



## Swarms still MIA

**N**ot so long ago, the first few weeks of every spring, pest management professionals' (PMPs') telephones would ring off the hook as panicked homeowners called to report termite swarms and request related inspections/treatments.

Since the mid 2000s, though, PMPs across the country have reported termite swarms have all but vanished.

"We still see swarms, but they aren't nearly as numerous or as large as they used to be," says Jim Freund, Termite Department Manager at Arrow Exterminating Co. in Lynbrook, N.Y.

"Termite swarms happened every spring for about 30 years," Freund adds. "We could count on that happening *every year*. The swarms we *used* to see each comprised hundreds to thousands of termites with wings all over floors and windowsills, sending homeowners into states of panic. We don't see that

anymore. We're lucky to have 100 termites in each of the few swarms we're seeing nowadays."

Garey Clark, owner of Clark Pest Remedy in McDonough, Ga., notes: "Sometimes we find termite swarmers in mud tubes, crawling around with worker termites after swarm season, and wonder, 'Why are the swarmers still in the mud tubes? Why didn't they fly out during swarm season?'"

"There's definitely something happening with termite swarms. In time we'll figure it out," says Dr. Austin M. Frishman, a PMP columnist and owner of AMF Pest Management Services in Boca Raton, Fla. "Meanwhile, the lack of swarms makes annual termite re-inspections that much more important!" **PMP**

— P.B.

### Annual re-inspections key

"The industry knows termites are crypto-biotic creatures that can be difficult to detect. Annual termite re-inspections are critical to the success of our termite business," says Jim Freund, Termite Department Manager at Arrow Exterminating Co. in Lynbrook, N.Y. "Even though more than 90 percent of our customers request bait systems, we include an annual termite re-inspection of every home — without exception.

"We inspect the entire house, inside and out, and we document, and share with clients, our findings," Freund says. "Our customers are counting on us to *keep protecting* their homes from termites."

A thorough termite inspection cannot be conducted in just 15 minutes, notes Richard Diggs, president of Alexandria (Va.) Pest Services.

"Some customers tell us competitors spent just a few minutes on their termite inspections and the lack of detailed documentation demonstrates that," Diggs says. "These customers recognize we are a quality company and say our professionalism is worth the extra cost. Proper, thorough termite inspections are a clear competitive advantage for us."

— P.B.



### SWARM-LIFTED SALES

% of new termite jobs in 2011 derived in part from customers seeing swarms

