

Bed Bug Prevention and Control in Hotels and Other Multiple-Unit Dwellings

Recommendations for Owners/Operators

When informed of a bed bug infestation, owners and operators of hotels and management of other multiple-unit dwellings should not attempt to control the infestation prior to an assessment by a licensed pest management professional (PMP) company. Due to the elusive nature of bed bugs, control can be expensive and time consuming. The successful eradication of a bed bug infestation requires that owners/operators, management, and affected tenants fully cooperate with the recommendations of the PMP.

Educating housekeeping and management staff to recognize the signs of bed bug infestations will provide the means for a timely response by a PMP and help prevent bed bugs from spreading throughout the facility. A prompt response to the problem will reduce the financial burden of bed bug control and significantly diminish inconvenience to tenants.

Training Recommendations for Staff

Owners/operators or management should provide training to all staff members on bed bug surveillance, control, and prevention. Training should be provided at the commencement of employment and annually thereafter. Training should be conducted by an experienced and knowledgeable individual and should include the following elements:

1. Identification of bed bugs and discussion of the life cycle;
2. Review of routine inspection procedures for tenant rooms including close inspection of:
 - a) all seams on mattresses and upholstered furniture as well as the joints of bed frames and other furniture,
 - b) the area at the top and bottom of baseboards, window sills and door frames,
 - c) any known cracks and crevices in the room, including the floors, and
 - d) the portion of walls behind picture frames, headboards, and furniture;
3. Instructions on how to conduct routine inspections that include rooms dedicated to storage of unused furniture and housekeeping supplies such as maid carts;
4. An assessment of housekeeping and maintenance procedures including vacuuming and appropriate disposal of refuse;
5. Review of reporting and referral procedures subsequent to detection of bed bugs or evidence of an infestation; and
6. An evaluation of prevention and control measures aimed at reducing bed bug populations and limiting their spread within the facility.

Visit <http://www.pestboard.ca.gov/license.htm> or call California Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), Structural Pest Control Board at (916) 561-8704 to verify the certification of an individual or company performing pest management services.

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Department of Public Health, County of Los Angeles
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5050 Commerce Drive
Baldwin Park, CA 91706

If you have questions regarding this document please call the Vector Management Program, (626) 430-5450

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Suggested Procedures for Owners/Operators Reporting and Responding to Bed Bug Complaints

Responsible personnel should:

1. Develop a written referral procedure for tenants and staff reporting pest complaints to management. The procedure must include a rapid response to bed bug complaints and a prescribed means of contacting a licensed Pest Management Professional (PMP).
2. Assist tenants and/or guests in seeking medical assistance when necessary.
3. Whenever possible, relocate tenants/guests while the infested room is being serviced by the PMP. The room the tenant is relocated to should not be adjacent to the infested rooms and should be inspected for signs of bed bug infestation prior to relocation. If a tenant/guest is relocated, the room they were relocated to should be inspected by the PMP once the tenant has vacated to ensure bed bugs were not transferred to the room.
4. Instruct the tenant/guest to launder all clothing and linens. The tenant/guest must secure clothing and linens in plastic bags to remove them from the infested room, and place the laundered items into new plastic bags immediately upon removal from the clothes dryer. Dispose of the original plastic bags. All personal items to be taken to the new location must be thoroughly checked for evidence of bed bugs and washed before bagging if appropriate. This procedure helps prevent the relocation of bed bugs into the new room. Tenants should use only a minimal amount of clothing and personal items while in the temporary/relocation room. Leave all other clean items in the secured bags.
5. Notify tenants in adjacent units (next door, above, and below the infestation) of the bed bug infestation. Such notification should stress the need to prepare their units for inspection and possible treatment for bed bugs.
6. Instruct the PMP to inspect all units adjacent to bed bug infested units, including the unit(s) where tenants were relocated, and treat as necessary.
7. Bed bug infested articles destined for disposal shall not be removed until after the unit has been treated by the PMP. All articles to be disposed of, including vacuumed refuse must be double bagged in plastic, tightly sealed, and properly disposed of in an appropriate trash receptacle. Consult with the PMP to determine if contents should be retreated before disposal to prevent the possibility of relocation of the bed bugs.
8. Hotel owners/operators should replace all torn mattresses and box springs. It is strongly recommended that hotel owners/operators refrain from purchasing used mattresses and box springs.
9. Hotel owners/operators should replace wooden bed frames with metal bed frames whenever possible.

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Instructions for Tenants Prior to Treatment for Bed Bugs

1. Tenants should immediately report suspected infestations of bed bugs or other pests to Management or other responsible personnel.
2. It is important for tenants of infested units to follow the Pest Management Professional's (PMP) guidelines on how to prepare their unit for treatment.
3. Whenever possible, tenants of bed bug infested units should be relocated to a vacant unit. On the day the PMP arrives to treat infested units, tenants should seal clothing and/or linens to be taken to the relocation unit in plastic bags and launder them as directed below.
4. Wash all articles in HOT water with the appropriate amount of detergent, and dry on the HOTTEST setting. Place in new plastic bags immediately upon removal from the dryer and seal with a tie. Open the bag only to remove clothing prior to wearing and reseal.
5. Personal items that cannot be laundered (personal hygiene items, etc.) should be thoroughly checked for bed bugs and stored in sealed plastic bags when not in use. When the tenants arrive in the relocation unit, they should bathe and change into the newly laundered clothing and carefully seal removed clothing in a plastic bag for laundering. Tenants should not return to infested units until after the room treatment is completed and no additional evidence of bed bugs is observed.
6. If it is not possible to relocate tenants, all clothing and linens must be secured in plastic bags for laundering and placed into new plastic bags immediately after laundering. Bags should only be opened to retrieve fresh articles, and immediately resealed.
7. Personal items that cannot be laundered must be thoroughly checked for evidence of bed bugs and sealed in plastic bags between uses.
8. To the best of their ability, tenants shall ensure that all used furniture and other items brought into any unit are free of bed bugs. It is highly recommended that tenants refrain from purchasing used furniture to prevent the spread of bed bugs.
9. To the best of their ability, tenants shall cooperate with Management if temporary relocation is required (to a bed bug free room) while the infested room is being treated and until no additional evidence of bed bugs is observed.
10. Tenants should not remove any articles from an infested unit until after the unit is treated. If it is necessary to remove clutter and other unwanted items following a treatment, those items should be bagged and sealed and placed in the appropriate trash receptacle.
11. Tenants should be mindful of the difficulty involved in treating occupied units and do their best to reduce clutter and other unnecessary items after treatment, and maintain their units in as clutter-free condition as possible.

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