Don’t Panic!

Helping Social Service Providers Cope with Bed Bugs

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Today’s Agenda

1. Bed Bug Basics
2. Why Are Bed Bugs a Problem?
3. Bed Bug Control
4. Guidelines for Home Visitors
5. Bed Bug Resources
Brief History of Bed Bugs

- Bed bugs were mentioned in writings of ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans several thousand years ago.
- Spread to central Europe by 11th century; most likely came to the United States with the first immigrants.
- Numbers exploded by late 18th century (Industrial Revolution).
- Fact of life by early 1900’s through WWII.
- Then they ‘went away,’ and were not a problem for most of the rest of the 20th century.
- A result of mass applications of DDT.
Since the early 2000’s, bed bugs have been a re-emerging issue in the United States.

- Increased mobility of human populations
- Lack of public education
- Insecticide resistance/changes in insecticide use
Identification
Why is Identification important?

• Bed Bugs often confused with many other things

• **Insects and spiders**
  - Beetles, spiders, web-caught insects, fleas, mites, springtails, other bugs (garden insects), grasshoppers, bat bugs/swallow bugs etc., etc.

• **Other objects**
  - Scabs, skin flakes, dried nasal mucus (nose nuggets), flaked paint, fluff, “dust bunnies”

• **“Mysterious” bites**
  - Hives, rashes, fifth disease, allergies, other insect bites, aggressive self grooming
Why is Identification important?

- Controlling a bed bug infestation is difficult and expensive

- You don’t want to treat for bed bugs if it is a different pest
- Unnecessary treatment leads to extra cost and exposure to insecticides
Bed Bugs are:

- A blood feeding insect
- Reddish brown in color
- About ¼ to 3/8 inch long
- Frequently compared to an apple seed in size and shape
Bed bugs go through seven life stages from egg to adult, changing shape and size as they grow and feed.
A bed bug infestation cannot be diagnosed by the bites alone.

Bites generally occur on exposed skin but there is no definitive pattern.

Other insect bites, rashes, or skin conditions are often mistaken for bed-bug bites.

Your reaction to bed-bug bites is affected by:
- previous bites
- size of infestation (i.e., number of bites)
- Individual immune system response
- use of some cold medicines

~25 % of people do not react to bed bug bites
Bed Bugs are Nest Parasites

- Hide close to a resting person
- Feed when person is present (and asleep/preoccupied)
- Feed undetected (as much as possible)
- Return to hiding (develop/mate/lay eggs)
- Rate of movement is relatively fast
Common Bed Bug Hiding places

- All cracks and crevices within 8 feet of a resting place
- Mattresses, box springs, bed frames.
Common Bed Bug Hiding places:

• Curtains
• Between the wall and baseboard
• Cracks in hardwood floors
• Under carpet along walls
• Behind wall plates
Common Bed Bug Hiding places

- Nearby Furniture
- Dressers
- Book shelves
- Nightstands
- Side tables
Why Are Bed Bugs a Problem?

- Cost of treatment
- Health Issues
- Risk of bringing them into your home
Cost of treatment

- Bed Bug Treatments are expensive
  - Professional Services
  - Costs born by residents
Health Issues

• Bed Bugs Do NOT Vector any infectious diseases

• Mental health

• Secondary infections

• Health effects of bed bug treatments
Bringing Bed Bugs Into Your Home or Office
Bed Bug Control
Insecticides

- Only products that show an EPA registration number on the label should be used
- Thorough applications are critical
  - Three “formulations” should be used
    - A residual insecticide
    - A short-acting, contact insecticide
    - A dust insecticide
Insecticides

- Do NOT use over-the-counter insecticides
Heat Treatments
Additional Considerations

- 2-3 visits by a Pest Management Professional (PMP)
- Proper preparation is essential
  - Discarding furniture may not be necessary
- Do NOT use over-the-counter insecticides
  - Not effective against bed bugs
  - Could cause damage or illness
DIY Bed Bug Control

- Don’t Use Over-the-Counter Insecticides
- Report the infestation
- Use mechanical methods for controlling bed bugs
  - Laundering
  - Vacuuming
  - Freezing
  - Steaming
  - “nit pick”
- Install encasements
Laundering

• Place items in dryer on high-heat for at least 30 minutes
  • Linens
  • Clothing
  • Pillows
  • Plush toys
  • Etc.

• After drying
  • Place all laundered items into plastic bags, unless the infestation has been controlled already.
Vacuuming

- Can reduce numbers of bed bugs
- Utilize crevice tool
Vacuuming

• Concentrate on areas bed bugs are likely to hide:
  • Crevices
  • Baseboards
  • Electronic items
  • Furniture near bed
  • Mattresses and box springs

• After vacuuming
  • Be sure to empty vacuum bag/canister into a plastic bag for disposal. Check vacuum itself for bed bugs (wheels, hose, etc.)
Freezing

- Requires precise temperatures long periods of time
  - Use a remote thermometer to monitor temperature

- Place freezable items into freezer:
  - At or lower than $0^\circ F$
  - For at least 4 days
Freezing

Items that can be frozen:
• Cloth items that you cannot (or do not want to) wash or launder
• Modern books
• Shoes
• Jewelry
• Pictures
• Toys
• Electronics without an LCD screen

Items that should not be frozen:
• Electronics with LCD screens.
• Items of considerable value
• Items that may be damaged if condensation occurs
• Items that contain high moisture or liquids inside
Freezing

