Structural Pest, as well as the number of Service Technicians, has significantly increased. There has also been a significant increase in licensed pest-control companies. Although the trend in consumer complaints received by the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture (ODA) concerning pest control companies gradually decreased over the past decade, this is cyclic and occasional increases in complaints occur. Structural pest-control problems represent 25% of all complaints but require 50% of ODA investigation time to resolve, and complaints remain at unacceptably high numbers.

One expectation of the PEFSUPC training program is to achieve a significant reduction in the number of complaints. Three-day training courses are conducted quarterly, and additional courses are scheduled if warranted. Applicators who successfully complete training will know how to properly utilize proven technologies and methods to effectively protect wooden structures from termite attack, and treat termite-infested structures. They will recognize standard and unique construction practices and how to treat high-risk areas in and around structures, and will meet minimum certification standards of the required commercial and non-commercial practical examination.

Attendees earn continuing education units (CEUs) upon completion of training. Written examinations must also be passed. A detailed presentation of the PEFSUPC is found on the Oklahoma State University Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology web site: <http://www.ento.okstate.edu/ve/supef/>