



**WE'RE LICENSED TO KILL - WHAT'S BUGGING YOU?**

# **BED BUG BASICS**

## **INFORMATION SHEET**

Bed bugs hitchhike on people's belongings and hide in crevices near where people rest. To prevent an infestation of bed bugs, you need to focus on prevention and early detection. Pest control methods have improved, but we are still working on the best solutions for bed bug management. Basically, no silver bullet exists, but we can provide tips on best practices to maintain a healthy environment.

- Rely on the pest management professional (PMP) for all pesticide use.
- Educate residents and staff about how to prevent bed bugs from hitchhiking on their belongings.
- Make sure procedures are in place for prompt and proper furniture removal from the property.
- Offer free products and services to incentivize cooperation.
- Teach residents and staff to inspect often. If a unit is being treated for bed bugs, have a staff person check on the preparation progress before the PMP arrives.
- Install mattress and box-spring encasements and bed bug interceptors.

### ***What do they look like?***

Adults look like apple seeds with legs.  
Young bed bugs -nymphs- look like adults, only smaller. Newly hatched nymphs are poppy seed-sized. Eggs are tiny, white, and hard to spot.

### ***Where do they live?***

In cracks and crevices of bed frames, floors, walls, furniture, electronics, mattresses - any spot they can wedge themselves near where people rest.

### ***What do they do?***

Feed on you as you sleep, but if you're not around they can go over a year without food. Bites can appear as a rash or welts - or you may not notice them at all. Bed bugs don't transmit disease.

## **HOW TO DEAL WITH BED BUGS**

***Don't bring home hitchhikers*** - Working in an infested unit? Remember, bed bugs can't jump or fly and they spend a lot of time hiding. You're likely to see them before they crawl on you. Don't sit or set your equipment down near where people rest. If you have to move an infested object, wear a disposable suit and booties. Keep a change of clothes in your car, change at work, and dry your bed bug clothes for 20 minutes on high heat as soon as you get home.

***Buying used furniture, bedding, clothes?*** - Inspect thoroughly. Look for evidence of bed bugs or the spots they leave behind. Wash and dry bedding and clothes with hot water and high heat. There are other heat options like steam too.

***Detect before the infestation grows and spreads*** - Keep bedroom furniture an inch or two from the wall and a flashlight handy for easier cleaning and inspecting. Bed bug-proof mattress covers, light-colored bedding, and insect interceptors make them easier to spot. Offer professional services and bed bug products for free to incentivize cooperation.

***Pesticide options*** - Leave it to the professionals. Some sprays simply repel bed bugs, spreading them around. Make sure Pesticides are labeled specifically for bed bugs. Always read and follow the instructions on the label. The pros may ask the resident to prepare for bed bugs service. The preparation requirements should be least disruptive to the bed bugs and customized to each infestation - bed bug prep is not always time consuming.

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