

Resources and FAQ's on Bed Bugs for teachers and school personnel

ABOUT BED BUGS:

Bed bugs are straw-colored to reddish-brown and do not have wings. They are usually very flat, except after they have just fed, when they are filled with blood. Adult bed bugs are $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inches long. Young bed bugs look like the adults, but are smaller and lighter in color. These bugs do not fly or jump, but can move rapidly on floors, walls, ceilings and other surfaces. Female bed bugs lay their eggs (clusters of 10-50) in secluded areas and are tiny, white, and hard to see on most surfaces. The bug will reach maturity in a little over a month and live ten months to a year- and possibly that long even without a food source if other conditions are right. As they grow, they feed on human blood but will also bite other warm-blooded animals including dogs and cats.

Bed bugs are most active at night and prefer to stay hidden and come out when people sleep. Bed bugs do not have nests like ants and bees, but tend to congregate in hiding areas close to humans. Transmissions of diseases from the bites is considered unlikely but some experience itching and inflammation following a feeding.



Adult bed bugs are small, reddish brown, wingless and have very flat bodies.

Above—highly magnified view.
At right—actual size ($\frac{3}{8}$ "- $\frac{1}{4}$ ")



WHAT CAN I DO IF MY STUDENT IS FOUND TO HAVE BED BUGS OR IF I FIND A BED BUG IN MY ROOM?

- Make every effort to capture the bug on tape and KEEP INTACT.
- Send the captured bug to the designated person at your school. Give precise details of room location and desk (if applicable).
- If found on student, VERY DISCREETLY send the student with belongings up to the office. (THEY WILL NOT BE EXCLUDED)
- Keep open contact with your school's designated task member of any future sightings.
- Once you receive confirmation, try to reduce items going to and from home.
- Expect your student to be monitored each morning before start of school for at least 2 weeks.

- Once a known infestation at home, discreetly remind the child each night to store all books and agendas in sealed plastic bag or up on kitchen table. (away from sleeping areas).
- Educate your students to prevent misconceptions and fears.
- Remember, If a bed bug is found on a student or student's belongings it suggests, *but does not prove*, that the student may be living in a home with bed bugs.

HOW CAN I PREVENT BED BUGS BEING TRANSFERRED TO MY HOME?

- Remain calm and learn fact about bed bugs. Realize that sightings can be expected as the problem arises out in the community.
- Reduce clutter in my classroom/office to aid in room inspections.
- Keep my personal items stored in tight plastic bins.
- Wear light clothing to aid in spotting a crawling bug.
- Treat the possibility of picking up a hitchhiker at school no different than when you visit a movie theater, hotel or department store trying on clothing. – Run any clothing that could have been as transfer point through the dryer for 20 minutes as soon as you arrive home. Place shoes in closed, tight container if needed.
- Always respect those that have bed bugs in their home. It is not a sign of bad sanitation but bad luck. It could easily be you!

WILL MY ROOM OR OFFICE BE SPRAYED?

Bed bugs and especially their eggs are resistant to most pesticides. Schools can be a transfer point of moving the bed bug to another location like many public buildings but very unlikely to have an infestation with breeding bugs. Remember, a single bed bug is not an infestation. Use of the term “infested” should be reserved for situations when bed bugs have settled in and reproducing as a result of consistent and available nighttime food supply. Monitoring, not pesticide application, is probably the best first response to reports of hitchhikers.

Staff members cannot bring in over the counter sprays to the schools. All pesticide use within the building requires notification and removal of students and staff. These remedies claim to eliminate bed bugs, but most have little to no residual, therefore require direct spraying onto the bugs to kill them.

Once the sighting is positively confirmed, the facilities director, in cooperation with the lead custodian, will conduct a thorough inspection and recommendations will be made to the Superintendent/designee as plan of action.