
BED BUGS

Information for Landlords

What are bed bugs?

Bed bugs are insects. *Cimex lectularius* is the species commonly found in homes. Adult bed bugs have oval-shaped bodies with no wings. Prior to feeding, they are about 6 mm (¼") long and flat as paper. They turn dark red and become bloated after feeding. Eggs are whitish, pear-shaped and the size of a pinhead. Clusters of 10-50 eggs can be found in cracks and crevices. Eggs hatch in about 10 days. Bed bugs have a one-year life span during which a female can lay 200-400 eggs depending on food supply and temperature.

There is no evidence that bed bugs transmit disease-causing organisms. Most people are not aware they have been bitten. Bed bugs inject a fluid into their host to get their blood meal. This fluid makes some people sensitive to bites, causing irritation, itching and inflammation. Scratching the bitten areas may lead to infection.



What do bed bugs feed on?

Bed bugs prefer to feed on human blood, but will also bite pets, birds and rats. Bed bugs bite at night and will bite all over a human body, especially around the face, neck, upper torso, arms, and hands. Bed bugs can survive up to one year without feeding. Both male and female bed bugs bite. Fecal spots are often found where they rest. Cast skins will also be found especially where infestations are heavy.

How do bed bugs get into my home or apartment?

Bed bugs are often carried into a home on objects, such as furniture and clothing. Bed bugs can be found in the following areas:

- Seams, creases, tufts, and folds of mattresses and box springs
- Cracks in the bed frame and head board
- Under chairs, couches, beds, and dust covers
- Between cushions of couches and chairs and between curtain folds
- Under area rugs and the edges of carpets
- In drawers, telephones, radios, and clocks
- Behind baseboards and around window and door casings
- Behind electrical plates and under loose wallpaper, paintings and posters
- In cracks of plaster

Health & Environment Facts

What can I do if there are bed bugs in my rental property?

- If bed bugs are detected in one apartment within a multiple occupancy building then adjoining units should be inspected. All rooms that make contact with the infested room, both above and below, must be inspected and treated. It would be beneficial to inform **all** tenants of a potential bed bug infestation including what to look for and measures to prevent further spread. Units are to be treated in blocks in this general pattern:

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- Have a system in place to remove or destroy furniture that comes from a unit that has confirmed bed bugs. If that piece of furniture, for example a mattress, is brought back into the building by another tenant the bed bug infestation will only continue. Take apart, deface or damage the piece of furniture to ensure it cannot be reused. Mattresses should be slashed or otherwise damaged to make it unusable and wrapped. Wrap the object in plastic so bed bugs cannot escape-this should be done in the unit before it is removed.
- Consult a professional pest control company to apply insecticide. Be sure to advise tenants of any actions to take prior to entry of the pest control company.
- Inspection after treatment: ensure an inspection by pest control professional is carried out following treatment to assess the treatment's effectiveness and determine if further treatment is needed. Most pest control companies will perform two follow up visits once initial treatment is complete.

Role of Public Health

The Public Health Unit provides information on how to identify bed bugs, how to prevent bringing bed bugs into the home and methods to control a bed bug infestation. The Public Health Unit does not visit a home to identify or confirm a bed bug infestation. Public Health can help identify several of the most common pests. You can bring a sample of a dead pest to one of our offices to be identified.

Preparing your sample:

- Collect a sample of the pest (adults are the easiest to identify).
- Do not squish the bug or put it on tape as identification will be more difficult, if not impossible.
- Put pest(s) in a watertight container (film canister, baby food jar, etc.).
- Please do not bring in live pests. The pest can be stored in the freezer or 70% rubbing alcohol which will kill and preserve it.

Where to bring your sample:

Owen Sound office: 101 17th Street East, 519-376-9420, 1-800-263-3456

Walkerton office: 30 Park Street, 519-881-1920, 1-800-263-3456