



Managing Bed Bugs in the Workplace



It is becoming fairly commonplace to find bed bugs in public and private work places. Why? Bed bugs are small and they like to hide. Anyone could carry them into your building on their clothing, personal belongings and shoes. However there is no need to panic if you find them in your work place. Properly managed, the bed bugs can be eliminated with a minimum of disruption to your working environment. Below are some facts and strategies to adopt if your workplace is experiencing an occurrence of bed bugs.

Adults
1/4"



Know some basic facts about bed bugs.

- Bed bugs do not fly (they don't have wings!).
- Bed bugs cannot jump.
- Bed bugs crawl fast.
- Bed bugs like to hide.
- Bed bugs feed on human and animal blood.
- Mature bed bugs can survive for several months without a blood meal.
- Bed bugs are attracted to the heat and carbon dioxide we produce.
- Bed bugs are not known to transmit disease.
- Bed bugs are nocturnal insects, except in buildings where the carbon dioxide levels are at their highest during the day.

What do bed bugs or their bites look like?

- Bed bugs are reddish brown and shaped like a tick.
- Bed bug eggs and juveniles are tiny, but visible.
(A flashlight and magnifying glass make them easier to see.)
- About 70% of the people bitten by bed bugs will develop itchy welts. These welts typically occur in groups or clusters on exposed skin, but otherwise they look like other insect bites. To see more photographs of bed bugs and bed bug bites, visit www.centralohiobedbugs.org

Bed bug bites



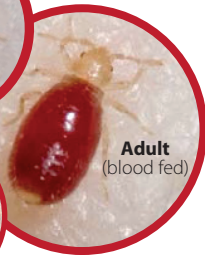
Juvenile



Eggs



Adult
(blood fed)



Where would bed bugs hide in my workplace?

- Because bed bugs like to hide, it is important to know where to look for them.

Check the following areas:

- the folds and seams in upholstery
- lockers
- floor baseboards
- cubicle walls and office furniture
- wall joints and corners
- electrical outlets and switches
- piles of papers and other nooks and crannies
- If you find bed bugs, contact your manager and building's facility manager.
- Do not crush or try to kill the bed bugs, it is impossible to make a positive identification from smashed bug parts! Put the live bug(s) in a pill bottle or a tightly sealed plastic bag so that your building manager and pest management professional (PMP) can make a positive identification.

Bed bugs
on office chair





What if bed bugs are found in my workplace?

- DO NOT PANIC. Bed bugs are a pest, but they shouldn't be a cause for panic.
- When one or two bed bugs are found, most people assume that there are many more in the building, which isn't always the case.
- Remember that bed bugs do not transmit disease.

How will they treat my workplace for bed bugs?

- A licensed pest management professional (PMP) will provide a workplace with a treatment plan that explains the chemicals to be used, how they will be applied, if traps will be set, and when follow up inspections will be conducted.
- Chemicals that will be used are approved by USEPA and will be applied according to the label. A material safety data sheet should be available for any chemical used.
- Treatment should not occur while employees are in the area.

How do I protect myself before and during workplace treatment?

- Staff should not be in the area where the bug(s) were found, if possible.
- Coats, purses and other personal belongings should be placed in a tightly sealed plastic bag, or a plastic container with a tight fitting lid to avoid transferring bugs to your vehicle or home.
- Keeping an extra pair of shoes for use in the work place until the bed bugs are gone also helps to prevent infestations of your home or car.
- Reduce clutter if possible to eliminate bed bug hiding places.
- Check your shoes and other clothing at the end of the day for signs of bed bugs or eggs.
- If you are concerned you might have picked up bed bugs on your clothes or shoes, you can place them in a clothes dryer. Run the dryer for 30 minutes on the hottest setting. This will kill bed bugs and their eggs.

What if I think I have bed bugs at home?

- The Ohio Department of Health recommends that homeowners hire a pest management professional licensed by the Ohio Department of Agriculture to evaluate and confirm the identity and treat a home with bed bugs.
- If you live in rental housing, and the landlord refuses to treat your building, contact your local health department or local code enforcement office. (You can find your local health department by visiting www.odh.ohio.gov click on the *Local Health Department*, menu then click *Directory*.)

What if a coworker has bed bugs at home?

- First, remember that bed bugs can happen to anyone and dealing with a coworker who has bed bugs requires sensitivity. People feel ashamed that they have the bugs, and they are reluctant to talk about their problem with anyone.
- Blaming or accusing coworkers won't solve the problem. Getting bed bugs is no one's fault. Consult your manager or Office of Human Resources for strategies to help an employee or coworker who may have bed bugs at home.

