

### **CONTROL OF BED BUGS**

Students suspected of carrying bed bugs (*Cimex lectularius*) will be discretely removed from the classroom so that the school nurse or another qualified individual can perform an inspection of the student's clothing and belongings, including shoes, jackets, hats, books, backpacks, school supplies, etc.

After a positive identification, the school administration will directly contact the student's parent or guardian and provide the following information:

- A. Instruct the parent or guardian to send the student to school with a sealable plastic bag containing a clean, freshly laundered change of clothes. The clothes should be washed at the hottest recommended setting and tumble dried on high heat for at least 30 minutes before being placed in the bag.
- B. Request that the parent or guardian send only essential items to school with the student. These items should be inspected upon arrival at school. The school may offer to keep non-essential items overnight to help ensure the items are bed bug free.
- C. Suggest keeping school items sealed in a plastic bag at home and limit items going back and forth from home to school until the infestation is under control.

The Administration will also send to the parents or guardians of all students in the classroom of the student identified as carrying bed bugs a notification letter and a bed bug "Fact Sheet," which will provide steps parents or guardians should take to address a bed bug infestation in their place of residence.

To help minimize the potential transfer of bed bugs or their eggs from one student's belongings to another, students identified as carrying bed bugs will have their personal belongings (coat, backpack, lunch bag, etc.) separated from those of their classmates or placed in individual plastic containers labeled with the students' names.

A school nurse will be assigned to recheck students previously identified as carrying bed bugs on the morning the students return to school. If bed bugs are found, the Administration will contact the student's parents or guardians, as well as the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, or any other appropriate public agency, as deemed necessary by the school principal.

Because bed bugs are not known to transmit disease, students identified as potentially carrying bed bugs will not be excluded from school. However, all reasonable steps to safely remove bed bugs from such students and prevent the spread of future infestations may be taken. The Administration will discretely follow the guidelines provided in this policy with the affected student's dignity in mind.

Adopted: November 21, 2016

## School Letterhead

Date

Dear Parent or Guardian:

This letter has been sent to you in response to a bed bug being found in your child's classroom. Although it is often very difficult to identify the source of the bed bug and pinpoint how it was brought into the school, our staff is in the process of conducting a thorough inspection of the school and treating appropriately where necessary. We will continue to monitor the situation and consult with public health and pest control professionals to eliminate any bed bugs in the building and to minimize the potential for future bed bug activity in the school.

Although bed bugs are a nuisance, they have not been known to spread disease. Anyone who comes in direct contact with bed bugs or their eggs can unknowingly carry them into their home or workplace. They are easily spread by moving beds, furniture, luggage, or clothing from one location to another. For this reason, it is important that you inspect your child's backpack, lunch bag and other items regularly for the presence of bedbugs.

The Cuyahoga County Board of Health recommends that you routinely check your residence for signs of bed bug activity. Eliminating an extensive bed bug infestation can be a very challenging and costly process, so it is very important to begin treatments and prevention practices as soon as a problem is identified.

Bed bugs require blood to survive and reproduce, so they will typically look to bite any areas of exposed skin while you are asleep. The bites may not hurt at first, but may become swollen and itch a few days later, much like a mosquito bite. Most bed bug bites do not usually necessitate medical treatment. Wash the affected area with soap and water and then apply Calamine lotion to help dry out the bumps and stop the itching. If allergic reactions persist, an antibiotic cream or topical steroid, such as Hydrocortisone, will help take care of the infection. Please contact your physician with specific medical questions.

If you have any questions regarding bed bugs or our response efforts, please feel free to contact the Principal or School Nurse. Detailed information on bed bugs and appropriate control measures can be obtained on the Board of Health's web site ([www.ccbh.net](http://www.ccbh.net)). Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Principal or School Nurse



Public health officials and pest control operators in northeast Ohio and across the country are responding to a significant increase in bed bug complaints. Bed bugs were once found only on bedding in homes, apartments, and rooming houses. Now they are found in office buildings, retail stores, hospitals, dormitories, nursing homes, libraries, movie theaters, buses, or any other place where people gather. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have declared that the bed bug is now a “pest of significant public health importance”.



Bed bug eggs and cast skins



Fecal spots by outlet cover

**Identifying Bed Bugs**

- Bed bugs are small, flat, oval, reddish-brown, wingless insects that feed on the blood of humans and other mammals.
- Adult bed bugs are approximately ¼ inch long, about the size of an apple seed. Young bed bugs (nymphs) are quite small and when unfed they appear lighter and almost clear in color.
- Bed bugs do not fly or jump. However, they can crawl very fast.
- Female bed bugs can lay up to five eggs a day and five hundred during a lifetime.
- They are excellent hitchhikers and are easily spread by moving beds, furniture, luggage, clothes, or other possessions from one location to another.
- Anyone who comes in direct contact with bed bugs or their eggs can unknowingly carry them into their home or workplace.

**Bed Bug Bites**

- Bed bugs are primarily a nuisance to humans and are not known to transmit disease.
- Bites can cause welts which may become infected by excessive scratching.
- Bed bug infestations can cause anxiety as well as psychological and emotional stress.



