



# Bed Bugs: Information Sheet

## **How to identify bed bugs?**

Adult bed bugs are reddish brown, about 5 mm long and oval in shape. Juvenile bugs can also be much smaller. You can identify an infestation by looking for insects in the cracks and crevices of the mattress, the protective corner on the box spring and any other small dark crevice close to the insects' food source.

During an infestation, you are also likely to see fecal matter (small brownish dust), unexplained blood stains and skin castings of molted insects in the same areas of the mattress.

## **How to avoid the spread**

It is absolutely imperative that you report any suspected bed bug infestation as soon as possible. They are "hitch-hikers" and can travel throughout the building very easily on your belongings and your clothing as you come and go from your unit. Unreported infestations can spread to adjoining units and common element hallways.

Once the Condominium Corporation is advised of an infestation, inspections will be scheduled in all adjoining units (on both sides, above and below) to determine whether the infestation has spread and decide on the best course of action.

It is important to note that there are stringent regulations with respect to pesticide application. The Condominium Corporation retains the services of an insured, reputable and licensed professional pest control contractor. It is very important that you not attempt to treat an infestation yourself or through the help of a third party pest control contractor. Bed bugs will easily form a resistance to the chemical sprays used to eradicate them. Therefore, every failed attempt to get rid of them increases their resistance.

## **How are bed bug infestations treated?**

Bed bugs are very hardy and require a thorough and detailed treatment in order to eradicate them. A residual pesticide is meticulously applied and must cover every crack and crevice of your home. Most treatments take 2-4 hours to complete.

## **How do you prepare your unit for a pesticide application?**

Most people start with discarding the infected mattress. If you choose to buy a new mattress, it is very important to insure that it remains in the plastic they are wrapped in with all holes sealed until the treatment is complete.

You must empty all furniture (chest of drawers, etc) and closets. **All** clothing should be washed in hot soapy water and stored in sealed bags until the treatment is complete. All furniture has to be pulled away from the wall. All hanging pictures have to be removed from the wall.

Please be aware that all of your sofas, chairs, beds, etc will be turned upside down to treat the underside.

**What about safety?**

Bed bug treatment is one of the most intensive chemical applications being performed. Everyone must be out of the home for a minimum of 4 hours after the treatment is completed (although preferably 24 hours if your health is compromised, if you are pregnant, if you have small children or elderly people in your home). Pets must also be removed from the unit.

**Is there a warranty on treatment?**

If you have followed all preparation procedures to the letter, the Corporation's contractor provides a three month/one time re-treat warranty. All well prepared customers have managed to gain control with this program.

**What is the average cost of treatment?**

The average cost to treat a unit ranges from \$300 - \$900 per unit depending on the level of infestation. In accordance with the Condominium Act, the Corporation's Declaration and By Laws, cost of treating your unit is the responsibility of the unit owner.

**What are the legal ramifications?**

Unit Owners / Residents who do not comply with unit preparation guidelines or who fail to provide access to the unit for a scheduled pesticide treatment will be charged the cost of the pest control contractor's missed visit, regardless of whether the unit is the source of the infestation.

Such unit owners will then also be subject to any and all of the Corporation's legal fees to obtain a compliance order.

Please also note that the Corporation is required to disclose on Status Certificates whether a unit has been the subject of a recent infestation, and if so whether treatment has been successful.

**Further Information**

Further information on bed bugs can be obtained at the City of Ottawa website or at [www.Ottawavalleyipc.com](http://www.Ottawavalleyipc.com) or at [www.bedbugsinfo.ca/](http://www.bedbugsinfo.ca/)