

March 23, 2009

Michigan Bed Bug Workgroup – 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting (Notes/Update)

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We had our second face-to-face meeting yesterday in Lansing at the Office of Public Health and Preparedness. There is now a web presence on the Michigan.gov Website: <http://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases> This web location has several documents that you can link to get more information on control of bed bugs. This site includes; Bed Bug Facts by MDCH, Questions and Answers About Bed Bug – MSU Extension Bulletin, Choosing a Pest Control Company – MSU Extension Bulletin, and Guidelines for Prevention and Management of Bed Bugs in Shelters and Group Living Facilities – by Cornell University (an Extension Bulletin).

The primary goal of the workgroup is to prepare a comprehensive document to be used by interested parties such as local health officials, to identify, treat, manage and prevent bed bugs. The concept is to provide a comprehensive manual to cover all aspects of prevention and control of bed bugs. The assumption is that the “Bed Bug Manual” would be in a binder form and also available in CD format and be published on the Web. There is no exact timeframe for having this project completed, but a start was to get existing information on the web, which has been accomplished.

The workgroup is divided into four Subcommittees: a) Scientific, b) Treatment Guidelines, c) Laws and Regulations, and d) Education, Communication and Training. Some specific items discussed yesterday include:

- There is no prevention, when you get them you deal with them.
- The mattress law was repealed in 2000 – this dealt with sale and safety issues of bedding. 16 states currently have bedding laws that control sanitation and re-sale. We also reviewed other laws that impact this issue.
- Health Departments were surveyed around the state to understand the extent of the problem and how they were responding. The hot spots are in the more populated areas, such as Southeast Michigan, Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids and Berrien County. Health Departments need guidance in this area.
- There is concern about safety of home (self) treatments, alcohol can cause fires, pesticide use can have serious health risks. These concerns must be balanced with high costs associated with the use of licensed pest management professionals. Bed Bugs are developing resistance to insecticides and no single cure has been developed.
- Members of the task force are also concerned with developing training to roll out and collecting information for the “Bed Bug Manual.”
- The Cornell Document; “Guidelines for Prevention and Management of Bed Bugs in Shelters and Group Living Facilities,” is comprehensive and discusses ways to manage bed bugs safely, minimizing environmental, health and economic risks. The authors have allowed us to link to the document on the Michigan Bed Bug website.

The next meeting of the group will be in May.