Welts from bed bug bites

**Signs of a Bed Bug Infestation**

Usually the first sign of a bed bug infestation is the appearance of red itchy welts on any bare skin that is exposed while sleeping. Be aware that not every welt or bite is due to bed bugs. Consult a medical provider with questions about unexplained bites or red welts.

Live bed bugs, eggs and cast skins indicate a bed bug infestation. Small black or rusty colored spots found on bed linens, pillows, or the mattress may be blood spots and bed bug droppings.



Blood stains and fecal spots on a mattress

**Inspecting for Bed Bugs**

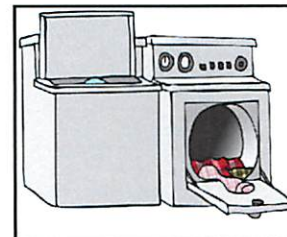
Bed bugs hide close to where people sleep. They prefer fabric, wood, and paper surfaces over metal or plastic. Look for live bed bugs, eggs, cast skins, and blood or fecal spots in these locations:

- |  |  |  |   |  |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> mattresses            | <input type="checkbox"/> recliners             | <input type="checkbox"/> telephones      | <input type="checkbox"/> luggage              | <input type="checkbox"/> hollow furniture legs   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> box springs           | <input type="checkbox"/> baseboards            | <input type="checkbox"/> radios          | <input type="checkbox"/> futons               | <input type="checkbox"/> door frames & hinges    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> head boards           | <input type="checkbox"/> behind pictures       | <input type="checkbox"/> televisions     | <input type="checkbox"/> gym bags             | <input type="checkbox"/> wall / ceiling junction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bed frames            | <input type="checkbox"/> under loose wallpaper | <input type="checkbox"/> stacks of books | <input type="checkbox"/> draperies & curtains | <input type="checkbox"/> wheelchairs/walkers     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> upholstered furniture | <input type="checkbox"/> sleeper sofas         | <input type="checkbox"/> piles of papers | <input type="checkbox"/> stuffed animals      | <input type="checkbox"/> bed side tables         |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> electrical outlets    | <input type="checkbox"/> back packs      |   | <input type="checkbox"/> edge of carpeting       |

## **Treating Bed Bug Infestations**

Complete elimination of a bed bug infestation can be a difficult process and may require the services of a knowledgeable and licensed pest management company. It may take several treatments to gain control over an infestation. If a “do-it-yourself” method is chosen, only use pesticide products that are labeled to kill bed bugs. Always read and follow the label directions before applying any pesticide product. Here are some additional tips to help eliminate bed bugs.

- Reduce and eliminate clutter. Don't keep piles of clothes, boxes, toys, shoes, etc. on the floor, under the bed, or in closets. They are prime hiding places for bed bugs.
- Heat kills bed bugs. Wash clothes in the hottest recommended setting. Tumble dry the clothes on high heat for at least 30 minutes (120° F or above).
- Encase an infested mattress and box spring in a zippered cover that is labeled and certified “bed bug proof”. Leave the covers on for at least one full year.
- Vacuum your home thoroughly and often. Pay particular attention to the area around the bed and the bed itself. Sprinkle ¼ to ½ cup of talcum powder on the last section of floor to be vacuumed. The powder will help dry out and kill bed bugs in the bag or cup. Place the vacuum cleaner bag or contents in a sealable plastic bag and discard it in the trash outside.
- Pesticides labeled to kill bed bugs are available over the counter and may provide effective control. However, if the problem persists or is heavily entrenched, contact a knowledgeable, experienced, and licensed pest management professional for assistance.
- Since bed bugs are difficult to control, plan on several thorough treatments to eliminate an infestation.
- DO NOT USE “Bug Bombs”. These products may kill on contact but they are mostly ineffective against hidden bed bugs. They may make the infestation worse by scattering the bugs throughout the home or apartment.
- If an infestation is suspected in a rental unit, contact the building manager or landlord about the problem. Property owners should contact a professional pest control company for advice and assistance. Your local health department can also provide assistance on bed bug identification, prevention and control options.
- The property manager and pest management professional may provide preparation guidelines prior to treating for bed bugs. Getting rid of bed bugs is a cooperative effort. And these guidelines should be followed closely.



Wash sheets and blankets in hot water and dry them thoroughly in a hot dryer before making up the bed



A zippered bed bug proof cover can help protect against bed bugs



Do not use foggers

## **Preventing Future Infestations of Bed Bugs**

- Do not bring discarded bed frames, mattresses, box springs, or upholstered furniture into the home.
- Carefully inspect used or rented furniture prior to bringing it into the home.
- Place any recently purchased clothes, whether new or second hand, into the dryer on a hot setting for at least 30 minutes (120°F or above).
- When traveling, inspect the bed, headboard, and furniture upon arrival. Keep suitcases off the floor and bed and inspect them before leaving. Wash and dry all clothing, per the above recommendations, after returning home.
- Caulk and seal any cracks and crevices throughout the home, especially in rooms where people sleep.
- Be careful of who stays overnight or sleeps at the house. Likewise, be mindful when staying away from home. Inspect all children's backpacks, stuffed animals, and other belongings if they have stayed overnight or spent considerable time at another location.

