

Sleep Tight after Home Visits!



Bed Bug Basics

- Bed bugs are making a comeback in the US, including Wake County.
- Bed bugs can't fly. They travel by hitchhiking on bedding, furniture, clothing and bags or luggage. They crawl between apartments and hotel rooms.
- A bed bug can fit into any crevice that you can slide a credit card into.
- Bed bugs hide during the day and bite at night.
- Only if an infestation is really bad will you see signs of bed bugs in the corners of rooms, bloodstains on the walls or possibly even the bugs themselves.
- Bed bugs are not only found on beds, but also on upholstered furniture, night stands, dressers, telephones, clocks, in cracks and crevices in walls, under carpeting etc.
- Bed bugs can live many months without feeding.
- Bed bug eggs are sticky, nearly invisible and attach easily to cloth.
- Bed bugs are not known to transmit disease.
- **Anyone can get bed bugs! Assume the homes you visit are infested.**

Before going into a home:

- Notice if beds and other furniture are piled up on the curbs, near the dumpster or on the balcony. This could be an indication that there is a bed bug problem in the area.
- When you go into a home, wear tight fitting clothing. Don't wear clothing that might brush the floor when sitting down. Don't wear pants with cuffs. Leave your coat in the car (or hold it the entire time you are in the house).
- Only take what you absolutely need into the home with you. Leave personal items in your car (back pack, bag, purse, computer bag etc).



While in the home:

- If you must take things into a home, only put them down on a hard surface, like a table. OR bring something disposable with you to place your items on, like a plastic bag. Consider buying a plastic container to bring and keep your things in.
- If possible, stay out of rooms where people sleep.
- Only sit on hard surfaces (wooden, plastic or metal chairs or tables) or better yet STAND. Do not lean on sofas, walls, doors or anything else. Consider buying a folding chair and bringing it with you on home visits.
- If you must "play" with children on the floor, put down a disposable barrier, like paper. Consider taking a sheet or other piece of washable material that you can put down on the floor. Only use toys that YOU have brought to the home. Disinfect them after each use. Never bring plush toys or stuffed animals into a home, unless they are going to stay in that home.

When you leave:

- Throw disposable items away before leaving the home or in an outside dumpster.

When you return to your own home:

- Leave the shoes you wore during home visits outside of your home. You may want to seal them in a plastic bag before getting into your car.
- Vigilance is key! Inspect your home often. It's easier to contain a bed bug problem if you catch it early. Regularly look for "marks" on mattresses and bugs hiding in seams, on box springs or behind the headboard (see pictures below)
- Keep your home and car free of clutter (bed bug hiding places). Vacuum often, including your car, mattress, box springs, headboard etc. Wash and dry sheets on high heat once a week.

Special precautions when you know you are entering an infested home:

- If you are visiting a home that you know or suspect is infested, suggest meeting outside of the home, in a park, at a restaurant, on the lawn, etc.
- Consider taking your own hard (metal or plastic) folding chair to sit on.
- Keep plastic bags of different sizes in your car. If you think you may have been directly exposed to bed bugs or their eggs, cover the seat of your car with a disposable plastic cover or with a washable sheet so that your clothes do not touch the seat. Remove your shoes and put them in a sealed plastic bag.

When you return home you should:

1. Throw any disposable plastic away outside your home.
2. Wash and dry sheets or cloths you used on HOT for 30 minutes.
3. Leave your shoes outside your home, or in a sealed plastic bag.
4. Remove your clothing in your garage or just inside the door, put them in a plastic bag and seal well.
5. Wash and dry clothing on HOT for 30 minutes.
6. Throw plastic bags away in an outside dumpster.



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Questions? Call 250-4462 or 250-3891