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## Taking stock of urban termite problem

**PETALING JAYA:** Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) is conducting research on the severity of termite infestation in homes and buildings throughout Malaysia via an online survey targeted at property owners.

The aim of the Development of Strategies and Techniques to Control the Asian Subterranean Termite in Urban Settlements research project is to provide understanding to participants on the factors that

contribute to termite attacks so that FRIM can develop better and safer methods of controlling the problem.

“The research project is to gain

better understanding of the factors that predispose homes and buildings to termite attack and to identify hotspots of termite infestation in the country.”

“Termites are naturally forest-dwelling insects. However, some species are able to survive and live in the urban environment, eventually attacking homes, buildings and urban structures,” said FRIM senior research officer, Shawn Cheng.

He said that the Asian subterranean termite, *coptotermes gestroi*, is one of the species whose incidence of attacks have been reported to be on the rise in Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore.

“The termites also appear to be rapidly out placing other species of *coptotermes* as the main urban termite pest. The research is being

carried out by entomologists at the FRIM who are experts in the field of termite ecology and biology.

This research project is funded by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Malaysia and is from July to May.

Limited edition FRIM T-shirt will be given away to lucky respondents.

More information is available at [www.frim.gov.my/isoptera](http://www.frim.gov.my/isoptera) or email [shawn@frim.gov.my](mailto:shawn@frim.gov.my) or [isoptera2@gmail.com](mailto:isoptera2@gmail.com).