Termites don’t read blueprints. They follow moisture and cellulose, then quietly mine the fibers that give wood its strength. By the time you notice a springy floor or a door that pinches, they may have already eaten the center of a beam or the edge of a sill plate. I have opened beams that looked fine on the outside, only to push a screwdriver through the belly of the member and watch wood dust sag like wet flour. When the damage lands on a primary load path, the structure starts to tell on itself.

Beam and joist repairs after termite treatment are not just carpentry, they are structural work. The goal is to restore the load path safely, keep the building true, and leave the wood less inviting to another infestation. That means planning, shoring, verified treatment, and connections that do more than look strong. It also means knowing when to stop chasing old lumber and bring in engineered members.

Why load paths matter more than cosmetics

Every floor load drains into something. Joists deliver weight into beams, beams into posts or bearing walls, and finally into the foundation. When termites hollow a beam or notch a sill plate from the top, you lose section depth where the fibers are working the hardest. Deflection increases, fasteners loosen, squeaks appear, then drywall cracks or tile grout opens. If you correct only the symptoms, say with a patch of termite wall repair or a skim coat of joint compound, the load still has nowhere good to go.

Termite structural repair lives or dies on respect for the load path. Strengthening a beam means more than adding wood next to it. You must reconnect that member to its supports and to the joists that bear on it so the full assembly works as one, not as a stack of parts.

Confirm treatment before you rebuild

I never start termite wood repair with a saw. I start with evidence that the colony is dead or managed. A licensed pest professional should inspect, identify the species, and apply the correct treatment. Subterranean termites often need soil treatments or bait systems, while drywood termites may require localized injections or whole-structure fumigation. Without that step, fresh wood becomes an expensive buffet.

Your contractor should coordinate with the pest company on timing. If we open up a beam pocket or a crawlspace wall, we give the technician clear access. We also protect interior finishes because termite damage restoration often overlaps with termite drywall repair after termite treatment.

Signs your beam or sill might be compromised

You don’t need to be a carpenter to suspect trouble. A few small cues often add up to a bigger story.

- Floors that dish near the middle of a room or feel springy underfoot
- Doors or windows racking out of square after a rainy season
- Cracks that widen at the corners of openings, especially over a beam line
- Baseboards separating from floors, or tile grout cracking along a mid-span line
- Mud tubes or frass near beam pockets, sill plates, or crawlspace piers

These symptoms do not prove termites, but they do justify inspection. I use a strong flashlight, an awl, and a moisture meter. On beams and sills, I test around bearing points, along the lower third of the member, and

anywhere a pipe has sweated or leaked. If the awl sinks easily or the wood sounds dull when tapped, I mark it and keep going.

Anatomy of a sound repair plan

A thorough termite damage repair plan moves through a predictable arc. You document, you support, you open up, you replace or reinforce, and you reconnect. On structural members, permits are typically required. Get your local building department involved early, particularly if you are considering engineered beams or altering supports.

I like to draw the existing load path, then mark compromised pieces in red. Joist span, beam length, bearing width, and connection types all matter. If you have a 6 by 8 beam carrying 12 feet of 2 by 10 joists on each side at 16 inches on center, I can estimate loads within a working range. Only then do repair options make sense.

Shoring before surgery

You cannot fix a sagging beam while it is still carrying the house. Temporary shoring is non-negotiable. I set up a pair of temporary walls or adjustable screw jacks with a continuous sole plate, placing them a foot or two away from the beam to be repaired. Jacking is done slowly, often no more than an eighth to a quarter of an inch per day, to avoid cracking finishes and stressing brittle materials. Patience here pays off. I have seen overzealous jacking pop a backsplash off a kitchen wall two rooms away.

For crawlspaces, a compact jack on solid cribbing works, but never set a jack on bare dirt. Use concrete pavers or a footing block to spread the load, and check for plumbing or electrical lines before you lift.

Choosing your repair strategy

Termite beam repair is not one-size-fits-all. The right method hinges on how much cross section is gone, the beam’s span and load, and how much access you have.

- Sistering with solid sawn lumber. If the original beam lost, say, 20 to 30 percent of its section and access is decent, a full-length sister on each side can restore capacity. The sisters should match or exceed the original depth, extend beyond the damaged area by at least two to three feet, and bear on solid support at each end. I like a construction adhesive rated for structural use between faces and a bolting pattern verified by an engineer or based on APA tables. Stagger bolts, keep edge distances, and add blocking at bearing points to prevent roll.