“It’s winter, and it’s cold; can I simply put my stuff outside, or open the windows in my home to kill bed bugs?”
Steaming

- Use a **commercial** steamer
  - Not a carpet cleaner

- Use a triangular or floor nozzle, not a pinpoint nozzle

- Surfaces must reach a temperature between 160°F - 180°F
  - Use a non-contact thermometer to monitor

- **Precautions**
  - Always follow the manual directions
  - Use caution: steam can cause severe burns
Killing Bed Bugs by Hand

• Capture & Squash
  • Gloves, washcloth, paper towel, or sticky tape

• Tools:
  • Flashlight
  • Credit card/thin plastic card
  • Clear sticky tape
  • Plastic bag
  • Hot soapy water
Encasement

• Specially designed to trap bed bugs (must be labeled specifically for bed bugs)

• Simplifies the habitat: makes it harder for them to hide
If You Have Bed Bugs

- **Do NOT** use over-the-counter insecticides
- **Do NOT** use homemade or custom-formulated products
- **Do NOT** apply pesticides directly to your body
- **Do NOT** use rubbing alcohol, kerosene, or gasoline
- **Do NOT** place items outdoors to kill bed bugs
- **Do NOT** discard all of your furniture
Guidelines for Home Visitors

- Be aware of the potential, but don’t be paranoid

- Be educated

- Use a Bed-bug containment ‘kit’

- Keep car and home free of clutter

- Your dryer is your best friend!
Being Prepared

• Bring only items necessary for the visit into the home

• Keep a bed-bug kit in your car
  • Plastic bags
  • Flashlight
  • Wet wipes
  • Change of shoes/socks and/or protective booties
  • Clear tape
  • Educational materials
During the Visit

- Do not place your possessions on upholstered furniture or bedding
- Use a separate pair of shoes, and store in a sealed plastic bag when not in use
- Do not sit on cloth-covered furniture or bedding
After the Visit

- Perform self-inspection at end of visit
- Plastic bags or plastic boxes to contain potentially infested items.
- Do not redistribute items from one client to another
  - Bed bugs are hitchhikers!
- Put clothing in dryer to kill bed bugs
Resources
Bed Bug Information Line

612-624-2200 or 1-855-644-2200
bedbugs@umn.edu

• A resource for individuals who have questions about bed bug prevention and control.
  • Common questions include:
    • How do I know if I have bed bugs? / Is this a bed bug?
    • How to get rid of bed bugs?
    • Tenant rights?
    • Does ‘X’ product work?
    • Where can I get help getting rid of bed bugs?
www.bedbugs.umn.edu

Let's Beat the Bed Bug!

Seminar Videos
Were you unable to attend the Bed Bug Information Days hosted by Let's Beat the Bug in early 2012? Well here is your chance to watch the seminars at your own convenience. Watch the entire thing, or choose only one session. It ... read more

Bed Bug Video
This video has been produced by the Let's Beat the Bug! Campaign to help you understand more about bed bug behavior. Why you might have bed bugs in your home and how to control them. This Video will ... read more

Search this site
Search this website...

Contact Us
For more information contact the bed bug information line:
612-642-2200 or 1-855-644-2200
bedbugs@umn.edu

Bed Bugs (Cimex lectularius) have recently reappeared in North American society and are
Task Sheets

- 23 task sheets designed to be easily accessed by the general public
- Available in Arabic, English, Hmong, Somali and Spanish
- All available via bedbugs.umn.edu in easily printable PDFs
Multi-Media Content

Let's Beat the Bed Bug!

Homeowners and Tenants

Video: Controlling Bed Bugs at Home

Bed Bug Prevention and Control Video

Watch this video to learn about how to prevent and control bed bugs in your home.

This Video will help you:

- Understand what bed bugs are and why they are a problem
- Take the necessary steps if you think you may have bed bugs
- Prevent these insects from getting into your home, and
- Understand how to safely control an infestation.

We hope you find this video helpful. If you have any additional questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact the Bed Bug Information Line at bedbugs@umn.edu, 612-624-2200 or 1-866-644-2200

Bed Bug Prevention and Control is available in:
Bed Bug ID Card

- A business card with bed bug identification/information
- Designed to be carried with you, to provide easy access to information on bed bugs where and when you need it.

Let’s Beat the Bug!

www.bedbugs.umn.edu

- Bed bugs are small insects, about the size of an apple seed. Adult bed bugs are flat, oval and reddish-brown in color. Bed bug eggs are tiny and very hard to see.
- Bed bugs feed on human blood, and are mostly active at night when people are sleeping.
- Some people have no reaction to bed bug bites; while others may get a small bump or large welt.

Signs of Bed Bug Infestations

Think you have bed bugs?
visit www.bedbugs.umn.edu
or call 612-624-2200
for more information

- Signs that bed bugs are present:
  - bugs, fecal spots, eggs and shed skins.
- If you think you have bed bugs check for these signs in the following places:
  - Where you sit or sleep such as; mattresses, box springs, bed frames, bedding and furniture.
  - In cracks and crevices of floor boards, base boards, windows, door frames and electrical outlets.
Social Media
Where Can I get More Information?

www.bedbugs.umn.edu
bedbugs@umn.edu

MN Bed Bug InformationLine:
1-855-644-2200
612-624-2200

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