



BED BUGS

FACT: Bed bug infestations have made a worldwide comeback and are on the rise in Erie County.

FACT: The most significant cause of their decline after World War II was the widespread use of DDT (a synthetic insecticide, highly toxic toward a wide variety of insects ...banned by the FDA in the 1970's)

FACT: Bed bugs feed exclusively on blood, preferably human and their bites are a nuisance, they are not known to transmit any diseases to humans.

FACT: Although bed bugs are not disease carriers their bites can leave bumps or swollen welts if the victim is sensitive or allergic to the saliva injected while the insects feed.

FACT: Heavy infestations of bed bugs have been shown to cause anemia in children and the elderly.

FACT: Bed bug infestations can be prevented and controlled.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE BED BUGS

- A newly hatched bed bug or nymph is semi-transparent, light tan in color, and the size of a poppy seed. Adult bed bugs are flat, are rusty red in color, have oval bodies, and are about the size of an apple seed.
- They leave behind blood stains, droppings and eggs that are found in places like: mattress seams & tufts, sheets, upholstered furniture, crevices & cracks in furniture and wall baseboards.
- By the bumps or large, itchy welts that they can leave on your body.
- Be sure that all of the above are present before assuming you have bed bugs...know your pest. If you are not sure that your insect infestation is bed bugs have a professional identify them.

BED BUG INFESTATION PREVENTION

Bed bugs enter the home in a variety of ways. They latch onto used furniture, luggage, clothing or travel along pipes and wires that connect apartments and rooms.

- Never bring upholstered furniture found on the street into your home. If you have to discard infested items, properly label them as being infested to prevent others from bringing those items into their homes.
- Thoroughly inspect all used or rented furniture for bed bugs prior to bringing them home.
- When traveling, inspect the bed, furniture & picture frames. Keep luggage off of the floor and bed and inspect them before you leave.
- If you think that you've been around bed bugs, immediately wash your clothing in hot water and dry clothes in dryer on the highest setting for at least 20 minutes.
- Seal cracks and crevices with caulk, even if you don't have bed bugs. This will help prevent bed bugs and other pests from coming in.

BED BUG CONTROL

After identifying your pest as bed bugs, control of bed bugs is best achieved by following an integrated pest management (IPM) approach that involves multiple tactics such as preventive measures, sanitation and chemicals applied to targeted sites. Severe infestations usually are best handled by a licensed pest management professional.

- Vacuum infested areas daily: furniture, bed frames, mattress, and box springs. Concentrate on seams, creases and folds. Immediately empty vacuum cleaner outside every time.
- Clean bed linens in a hot (140° F) dryer for 20 minutes. Bed bugs are sensitive to extreme temperatures in all of their life cycles. Both extreme heat and freezing can be used to remove bed bugs from clothing and other objects that can withstand that temperature.
- Make your bed an island. Move your bed away from the wall and make sure your bed linens do not touch the floor. Bed bugs don't jump or fly.
- Seal crevices with caulk around window sills or along baseboards. Use removable caulks appropriate for furniture. Repair or remove peeling wallpaper. Tighten down loose light switch covers. Seal around pipes or wires or utilities that travel from one living unit to another.
- Hire a good, well trained, licensed pest control professional that will:
 1. Inspect your property before giving you a quote and base quotes on findings.
 2. Give you a written inspection report and an action plan and notify you on how to prepare for a pending insecticide treatment and to prevent further infestation.
 3. Visit often until the job is done and the bed bugs are gone.

For additional bed bug documents visit our website @ www.erie.gov/health

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
RABIES, DISEASE, AND VECTOR CONTROL PROGRAM
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