- Flitch plate reinforcement. When headroom limits beam depth or removal is impractical, a steel plate sandwiched between new lumber can provide a big bump in stiffness without much thickness. Holes must be drilled accurately, plates sized for the load, and the assembly tightened to specification. This is not a back-of-the-truck fix, but it shines when you need strength and limited disruption.

- LVL or PSL replacement. When the beam is deeply compromised, a clean replacement with engineered lumber is often the most reliable path. Laminated veneer lumber and parallel strand lumber provide predictable strength, come in long lengths, and handle moisture swings better than solid sawn. Replacement beams must sit on competent posts and footings. I have replaced 4 by 8 redwood beams with triple 1 3/4 by 11 7/8 LVLs and cut deflection in half, but only after increasing bearing and upgrading connections.

- Splicing with scarf or butt joints. If the damage is localized near mid-span and you can relieve the load, a properly designed splice can work. A true scarf joint spreads stress, but it must be long and tightly executed,

which is rare in tight crawlspaces. Steel side plates or plywood gussets with a tested fastener pattern can make a shorter butt splice effective. I use this sparingly and with an engineer’s blessing.

- Epoxy consolidation and dutchman repairs. For sill plates or beams where the majority of the member is sound and the damage is superficial or at bearing notches, structural epoxy consolidants and fillers can stabilize fibers. A dutchman patch, a carefully fit piece of solid wood locked into the repair zone, can replace lost wood. These are not cures for deep rot, but they can save original material when the load is small and the budget is tight.

Don’t neglect the supports

A strong beam sitting on a chewed sill plate is a bicycle on a flat tire. Termite sill plate repair often comes hand in hand with beams. If the sill is compromised, you may need to lift gently, cut back to sound wood, and stitch in a pressure-treated replacement. Anchor bolts or straps get replaced to meet current code. On older homes, I often find shallow, spaced anchors. Modern practice may call for 5/8 inch bolts at 6 feet on center, plus plate washers, or approved hold-downs near ends.

Posts also take a beating in damp crawlspaces. If termites have eaten the post base or moisture has wicked up, replace with treated posts on proper post bases, leaving an air gap from concrete to wood. Where possible, isolate interior posts on new pad footings sized for the load, usually 16 by 16 by 8 inches thick or as engineered.

Joists, subfloors, and the ripple effect

When a beam sags, joists follow. Termite floor joist repair usually ranges from sistering a few members to replacing runs where pipes leaked for years. Sistering works best if you can carry the new joist from bearing to bearing. If utilities block the path, you can use shorter sisters, but overlap them generously. For termite subfloor repair, cut back to the center of the joist bays so new panels land on solid framing. Use tongue and groove plywood or OSB of equal or greater thickness, glue the joists, and screw the field, not just the edges. In kitchens and bathrooms, I prefer plywood over OSB where moisture remains a concern.

Up above, termite attic wood repair can be stealthier. Rafters and ceiling joists that look gray and dusty may be hollowed out. Reinforce rafters with matching sisters, install proper rafter ties if missing, and verify ventilation to keep humidity down. Attic repairs can spare the finishes below if you act early.

Wall and drywall touchbacks

Termite wall repair depends on whether the studs or just the finishes were affected. If studs show damage, remove drywall to at least a stud bay past the last compromised member. Replace or sister studs, then reinstall drywall. After termite treatment, drywall repair is not just about patches. You want to monitor for recurring moisture. I advise clients to keep a cheap pin moisture meter for six months and check problem areas monthly. Readings that climb above 16 percent deserve investigation.

Moisture management that actually works

Termites chase moisture. If you correct only the structure and ignore the conditions, you have set the stage for a repeat. In crawlspaces, grade the soil to run water away from footings, extend downspouts, and install a continuous vapor barrier. A 6 mil layer helps, but 10 to 15 mil reinforced poly with taped seams and sealed piers is worlds better. In basements, fix gutter terminations and slope. Inside, correct plumbing sweats with insulation and address condensate lines from HVAC that drip.

Ventilation has its place, but air that is more humid than the space can add moisture. In muggy climates, a sealed crawlspace with dehumidification is often the better solution. I aim for 45 to 55 percent relative humidity as a working range.

A compact sequence for typical termite beam repair

Here is how a straightforward beam reinforcement job usually unfolds when we are not replacing the beam entirely.

- Verify and document termite treatment, then map out damage and loads with measurements and photos.
- Install shoring and gently jack to level over days, monitoring adjacent finishes.
- Open access, remove compromised wood and debris, and address sill plate or post issues first.
- Install the chosen reinforcement or replacement with proper bearing and a fastener pattern stamped or calculated.
- Reconnect joists with hangers or blocking, seal penetrations, control moisture, and schedule a follow-up inspection.

