

BED BUG POLICY

A Key Element in controlling this new challenge is to secure a pest control company with documented experience in bed bug management and one with plan in place for treating apartment communities.

Bed bugs are a growing problem nationally in retail, hospitality industries and multi-family as well as single family homes. These hitchhiking pests have proven especially challenging to eradicate once a property experiences an infestation. Education, preparation, and planning are important as management tools in dealing with resident issues with bed bugs.

STAFF TRAINING

All employees should become bed bug experts. Hold staff meetings so that all members can keep a diligent eye on signs before the problems escalate.

- Request training from your pest control contractor.
- Be familiar with recognizing what a bed bug looks like and how to recognize other signs of infestation.
- Be competent to address resident questions and reports of potential infestations.
- Be aware the entering an infected apartment requires treatment of both clothing and personal hygiene of the employee to protect the office, your home and vehicle from becoming infested.
- Do not remove affected resident furniture for the resident and do not place in the property dumpsters.

EDUCATE YOUR RESIDENTS

Residents are required to sign the Blue Moon Bed bug addendum (or the Abbey Bed bug addendum if Blue Moon is not available in your state) at move in and renewal.

Other helpful items in increasing community awareness to reduce the spread of bed bugs:

- Keep literature with color photos of bed bugs, and other evidence of infestation for residents to review when they report a potential problem or bites.

- Post signs near the dumpster warning residents about the possibility of acquiring bed bugs from discarded furniture.
- Encourage residents to report bed bug infestations immediately. Residents have sometimes delayed complaining due to worries about being held responsible for payment which has resulted in the spread of the infestation to other units. Unless a unit was certified bed bug free before a resident moved in, most court case history has not supported charging the resident in any case.
- Do inform residents that timely compliance with treatment preparation is mandatory. Also, access to neighboring units for inspection and treatment if necessary is also mandatory.
- If a resident becomes infested, review the treatment plan line by line personally with them and give them a written copy. Attempt to obtain a copy in their native language. Use Babelfish online (<http://babelfish.yahoo.com>) if translating is an issue as communication is crucial in treatment.
- Bed bugs may become more obvious the first 24 hours after treatment because they are sick and wandering around in the open. Within the next two days after that, the bugs should die in large numbers.
- Place signs in common laundry rooms not to place bed bug infested trash bags in laundry trash cans or clothing on tables until laundered at the proper temperatures.

INFESTATION IS REPORTED

Time is of the essence in treating bed bugs as not only are surrounding units susceptible, but also common areas, breezeways, etc which can spread these hitchhiking pests anywhere within the community quickly.

- Contact your pest control contractor to schedule an inspection urgently.
- Confirm the appointment with the resident. Access cannot be denied.
- Contact your Regional Manager that you when you have confirmed an infestation.
- Provide resident with a copy of the treatment plan and required preparations in advance of the treatment appointment. Be sure the resident is aware the the preparations will require time to comply; however, treatment scheduling needs are urgent. Obtain a signature the resident has received these instructions.
- Do not delay treatment if the resident cannot come physically to sign, but has received the instructions and understands what is expected of them.
- Treatment preparations are necessary for the pest control company to have access to base boards, cracks and crevices and isolate bugs/eggs that may be in their clothing and bedding.

TREATMENT

The first treatment should be intensive. Two subsequent inspections/ treatments should be made at two week intervals to treat any nymphs that may have hatched. If no further evidence or bites have occurred after the second follow-up treatment, the infestation will most likely consider being remedied. If however, the resident continues to see evidence or experience bites, treatment should continue until there are no more reports.

Clarify with the pest control company what work is guaranteed and the cost of each phase of the program in advance. Add a PO for the treatment plan.

Often, multiple treatment methods are recommended. Potential treatment methods may include:

- Mattress encasements
- ClimbUp™ devices*
- Steam
- Vacuuming
- Desiccant dusts
- Liquid insecticide formulations
- Aerosol insecticides
- Insecticidal dusts

ClimbUp Insect interceptors™ are placed under the legs of the bed and other furniture. A list of potential providers of these devices can be found at <http://insect-interceptor.com/distributors.shtml>.

ADJACENT UNITS

An inspection of each unit sharing walls or ceilings with the unit reporting the issue should be conducted after an infestation has been confirmed. The reporting unit may not be the source. In addition, if surrounding units have already started to become infected, but signs are not completely evident to the residents, a much higher likelihood of containment to a fixed area can be obtained with prompt treatment.

Inspections should continue at two week intervals as the affected unit receives treatment. ClimbUp™ is a useful device for infestations too small to observe in a visual inspection. The presence or absence of bed bugs in the ClimbUp™ at the two week inspection intervals is a good indicator as to whether the adjacent units have bed bugs or not.

VACANT UNITS

Unfortunately, you cannot guarantee a vacant unit is bed bug free. Bed bugs become inactive when there is no host present and may not contact insecticide treated surfaces. There is no reliable bed bug monitoring device to use when a host is not present. Bed bugs may also move to adjacent units looking for food.

If a resident infested with bed bugs moves during or before treatment, your pest management company can drill the wall voids and remove the baseboards and crown molding to treat these locations with dust. They can also apply a thorough treatment of insecticides to crack and crevices.

Another option becoming available is heating units. The unit is treated by raising the ambient temperature to 135°F. This temperature will not damage the resident's belongings but the heated air will penetrate all cracks and crevices where bed bugs live causing them to reach their thermal death point (114-115°F). While heat treatment is usually 100% effective, building construction features sometimes create heat sinks that provide refuge for bed bugs. So it is recommended that heat treatment be supplemented with a single insecticide application to harborage locations. Heat can also be used to treat the residents' belongings in a chamber. However, unlike chemical fumigation, heat does not have to be applied by a certified pest management professional. Heat chambers and even apartment heating packages can be purchased by the apartment management company and applied by trained employees in their buildings.

For more information see <http://www.thermal-remediation.com/bed-bugs/equipment-packages.aspx> .

RECORD KEEPING

The Bed Bug Treatment Checklist should be completed to document all reports, investigations, and treatments of bed bugs. A completed form should be kept in a notebook or file organized by building. Documentation is critical to defending any claims residents may have of improper response/ treatment.

Referenced Forms
(Available in the Forms Table of Contents)

Bed bug Addendum
Bed Bug Treatment Checklist
Full Color Bed Bug Photos
Sample Resident Preparation Instructions