

What are Bed Bugs?



What Is Biting Me? *Jeffrey Hahn, Asst. U of M Extension Entomologist*

Bed bugs have been on the increase over the last 10 or so years. Adult bed bugs are about 1/4 inch long, brown, and similar in size and shape to wood ticks; newly hatched bed bug nymphs are about 1/16th inch long or about the size of a pinhead. Bed bugs like to hide during the day and generally prefer to bite at night so it's possible to be bitten and not realize it. When looking for bed bugs, first check out bed rooms and other places where people sleep or rest. Other good areas to look are places where luggage is stored.

Bed bugs like to hide in cracks and behind or under objects so examine closely around mattresses, box springs, bed frames, as well as dressers, desks, chairs, and other furniture, the edges along carpeting and behind clocks, pictures, and baseboards. Also be aware of signs of bed bugs in your home. In addition to bites, watch for cast skins (empty shells of insects) as well as dark (but not red) spots. These spots are fecal droppings, composed of digested blood. Look for these spots on sheets, bedding, or other places where bed bugs feed or around their hiding places.

You can also try to determine whether bed bugs are present by using a bed bug interceptor. They are small plastic trays with an inner and outer ring. Put them under each leg of your bed. Bed bugs that attempt to climb up from the floor to the bed become trapped in the outer well. Any bed bugs that try to climb down will become trapped in the inner well. You can purchase Bed bug Interceptors online (type "bed bug interceptor" into a search engine for sources).

What to do if you think you have Bed Bugs:

If you think you have bed bugs and want the bugs identified, catch one on a piece of sticky tape and/or put in a clear (sealed) plastic bag and mail to:

Bed Bug Hotline
Rm 219 Hodson Hall
1980 Folwell Ave
St. Paul, MN 55108

How to tell if you have bed bugs? (video)

"Have I found a Bed Bug?" <http://www.bedbugs.umn.edu/have-i-found-a-bed-bug/>

What to do if you find bed bugs?

“Bed Bug Control in Residences”

<http://www.bedbugs.umn.edu/bed-bug-control-in-residences/>

NOTE!!! *The most effective way to control bed bugs in your home is through a Pest Management Professional! Let them know that Bug ‘bombs’ in the home do NOT work for bedbugs – they will just make a toxic indoor environment for the people living there. In addition to pest control, the resident must get involved with proper cleaning and laundering – this particular fact sheet outlines it well.*

For more information call:

The MN Bed Bug Hotline:

612-624-2200 or 1-855-644-2200

What are your rights as a renter when you find bed bugs?

“Getting a Landlord To Make Repairs.” Factsheet prepared by MN Legal Aid – Legal Services State Support.

<http://www.lawhelpmn.org/files/1765CC5E-1EC9-4FC4-65EC-957272D8A04E/attachments/73AAE461-F946-4A90-B94F-F8DDB37B047F/h-11-getting-a-landlord-to-make-repairs.pdf>

City of Rochester Ordinance chapter 35 – Housing Code: Dwellings and Apartments.

<http://www.lawhelpmn.org/files/1765CC5E-1EC9-4FC4-65EC-957272D8A04E/attachments/73AAE461-F946-4A90-B94F-F8DDB37B047F/h-11-getting-a-landlord-to-make-repairs.pdf>

Ordinance section relating specifically to insect infestation, note: 35.15. Extermination:

35.15. Extermination. Every occupant of a single family dwelling shall be responsible for the extermination of any insects, rodents, or other pests therein or on the premises; and every occupant of an apartment in a dwelling containing more than one apartment shall be responsible for such extermination whenever his or her apartment is the only one infested. Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this subsection, whenever infestation is caused by failure of the owner to maintain a dwelling in a rat-proof or reasonably insect-proof condition, extermination shall be the responsibility of the owner. Whenever infestation exists in two or more of the apartments in any dwelling, or in the shared or public parts of any dwelling containing two or more apartments, extermination thereof shall be the responsibility of the owner.

Contact Rochester Building Safety – Housing Inspections at 507-328-2600 to make a rental complaint.

How to prevent Bed Bugs:

Students should be advised to NOT pick up furniture that people have thrown away. Avoid taking items like mattresses and furniture left by dumpsters or put on the curb for trash pickup. If they buy furniture, mattresses or clothing from discount or thrift stores, inspect them carefully for signs of bed bugs before bringing them home.

Extreme heat can kill bed bugs. If they want to be on the safe side when purchasing used clothing – clothing can be treated by: Wash clothing and linen at the highest temperature possible (without damaging them) and then dry them in the “hot” cycle of the clothes dryer for at least 45 minutes. They can also run the clothes through the dryer’s hot cycle if not able to wash items in hot water.