On larger projects, a structural engineer’s letter or stamped drawings will be part of the permit package. Building inspectors appreciate clear labeling, tidy fastener layouts, and product data sheets kept on site.

Real numbers and reasonable expectations

Costs vary widely by region and access. A basic sistering job on a short beam in an open basement might run 1,500 to 3,000 dollars. Full beam replacement with LVLs, new posts, and upgraded connections in a tight crawlspace can fall between 6,000 and 15,000 dollars, sometimes more if footings are added or finishes must be removed and replaced. Termite floor joist repair in a bathroom with subfloor replacement often lands around 3,000 to 7,000 dollars depending on plumbing complexity and tile work. Termite sill plate repair runs from a few hundred for a short patch to several thousand if long runs and anchor upgrades are involved.

Lead times matter. Engineered beams might take a week to arrive. Pest treatment should precede invasive work, and some fumigation schedules require you out of the house for a couple of nights. Build in contingency. Once we open up cavities, we often find more damage or plumbing and wiring that need adjustment.

DIY or hire pros

There is honest sweat equity in demolition, cleanup, and non-structural finish work. Pulling carpet, removing baseboards, or handling termite drywall repair after termite treatment can save money and time. But if you are touching load-bearing members, get an experienced carpenter or a general contractor who has real structural termite repair under their belt. The judgment calls are subtle. I have seen homeowner sistering fail because the sister did not bear at both ends, turning it into a decorative board instead of a structural one.

If you are searching for help, terms like termite repair near me, termite damage repair near me, or structural termite repair near me will surface local options. Still, vet for specifics. Ask for photos of past termite framing repair, details on how they shore and **termite inspection in Watsonville** jack, and who handles permits. A wood repair contractor termite damage near me listing means little if the crew has only done cosmetic fixes.

Permits, inspections, and documentation

Every jurisdiction has its flavor of rules, but replacing beams, posts, or long runs of sill plate typically triggers a permit. Expect at least a framing inspection and sometimes a final close-out if finishes are part of the scope. Keep a folder with pest reports, product data for fasteners and adhesives, beam spec sheets, and any engineering notes. If you sell the house, this packet pays for itself in buyer confidence.

Insurance is hit or miss for termite damage. Many policies exclude pests. Some cover resulting damage if a covered peril contributed, like a sudden pipe break. Document conditions with dates and keep your correspondence with the pest company organized. If you were hunting for local termite damage repair or a termite damage contractor near me through your insurer’s network, confirm whether that affects coverage.

Edge cases and judgment calls

Not every chewed member needs full replacement. A beam with an inch of damage along the bottom edge near mid-span loses more capacity than the same inch near the neutral axis, but if the span is short and loads are light, conservative reinforcement can suffice. Conversely, a beam that looks passable yet crushes under a thumbnail belongs on the scrap pile.

Historic beams with irregular dimensions complicate modern reinforcement. I have scarfed in old growth doug fir and hidden flitch plates inside boxed beams to preserve sight lines. That is slow, fussy work, but it keeps the character where it counts.

Plumbing and mechanical runs love to occupy the exact spot you need for a full-length sister. In those cases, plan around them. Offset sisters on both sides, each bypassing different obstructions, can spread loads if you maintain good overlap and a sound fastener schedule.

After the dust settles

Once the structure is sound, restore finishes with an eye on movement. Use setting type joint compound on patched drywall, which resists cracking better than premixed mud. Where floors were stiffened, you may see hairlines appear elsewhere as the house resettles. That is normal if small and stable. Keep an eye on alignment. I recommend a simple ritual for the first year: hang a small level in the closet near the repair and mark a baseline on the wall with pencil. Check it each season. If the bubble wanders, call your contractor.

Keep the environment boring for termites. Maintain that vapor barrier, watch your gutters, and fix leaks promptly. If your pest company offers annual inspections, take them up on it. Fresh mud tubes or frass are early warnings you do not want to miss.



Bringing it all together

Termite beam repair is part detective work, part engineering, and part craftsmanship. The end result should feel quiet underfoot and invisible to guests. The best compliment I get after a major termite damage restoration is a shrug from the homeowner when I ask how the floors feel now. If the answer is that they do not feel anything, that is perfect. The loads are going where they should, the wood is protected, and the building can get back to being a home.

If you are facing repairs across multiple areas, from termite subfloor repair to a sagging sill, approach it holistically. Shift the load safely, fix the structure, correct the moisture, then restore the finish. Whether you find a seasoned crew through local termite damage repair directories or from a neighbor’s recommendation, look for people who talk about loads and connections as comfortably as they do about saws and screws. That is how you know the house will be standing straight long after the last nail is set.