

## **BEST PRACTICES FOR BED BUG PREVENTION, DETECTION AND TREATMENT**

The common bed bug (*Cimex lectularius*) has long been a pest - feeding on blood, causing itchy bites and generally irritating their human hosts. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) all consider bed bugs a public health pest. However, unlike most public health pests, bed bugs are not known to transmit or spread disease.

They can, however, cause other public health issues, so it is important to pay close attention to preventing and controlling bed bugs.

### **PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM BED BUGS IN PUBLIC PLACES**

Bed bugs may appear periodically in offices or commercial spaces. There are precautions that you can take to be prepared.

- Reduce clutter. Clutter serves as an ideal habitat for bed bugs. By reducing clutter you provide fewer places for bed bugs to hide and fewer opportunities for them to hitchhike to your home.
- Keep your belongings stowed separately from those of other people.
- Be vigilant in areas where bed bugs are most likely to be found, break rooms, storage areas, offices and lounges with upholstered furniture, or any rest areas.
- Establish a monitoring program so if a bed bug is found in an area the status of that area can be formally tracked.
- Multiple sightings in the same area could indicate an infestation or reintroduction from someone's home.
- Educate employees so they know what to do if a bed bug is found.
- Discourage panic and the stigma associated with bed bugs.
- Vacuum daily to pick up any stray bugs before they settle in.

### **REPORTING A POSSIBLE BED BUG PRESENCE AT THE OFFICE**

- Encourage staff to contact their supervisor immediately if they think they have seen a bed bug. Consult the guide, ***Preventing and Getting Rid of Bed Bugs Safely*** to help with identification.  
<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/vector/bed-bug-guide.pdf>
- Supervisors should immediately contact the person or department responsible for facility maintenance and the Work-Safe Office to take action to prevent an infestation.

## **CONFIRMING THE PRESENCE OF BED BUGS**

- It is important to make sure the insect that has been seen really is a bed bug.
- Capture one of the suspected bugs to show to a pest management professional for identification.

## **DEALING WITH REPORTS OF POSSIBLE BED BUGS**

- Any reports by employees should be taken seriously and dealt with immediately.
- If any employee is suspected as being a source for bed bugs entering the facility, the employee's supervisor should deal with it confidentially.
- Discourage gossip about the possible source of bed bugs,
- Assure all employees the problem is being taken very seriously and that a pest management professional will be hired to deal with the problem. Give a time frame , if possible.

### **IF BED BUGS ARE CONFIRMED**

- Explain to employees exactly what is being done to stop an infestation, give specific dates of any inspections or treatments by pest management professionals.
- If a pesticide(s) is used, distribute copies of the label of the product and its SDS (Safety Data Sheet) to staff at their request.
- If a pesticide application is required, ensure the pest management professional chooses the least toxic but effective pesticides, and applies them in a targeted way when employees aren't present. Ask if anyone has a known sensitivity to any of the products being used and, if they do, refer them to their supervisor and the Work-Safe Office.

### **IF BED BUGS ARE NOT CONFIRMED**

- Encourage employees to remain vigilant in the future and report any other suspected infestations.
- Follow up with routine inspections of the office, preferably by a pest management professional.

***FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BED BUG PREVENTION, DETECTION AND TREATMENT PLEASE VISIT THE FOLLOWING WEB SITES:***

TACKLING BED BUGS : A STARTER GUIDE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

<http://npic.orst.edu/pest/bedbug/tacklingbbstarterguide.pdf>

PREVENTING AND GETTING RID OF BED BUGS SAFELY

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/vector/bed-bug-guide.pdf>

NYC HEALTH / BED BUGS / INFORMATION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

<http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/bedbugs-information-for-general-public.page>

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR BED BUGS

[http://bedbugbmps.org/PDF/BMP-bedbug\\_BedBugBMPsURL.pdf](http://bedbugbmps.org/PDF/BMP-bedbug_BedBugBMPsURL.pdf)