



BED BUGS

What are BED BUGS?

Bed bugs, *Cimex lectularius*, are small wingless insects that are up to ¼ inch long. Bed bugs range in color from white, right after molting, to a reddish brown when they mature. Bed bugs feed on human and animal blood, particularly at night. Adult bed bugs live 6–12 months and may survive for long periods of time without feeding.

Do bed bugs transmit diseases?

Bed bugs are not known to transmit any diseases. The primary medical importance is inflammation associated with their bites.

Where are bed bugs found?

Bed bugs are found worldwide, especially in areas with unsanitary conditions or severely crowded areas, such as in dormitories, hotels and motels. Adult female bed bugs lay about five eggs daily in sheltered locations such as mattress seams, crevices in box springs and spaces under baseboards.

How can I tell if a residence is infested with bed bugs?

The primary sign of an infestation is residents complaining of bites during the night. Similar to mosquito bites, the bites look red, inflamed and itchy. The bites may become infected. Seek medical attention if infection occurs. Other signs are crawling insects and bloodstains or dark spots from droppings on the mattresses, box springs, walls, floor, bed frames, pillows, sheets and blankets.

How can a household eliminate bed bugs?

- Clean areas known or suspected of infestation.
- Vacuum cracks and move furniture away from walls to expose hiding spots for bedbugs.
- Wash sheets and inspect mattresses and pillows.
- Fill in any cracks in walls or in the frame of the bed.
- Reduce clutter in the home.
- Call a pest control professional. Do not apply any pesticides without professional help because pesticides can be hazardous to people and pets.
- If you live in a dwelling with shared walls (such as a duplex, apartment building, dormitory or hotel), alert neighbors, landlords, building managers, or the owners if you have problems with bed bugs. Bed bugs can spread to other households by crawling through the walls.
- When discarding infested furniture, label it as “infested with bed bugs” to prevent further spread.

For more information on bed bugs:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - <http://www.dpd.cdc.gov/dpdx/HTML/Bedbugs.htm>

IdentifyUS (former Harvard School of Public Health content) - <http://identify.us.com/idmybug/head-lice/index.html>

Delaware Pest Control Operators - <http://delawareontheweb.com/businesses/pest.htm>

24/7 Emergency Contact Number: 1-888-295-5156

Revised 6/2011