

## **Bed Bug Infestation – Response by Property Managers**

1. Call your landlord and arrange for treatment through a professional.
2. Staff should come up and do a thorough assessment of the situation. This includes locating bed bugs with a flashlight and magnifying glass. Two persons will be required to thoroughly search under mattress and box spring, headboard, frame, wall art, dresser (under drawers) and all other furniture within 20 feet of the bed or furniture the host sleeps on. For every bed bug you see, there are probably a lot you can't see. Look for bedbugs moving, bloodstains, eggs and casings. Pay close attention to seams and ribbing of the mattress and also under the muslin cloth of the box spring. These are all favorite hiding places of bed bugs. As the population grows, they will move out to electrical outlets, edge of carpet, walls and ceilings.
3. Talk to the resident about how together you can overcome the infestation and go over the treatment agreement in detail with them and in private. Discuss removal of the infested bedding or need to purchase encasement products. Doing nothing is not an option. Explain the risk to other residents in the building and ask about how they might have come in the apartment. This will take some detective work on your part and other apartments that the resident has visited in recent weeks will also need to be contacted for an inspection. These other units will need to be scheduled for inspection and quickly. This includes all neighboring units and those they have visited.
4. Vacuuming all visible bed bugs from the mattress and box springs and all other dwelling places is an effective way to reduce the population immediately. You must ensure the vacuum bag is removed, sprayed, sealed and disposed of out of the building. A strong vacuum with 99% efficiency and a HEPA filter will get the bed bugs and dislodge the eggs that have been cemented to surfaces. Use a knee high stocking as a trap filter at the discharge end of the vacuum and before attaching the bag. Spray with alcohol (keeping in mind it is extremely flammable and take proper precautions) after you are done vacuuming to kill the live ones. Tie a knot in your filter after spraying and dispose with the vacuum cleaner bag outside in the dumpster.
5. Early in the infestation, bed bugs are likely to be located only around the seams, tufts or crevices of the mattress or bed covers. As the infestation grows, they move to crevices in the bedstead and other furniture and hiding places around the room. This may include behind baseboards, wall outlets, cove base, carpet, wall sconces, window frames, pictures, and sofas. If sleeping locations have changed, so have the locations of the bed bugs. Look for the tell tale signs of blood or scat on the furniture or bedding. You will need a good flashlight to find the hiding spots.
6. After completing the cleaning process, be sure the bed has been moved away from the wall and that bed covers are not touching the ground or flooring. Now that you have vacuumed up as many bed bugs as possible, coat the bed frame legs with 3 to 5 inches of a barrier to stop them in their tracks. Petroleum jelly or double side tape will work when coated all the way around the legs. Remove dust covers from the bed and seal in plastic bags for washing in hot water. You can also place glass dishes under the legs with a thin layer of vegetable oil in the bottom to create a moat like trap as they try to get up the bed legs to feed on the host. Human inspection will result in discovering bed bugs at a rate of 50% success. The bed bug sniffing dogs are accurate at about 92% and much faster. If you have a lot of units to inspect, the dog may be the most cost effective way to do your search.
7. The services of a certified and licensed pest management company should be called to treat the apartment. Make sure they have experience with bed bugs and let them outline the treatment plan and provide further education to the tenant. Typically, they will want the tenant to pack up all of their soft items such as clothing and bedding and take it to the laundry in a

sealed bag (to prevent further spread of the bed bugs) and wash it all in hot water and dry under high heat conditions. This will kill bed bugs, nymphs and eggs that have been cemented to the clothing. We do not recommend treating the bed bug infestation you, because the health and other risks of the pesticide are used improperly may outweigh the benefit. If you self treat, keep in mind that you should use an insecticide that is specifically labeled for bed bug management and read the label carefully. **Caution your resident that if they self treat (which we don't recommend): They should Not Use Any Insecticide on The Sleeping Area of a Mattress or Pillow**, unless the label specifically says to do so. Read the directions and don't trust all claims on the internet!

8. Typically, a pest management professional will spray the slats, bed frame, furniture, baseboards, etc. They will open up tufts, seams, and folds of the side of the mattress and spray these areas also. Let the insecticide dry before using the bedding or coming in contact with it. I would suggest then vacuuming a second time. Using steam is another less toxic approach on bedding. Steam will kill bed bugs on contact and generally the dry steam created moisture dissipates quickly.
9. Typically there will be two to three treatments to be sure all of the bed bugs are dead. There will generally be about 2 weeks between treatments, so the process may take 4 to 6 weeks, but the above response will provide immediate relief for the resident. Most insecticides act as nerve poison for bed bugs. Insecticides block ion flow across a nerve membrane by attacking sodium channels. If the nerve can't depolarize, the cell and bug is effectively paralyzed. Some insecticides interfere with the reproductive cycle

**List of some of the pesticides labeled to control Bed Bugs (Check EPA Website):**

**Allethrin**  
**Delta Dust**  
**Pyrethrins**  
**Resmethrin**  
**Suspend SC**  
**Drion Dust**  
**Fleet/ Dragnet FT**  
**Tempo**

An alternative is to use a heat treatment professional to bring the temperature up in a unit to above 120 degrees (F).

**Griffin Pest Solutions (1-888-547-4334) and Ridder Thermal Management LLC both offer the service (248-273-0000).**