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BED BUG FACT SHEET

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KEY POINTS

- Bed bugs can be extremely difficult to detect. Proper diagnosis requires highly trained professionals.
- Bed bug services are very labor intensive, rely on the careful use of residual pesticides and should only be conducted by highly trained professionals.
- Adult bed bugs are brown to reddish-brown, approximately 3/16-inch long, 1/8-inch wide, broadly oval, and flat.
- Proper service requires that ALL possible harborages are treated. This usually requires the complete cooperation of the customer to access all areas that need to be treated.
- Bed bug bites are essentially painless and often go unnoticed while the bugs are feeding. Reactions to bed bug bites can range from no reaction at all to a very severe allergic reaction and the level of reaction tends to vary depending on the person.
- One service WILL NOT eliminate bed bugs from your home. A typical bed bug management program consists of an intensive initial service followed by a number of follow up visits over a period of one to several months. These follow up visits are necessary to ensure a maximum level of control.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT BED BUGS

Bed bugs occur world-wide and bridge all economic and social strata. Bed bug infestations in North America have become much more common over the past 10 years. Adult bed bugs are brown to reddish-brown, approximately 3/16-inch long, 1/8-inch wide, broadly oval, and flat. Immature bed bugs (nymphs) are tiny and appear translucent or pale in color. The eggs are pearly white in color and only 1 mm in length, thus they can be very difficult to detect with the naked eye. Inspections for bed bugs include looking for live bugs, shed exoskeletons and characteristic black stains created by fecal droppings. These insects feed exclusively on blood however there has been no evidence to suggest that bed bugs transmit any diseases. Bed bug bites are essentially painless and often go unnoticed while the bugs are feeding. They hide in cracks and crevices, typically associated with beds and sofas, and can be difficult to detect. Therefore, infestations can grow rapidly and persist indefinitely until proper corrective actions are taken. Reactions to bed bug bites can range from no reaction at all to a very severe allergic reaction and the level of reaction tends to vary depending on the person.

Bed bugs do not enter homes from the natural outdoor environment; instead they must be introduced into the home from a previously infested environment. This can occur by picking them up during travel, bringing them in on rented or used furniture, introduction by guests or visitors, or other means. Often the exact source of the infestation is unknown. Ways to prevent introducing an infestation into your home is to avoid discarded furniture, inspect used furniture prior to entry into your home, briefly inspect hotel/motel rooms prior to staying in them and to be aware of the signs and symptoms of bed bugs so that you can identify an infestation as early as possible. It is best to leave the treatment of bed bugs to highly trained professionals due to the complex nature of bed bug infestations.

If you believe you may have an infestation of bed bugs in your home, if you are in an apartment please contact property management immediately and if you are in a personally owned home it is highly recommended you contact a knowledgeable professional as soon as possible. Identifying the presence of bed bugs and starting service as soon as possible are important steps to make the process go as quickly and efficiently as possible.