Bed Bug Informational Packet

Topics Covered

- What You need to Know About Bed Bugs
- What if I find a bed bug on a student?
- What can I do to eliminate bed bugs from my classroom?
- What if one of my students has an infestation at home?
- Letter to Parents of Students with Bed Bugs
- Parent Acknowledgement Form
- Bed Bugs Confirmed and Found in a Classroom Letter to Parent
- Bed Bug Inspection Report Return Letter to Parent

The resurgence of bed bugs has created concern in the pest management industry and in society overall. Controlling, let alone eradicating, this pest can be difficult.

The purpose of this packet is not to make you paranoid about bed bugs, but to heighten your awareness about encountering bed bugs during your daily activities. Because there is currently no simple and inexpensive way to eliminate bed bug infestations, we are seeing their populations becoming more and more widespread.

It is for this reason that we need to be proactive and develop a bed bug consciousness, so that we can modify our behavior to avoid bringing bed bugs into our homes and schools.

In order to avoid problems resulting from improper applications, it is critical that we are knowledgeable on how to handle bed bug introductions. Early detection is critically important to putting a bed bug problem behind you quickly and efficiently.
What You Need to Know About Bed Bugs

1. Adult bed bugs are about 3/16- inch long and reddish-brown, with oval, flattened bodies. They can be mistaken for ticks or cockroaches. Immature (nymphs) resemble the adults, but are smaller and lighter in color.

2. Bed bugs do not fly, but can move rapidly over floors, walls, ceilings and other surfaces.

3. Unlike head lice, they do not live on a person. However, they can hitchhike from one place to another in backpacks, clothing, luggage, books, and other items.

4. Bed bugs are active mainly at night. During the daytime, they prefer to hide close to where people sleep.

5. A common concern with bed bugs is whether they transmit diseases. Although bed bugs can harbor pathogens in and on their bodies, transmission to humans is considered unlikely.

6. Know the difference between an INTRODUCTION and an INFESTATION. An infestation can be defined as having virtually all of the life-cycle present (eggs, nymphs and adults). Finding bed bugs on students will most likely be classified as an introduction into the classroom as opposed to finding bed bugs in the environment (usually classroom), even if the student’s jacket or backpack may contain more than one stage of the bed bug life cycle.
What if I find a bed bug on a student?

If a bed bug is found on a student, it may indicate that the student has bed bugs at home. However, bed bugs can crawl onto, or off, of a person (or their belongings) at any time, so it is also possible that the bed bug was brought to school by someone else. If a suspected bed bug is found on a student or a student’s belongings, the following procedures should be followed:

1. The student should be discreetly removed from the classroom so that a qualified staff person can examine the student’s clothing and other belongings. It is important that any bugs found should be removed carefully without squishing and collected for identification. The specimen can be put on a piece of clear tape. Try to keep the specimen as intact as possible in a bag or container.

2. Contact Custodial Services at 904-858-6310 for positive identification. Until confirmed, please move forward as if possible confirmation. Proceed to contact the parent/guardian of possible introduction and provide information sheet. Conduct visual inspection of child and allow student to return to class.

3. If a confirmed bed bug is found on a student, the school principal or designee should contact that student’s parents or guardians to inform them of the bed bug presence on their child. Consider sending a bed bug inspection form home, a sample is provided at the end of this document.

4. The school principal or nurse should consider notifying the impacted class or classes.

Attachment H-I-3
5. Students should not be excluded from school due to bed bugs unless repeated efforts have been made to remedy an introduction. Schools should not be closed due to bed bug presence, if pest management is necessary, it will normally be targeted to certain areas of the school.

6. Ongoing pest management, that includes the use of pesticides indoors, should be overseen by the school principal, or designee, and must conform to the school’s integrated pest management plan.

**What can I do to eliminate bed bugs from my classroom?**

1. Backpacks, lunchboxes, and other items that travel back and forth to school can also be inspected daily and sealed in plastic containers to prevent bed bugs from getting into them at home.

2. Hard surfaces can be cleaned with standard cleaning products.

3. If bed bugs have been found repeatedly in a particular classroom, have the room inspected by a pest management professional, or other trained staff.

**What if one of my students has an infestation at home?**

When a student is dealing with an infestation at home, it is important to be sensitive to their problem. Although bed bugs have nothing to do with cleanliness or socioeconomic status, there is still a stigma that can come with having bed bugs. As a result, parents may be hesitant to admit to having bed bugs, and students may not want others to know they have an infestation at home. Students living in an infested home may also feel anxious or tired during the school day.

Schools should work with the parents of any student living in an infested home to develop strategies for preventing the further spread of bed bugs.

1. Determine if the infested home is being treated. Home remedies and do-it-yourself treatments may be insufficient and could cause negative health effects or produce potential hazards in the home.

2. In an infested home, parents should store their child’s freshly laundered clothing in sealed plastic bags until they are put on in the morning. This prevents bed bugs from hiding in the clothing and being carried to school.

3. Backpacks, lunchboxes, and other items that travel back and forth to school can also be inspected daily and stored in sealed plastic containers at home to prevent bed bugs from getting into them.
4. At school, the student could be provided with plastic bags or bins in which to store their belongings in order to prevent any bed bugs from spreading to other students' belongings.

5. If bed bugs are finding their way into the school, consider notifying the affected classes. A sample notification letter is provided at the end of this document.

6. Continue to use these measures until successful treatment of the home has been verified.