

Bed bugs are small insects that have co-existed with humans for millennia. **Although not recognized as disease carriers, bed bugs are unpleasant pests that can cause physical discomfort and emotional distress to human hosts.** Their presence is unrelated to personal hygiene habits or cleanliness. However, if not properly and quickly addressed, infestations of bed bugs can multiply and migrate into adjacent areas.

Many homeowners of this generation have never seen a bed bug. Until recently, they have also been a rarity among pest control professionals. Bed bug infestations were common in the United States before World War II. But with the widespread use of pesticides during the 1940's and '50s, the bed bugs all but vanished. The pests remained prevalent in other regions of the world including Asia, Africa, and Eastern Europe. Immigration and international travel have contributed to the resurgence of bed bugs in the U.S.

Bed bugs are active mainly at night. During the daytime, they prefer to hide close to where people sleep. Bed bugs do not have nests but do tend to congregate in habitual hiding places. Characteristically, these areas are marked by dark spotting and staining. Also present will be eggs, eggshells, the brownish molted skins of the maturing nymphs, and the bed bugs themselves.

General Information:

- *Adult bed bugs are about 3/16 of an inch long and reddish-brown, with oval, flattened bodies.*
- *They are sometimes mistaken for ticks or cockroaches.*
- *The immature bed bugs resemble the adults, but are smaller and lighter in color.*
- *Bed bugs do not fly, but can move rapidly over floors, walls, ceilings and other surfaces.*
- *The eggs are tiny, whitish, and are hard to see on most surfaces without magnification.*

In general what we will experience in a school setting will not be a bed bug infestation but rather a bed bug introduction. The actual infestation will exist elsewhere and the bed bugs will be introduced into the school setting by hitching a ride on a carrier. An infestation in a school setting would be difficult to establish. However, we do need to take precautions so an introduction does not become an infestation.

Bed Bug Protocol:

- **Remember you are the first line of defense.**
- **There is no prevention for bed bugs so vigilance is needed. Be aware of what bed bugs look like. Look for red welts on arms and legs; this could indicate an allergic reaction to bed bug bites. The red welts may alert you to a possible carrier of bed bugs.**
- **Avoid clutter, especially around areas where children may be napping.**
- **Do not bring in furniture from home or other sources.**
- **If a suspected bed bug is seen make every effort to capture the insect on a piece of tape or in a Ziploc bag for positive identification. Report the sighting to Maintenance and Operations so an inspection of the area can be made. Please follow up with a work order.**
- **If a positive identification is made our Integrated Pest Management vendor will respond to treat the area.**
- **New furniture should be inspected prior to being issued.**
- **Furniture being moved from one location to another should be inspected.**

Bed bugs are not known to carry disease. They are a pest and they need to be controlled. Your vigilance is the first line of defense in our control efforts.

Here are a few interesting bed bug pictures that we have collected from various sources on the internet:

