

- All clothing that cannot be washed at home should be sent to the dry cleaner. Be sure to alert the dry cleaner about the risk of bed bugs.
- Remove everything from the bedroom closets, hall closets, and any other areas that may be infested so that the pest control operator can adequately treat these areas.
- Remove all clothing, toys, paper, etc. from the floors. Reducing clutter decreases hiding places for bed bugs.
- Remove all containers, shoes, clothing, etc. from under the bed.
- Empty all dresser drawers and night stand drawers of all clothing, papers, etc. and place those items in a sealed plastic bag or container.
- Move all furniture at least two (2) feet away from the walls.
- Vacuum carpet/sweep floor thoroughly. Dispose of the vacuum bag quickly by placing it in an exterior trash can or dumpster and wash vacuum container if it is a bag-less vacuum.
- Make arrangements for pets, elderly residents, and persons with respiratory problems to vacate the premises during treatment, and for an extended time thereafter. Pesticide exposure can have adverse health effects.
- Do not be alarmed if you still see pest activity or increased pest activity within the first seven to ten days after treatment. Many pesticides have a delayed effect and cause pests to vacate harborage prior to death.

How do you prevent infestations?

- Do not take home discarded mattresses, furniture, or beds.
- Carefully inspect used and reconditioned items for bed bugs along all seams, cracks, and crevices.

- Take precautions when traveling. Check the bed and headboard for bed bugs, inspect luggage before returning home, and wash clothing immediately upon return.
- Seal or caulk all cracks and crevices near beds, i.e. moldings, baseboards, heating and air conditioning units.
- Repair peeling wallpaper and paint.
- Repair holes in walls, including around pipes and conduits connecting apartments.
- Destroy or mark infested items so that they cannot be reused once discarded.

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The Pennsylvania IPM Program is a collaboration between the Pennsylvania State University and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture aimed at promoting integrated pest management in both agricultural and urban situations. For more information, contact the program at (814) 865-2839, or Web site <http://paipm.cas.psu.edu>.

Apartment Residents' Guide to Identifying and Managing Bed Bugs



Identifying and Managing Bed Bugs

Bed bugs can be a real problem in multiple family apartments, but if you understand them, their habits and how to control them, they can be defeated. You are not alone. Anyone can have bed bugs. They do not discriminate between rich or poor, young or old. Bed bugs can be controlled, but control requires professional assistance and the cooperation of all involved.

What do they look like?

Bed bugs range from brown to reddish-brown in color, are oval shaped, flattened and paper thin when unfed. Adults can be 3/8 inch long, and immature bed bugs can be as small as 1/16 inch. Young bed bugs are nearly colorless except after feeding when they are bright red. All bed bugs require blood for growth and development.

How do they live?

Bed bugs are active at night and hide during the day. Females lay white, oval shaped eggs (1/16 inch) into cracks and crevices of their hiding places, called harborages. Usually an adult bed bug can lay 5-7 eggs per week and 200-250 eggs in a lifetime. Eggs hatch within 6-10 days. Immature bed bugs molt five times before becoming an adult and a blood meal is required prior to each molt, although some may choose to feed daily. Immature bed bugs can live several months without a blood meal; adults may survive as long as one year without a meal.

Who gets bed bugs?

ANYONE can get bed bugs. Bed bug infestations are not limited to any race, creed, or socioeconomic group. Bed bugs are excellent hitchhikers. Infestations are thought to be on the rise due to increases international travel, urbanization, and changes in pest management practices.

How do you know if you have bed bugs?

Bed bugs tend to cluster together in harborages where you will always find the following four signs of bed bug infestations: eggs, bed bugs, caste skins, and fecal spots. Most infestations begin around areas where humans spend the most time, like beds, sofas, and chairs. Bed bugs may also excrete blood waste immediately after feeding, which may result in red colored blood smears on pillowcases and bedding. Be mindful of unexplained bites that appear in the morning.

What do you do if you have an Infestation?

If you are renting you should alert your landlord immediately. The worst thing you can do is to ignore the problem because it will get worse over time. If you own, the best course of action to call a licensed pest control professional. Pest control professionals are trained to treat pest problems with the needs of

all residents in mind. Mechanical barriers like mattress encasements can be used to prevent bed bugs present in the mattress and box spring from re-infesting the area. Other practices include sealing all holes and cracks where bed bugs may be hiding and reducing clutter so that pest control professionals can treat the home effectively.

How do you prepare for a treatment?

Bed bug control requires the participation of management, residents, and the pest control professional to be a success. There are several measures that residents should take to prepare for bed bug treatments to make treatment safe and effective. Neglecting to complete all of these tasks prior to treatment may decrease success.

- Remove all bedding from the bed (including sheets, mattress covers, pillowcases, blankets, and pillows) and place them in a plastic bag. All linens should be thoroughly laundered in hot water. Linens should be dried for no less than 30 minutes on the highest setting. After washing, place linens in a NEW plastic bag and seal with tape/ties or place in plastic bins. Do not place them back on the bed until treatment is complete.
- Launder all other washable clothing, towels, and linens. Place them in plastic bags or plastic bins and put them in an uninfested area or area designated as safe by the pest control company.