

## Pest Management in Kenya

*Editor's note: VPMA member Craig Duncan recently returned from a church mission trip, that also allowed him to use his talents as a pest management professional. With product donated by BASF, Craig was able to provide a termite treatment to the church ministry building in Siaya, where termites are big, destructive and chemical control is unheard of. The following is an account of Craig's experience.*

In September 2005, Pastor Isaac Obure invited me to visit him in Siaya, Kenya. I said I would, but wasn't convinced it would happen anytime soon.

However, in December, dates were put on the calendar and the airline tickets were purchased.

We knew the village needed medicine and medical supplies, so we put the word out and started collecting vitamins, antibiotics, over-the-counter cold remedies, Band-Aids, Neosporin and the like.

But we also knew termites were an issue. Isaac had showed us pictures of the construction of a church building. It's basically a pole building with sheets of aluminum on the sides and top.

Naturally, we asked about termites. Isaac said termites were such a big problem, the life expectancy of the poles would only be about five years, even though the ends of the poles were soaked in oil before they were set in the ground.



In fact, the church, whose construction pictures had been taken less than two years earlier, was already infested with termites.

Transporting medicine was one thing, but I didn't

think the airlines would look favorably on wettable powder or liquid termiticides in the suitcases. So, I contacted Karen Boniface and asked if BASF would donate some Termidor®.

After a few emails were sent around the world, Termidor was made available for pickup in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. Fortunately, the label was in English!



A helper dug the trench around the exterior of the church, the Termidor was mixed in buckets, and poured in the trenches. We also directly treated a couple of termite mounds on the church property and at the pastor's house.

The Kenyan termites are larger and darker in color than Eastern Subterranean termites. The soil there is very shallow over a hard layer of rock, which is presumably why they build mounds up, since they cannot go deep into the ground. The termites are very aggressive and can be seen throughout the area.



While opening the mound to prepare it for the Termidor, we found a queen. I scooped her out of the mound, along with several workers and a soldier termite. I was wearing latex gloves at the time. The soldier bit me on the thumb through the glove, so hard that it drew blood – lots of blood!

Kenya is now in its fourth year of drought. Southwestern Kenya, where Siaya is located, has suffered less severe conditions than other areas of the country, but is an impoverished area. Basic necessities are in short supply, or more expensive than many locals can afford.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to BASF for providing the Termidor. It was wonderful to be able to use my professional expertise and apply a superior product to protect structures half a world away.

Two weeks in a third world country gave me a fresh perspective on the abundance in which we live and how blessed we are to have been born in the USA.

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