



Bed Bugs

INFORMATION & RESOURCES ON HOW TO AVOID BITES FROM BED BUGS

Bed Bugs are not just found in hotels. They can hitchhike on any item and infest homes, dorms, cars and even workplaces. They can even move through plumbing, HVAC systems and electrical lines. Bed bugs were common until the use of Pesticides like DDT almost eliminated them. However, these pesticides were found to be potential carcinogens (cancer causing) and use became illegal. Bed bugs are now re-emerging due to an increase in global travel, bed bug resistance to pesticides and changes in pest management practices.

Bed Bugs feed on blood, but they do not carry disease. They prefer to hide in dark crevices and come out to feed at night when humans are sleeping. They do not live on humans or clothes. They can cause itchy welts and infections can occur due to frequent scratching. Dots of blood on sheets, mattresses or chairs are a good indication that bed bugs are present.

Pesticides alone cannot eliminate bed bugs. Their resistance is too strong for these substances that are less toxic than they used to be. Pesticides that are strong enough are too dangerous for humans and animals.

WHAT DOESN'T WORK TO REMOVE BED BUGS

- Bed legs in kerosene or gasoline;
- Thyme oil;
- Abandoning the home for a period of time;
- Turning up the heat;
- Sleeping with lights on;
- Sleeping in a different room;
- Buying a new mattress;
- Wrapping items in plastic and placing in the sun;
- Pesticides, alone, often do not work.

WHAT DOES WORK TO REMOVE BED BUGS

- Encasing mattresses and box springs in bed bug covers.
- Steam cleaning.
- Putting items in a dryer for 1 hour on HOT.
- Use plastic bags when transporting infested items to stop the spread of bed bugs.
- Seal any cracks or crevices where they could live.
- Frequently clean bed linens and vacuum around your mattress.
- Calling a Pest Management Professional.



PREVENTION & PEST CONTROL

Protections for Workers Who Travel or Make Home/Field Visits

- Learn how to identify bed bugs. In hotels, inspect mattresses, bed corners, drawers and any other dark crevices bed bugs may hide.
- When visiting, bring in only what you need and avoid placing bags close to walls and furniture (if this is unavoidable, place belongings in a closed white plastic kitchen bag and examine it for any bed bugs before leaving).
- If possible, stand rather than sit, or avoid sitting on furniture with fabric – wood or metal chairs are better.
- Inspect shoes, clothing, and belongings after leaving.
- If you find any bed bugs kill them immediately.
- If found, bag clothing and items to contain them.
- Put work clothes in the dryer for at least 30 minutes on high heat when you get home. Always wash and dry clothes after any trip.
- Document where you have been with dates and addresses to prove workplace exposure. Remember the workplace is anywhere any employee performs work. Always report exposures.

COMBATING BED BUGS AT WORK

- Catch and kill them immediately with packing tape or paper towels.
- Report any bed bugs sightings.
- Provide training.
- Don't make assumptions about who carried them in. It is impossible to prove once an infestation has occurred.
- Request a labor-management meeting. Set deadlines for corrective action.
- Agencies and staff should develop clear guidelines for risk reduction, prevention, reporting, response, communication, and treatment plans.
- Remind uncooperative management that they can be cited by PESH/OSHA under the Vermin Control standard. (1910.141)
- Request copies of safety data sheets for all pesticides or chemicals to be used.
- File PESH complaint as a last resort.

For more information and resources visit:

www.cseany.org/safety



Follow the CSEA Safety Net on:

CSEA has been winning the fight for safe and healthy working conditions for over 100 years, yet there is more to be done. Hazards old and new- from Asbestos to Zika- remain a threat to workers every day. CSEA will not back down from the fight and nothing is more important than saving lives and keeping workers free from injury. Your help is needed now more than ever.

The life you save could be YOUR OWN.

