

Beg Bug Infestation... A Growing Issue

OCTOBER 2010

While bed bugs have been found in almost all civilized environments throughout history, until recently, bed bug populations were an easily controllable issue. Now we are experiencing a dramatic increase in the population of bed bugs throughout the United States. Currently, there are many theories as to why the rise in their population has occurred. These theories include, but are not limited to; poor house-keeping, resistance due to pesticides, greater international and domestic travel, re-use of discarded furniture, as well as the continuing decline or elimination of effective pest management programs at state, county and municipal public health agencies. The problem has become so severe, that for the first time, scientists, pest control companies, and amateur inventors convened in Chicago in September 2010 for the North American Bed Bug Summit.



Bed bugs are small, flat insects that feed on blood from sleeping people and animals. They are reddish in color, wingless, and range from one to seven millimeters in length (the thickness of a credit card). Reportedly, they can live for several months or even a year without a blood meal. They find refuge in places such as the seams of mattresses, bed frames, blankets, headboards, box springs, dressers, clothing, behind wallpaper, and/or under any clutter or objects near a bed. As such, bed bugs are commonly found in housing authorities, dormitories, and other settings that include beds. Recently, bed bugs have been found in office buildings, shopping centers and movie theaters.

Bed bugs are generally known as a pest that bites its host as they sleep. They are not known to be a vector for diseases but they can result in mild to severe allergic reactions and other dermatological reactions in humans and animals.

The detection of beds bugs has become an increasingly difficult problem as they hide so well. Adult bed bugs can be visible during investigation activities whereas the younger ones are much more difficult to see. Most people are aware of a bed bug infestation after they have been bitten. Bed bugs inject an anesthetic and an anticoagulant that prevents a person from feeling the bite. Since the bites usually occur while people are sleeping, most do not realize they have been bitten until marks appear. The bite marks resemble a mosquito bite.

Generally, pesticides and/or liquid carbon dioxide have been the treatment of choice to eradicate the bed bugs. However, the increased resistance to these pesticides by the bugs has hampered that effort. As such, many people and/or organizations have begun to implement an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to the control and eradication of bed bugs. A bed bug IPM program may include a number of methods and strategies such as disposal of infected furniture and other items, removal of clutter, application of temperature-related treatment (extreme heat or cold), increased vacuuming, using pesticides, as well as multiple other methods.

Birdsall Services Group's Industrial Hygiene professionals have experience in managing bed bug infestations and can develop and implement a bed bug IPM program to aid your facility in the treatment and prevention of beg bugs.

**For Additional Information about
Bed Bug Integrated Pest Management, please contact:**

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