

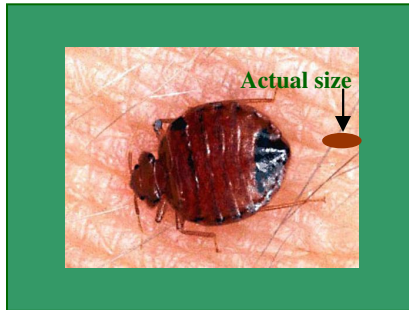
# Beating Bed Bugs

## Landlords & property managers dealing with a bed bug infestation

### What are they and how do they live?

Bed bugs are brown, blood-feeding insects, measuring up to  $\frac{1}{4}$ -long.

Immature ones are tiny, colorless, and are very difficult to detect. Bed bugs active mainly at night.



Bed bugs hide in crevices in the bed and other furniture, and also behind baseboards, under loose wall-paper, etc. They can survive up to a year without feeding.

Bed bugs may be introduced to a building on used beds or furniture, or on personal possessions.

### What problems do they cause?

Bed bug bites cause red, irritating marks, and some people develop an allergic skin reaction.

Bed bugs do not spread diseases.

Infestations may spread to adjoining units and can eventually infest whole blocks. Untreated bedbug infestations in rented property will quickly result in dissatisfied tenants, have a significant financial impact, and result in damage to your reputation.

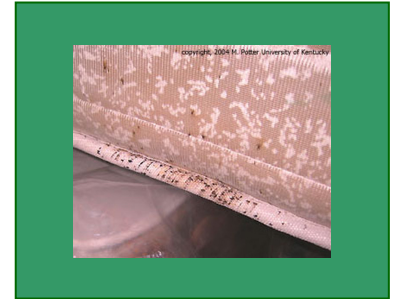
### As a landlord, am I responsible for dealing with infestation?

Article 11, Sec. 581(a) and 581(b)(8) of the San Francisco Health Code state that property owners cannot have pests on their property. Property owners or their agent who violate these Health Code sections may be subject to administrative penalty for each violation.

If you suspect a bed bug problem on your property, you are strongly advised to contact the Environmental Health Section of the San Francisco Department of Public Health for advice on eliminating the bed bug problem.

### How do I know if my property has bed bugs?

- Tenants complaining of bites.
- Blood-smears around the bed.
- Clusters of dark spots on the bed frame, edges of the mattress, etc.
- Finding insects around the bed.



### What should I do if I suspect my property has bedbugs?

Seek professional help immediately. The longer you leave it, the worse it will become. Contact your licensed pest control operator for advice and treatment.

Self treatment is very unlikely to be successful.

Do not relocate any furniture from infested units. Infested furniture requiring disposal should first be treated by the pest control operator.

### Professional inspection and treatment

The licensed pest control operator will need access to both the infested room and adjoining units. You should coordinate with your tenants to ensure full access.

Ensure that tenants prepare their rooms to be treated. (You may want to provide your tenants: *Beating Bed Bugs: Preparing your home for bed bug treatment.*) Your pest control operator should tell you what is required.

Ensure that tenants are not allowed back into their unit until approval has been given by the pest control operator.

Monitor and ensure that the pest control operator:

- Conducts a thorough inspection of the infested and surrounding units.

- Uses a combination of chemical and non-chemical treatment methods.
- Treat the tenant's belongings and building components, such as behind light switches.

After two or three weeks, ensure that the pest control operator returns for follow-up treatment. At least two treatments are necessary to eliminate bed bugs. Most reports indicate needing three to four treatments two to three weeks apart.

Ensure that the pest control operator has set glue traps after the treatments to continue monitoring for signs of bed bugs.

Since a surviving infestation can take several months to build up to a noticeable level again, about three months after the last treatment, call or visit the tenants to ensure that the infestation has been eliminated.

## Treatment Checklist

Techniques for treating bed bug are still relatively new and many licensed pest control operators are still unfamiliar with them. Property managers should work closely with the pest control operators and ensure that the best techniques are used. The following treatment methods have been known to be successful in eliminating a bed bug infestation when they are used in combination.

### 1. Inspection

- Identify that it is a bed bug infestation and not another pest.
- Tenants are interviewed to help determine the potential extent of the infestation.
- Inspection begins with the mattress, the box spring, and then the frame (or where the tenants sleep).
- Inspection then proceeds to the area near the bed, the baseboard, the edge of the carpet, the curtains.
- The next areas may include drawers and bedside tables, other furniture, electronics, and all cracks, crevices, corners.
- If at any point in the inspection, a bed bug is found, treatment should begin while continuing with the inspection.

### 2. Non-chemical methods

Although most of these methods will be used during each treatment, they will be used in different situations.

- Vacuuming (with a bag) the crevices to capture any bed bugs found. Doubled-bagged the vacuum bag and discard outside.
- Steaming the infested area. The steam should be very hot, not very wet (to reduce mold growth), and not under too much pressure (scatters bed bugs away).
- Dry cleaning will be required for articles that cannot be washed.
- Heat (2 hours at 140°F or 3 hours at 130°F) from an electric heater or infrared machines can be used to treat items if they can be isolated so that bed bugs cannot move away. Items should not be stacked because it will be harder to reach the correct temperature. Heat from washing machine or dryer (on the "HOT" settings) can kill bed bugs.
- If freezing temperature is used, the items are not stacked too high and they remain in the cold for several days.



- Diatomaceous earth used must be labeled "crawling insects". Most of the time, it is only used to treat wall cavities and other crevices and cracks.

### 3. Chemical methods

When spraying, people, animals, clothing, food, utensils are not present in the area. Follow the pest control operator's instructions for re-entry into the units.

*Contents adopted from Beating Bedbugs: information for Landlords & Property Managers and Beating Bedbugs: Guidance on Inspection & Treatment; Greater London Pest Liaison Group, 2009; and Control of Bed Bugs in Residences Information for Pest Control Companies, University of Minnesota Extension, 2006.*