

Bed Bug Infestation in Accommodation Units

Good Practice Guidelines

The following guidelines based upon the Department of Medical Entomology's "A Code of Practice for the Control of Bed Bug Infestations in Australia" are provided with the aim of reducing your potential liability to bodily injury claims arising from bed bug infestation. These guidelines are not considered minimum standards and should be used in conjunction with existing business practices. Compliance to these guidelines will not guarantee coverage arising from claims of this nature and cover is always subject to the policy terms and conditions.



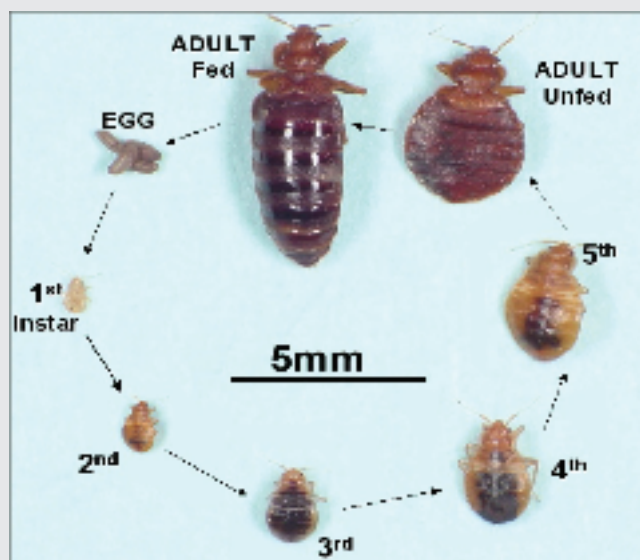
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Education & Training

Each site should have access to a range of educational material for staff training. At a minimum this should include:

- The latest version of 'A Code of Practice for the Control of Bed Bug Infestations in Australia' (available from: www.bedbug.org.au).
- Bed Bug Images.
- Fact Sheets, e.g. Westmead Hospital Bed Bug Fact Sheet (http://medent.usyd.edu.au/bedbug/bed_bugs_factsheet.pdf).
- In house bed bug procedural guidelines.

What do Bed Bugs Look Like?



Where to Look

This checklist is designed to be used as a tool for bed bug inspection:

- Is there evidence of bugs or brown spots (dried blood) around the seams and tufts of a mattress?
- Are bed bugs or brown staining visible between the folds of draperies or curtains?
- Are there signs of infestation underneath chairs, couches, beds, and dustcovers?
- Is the bed frame checked thoroughly, even in the cracks and screw housings?
- Do gaps behind baseboards, pictures, window and door casings, wallpaper, and other 'shelters' harbour bed bugs?
- Do nightstands, dressers, etc. show evidence of bed bugs?
- Do doors and window casings show evidence of bed bug infestation?
- Has the area behind the electrical switch plate been checked for infestation?
- Were telephones, radios, clocks, and similar places checked for the presence of bed bugs?

Handling Procedures

Suspected Bed Bug Infestation:

If a guest lodges a complaint suggestive of bed bug involvement, or if staff detect bed bugs or their signs, or if a medical practitioner has the suspicion that the cause of bites was bed bugs, then the following should be undertaken as a minimum:

- Any report of a possible bed bug infestation must be investigated and documented.
- The facility should attempt to collect bed bug specimens and have them identified by an appropriate expert.
- If guests develop a severe reaction to the bite, the facility management should encourage and assist the guest to seek medical assistance.
- The room should be inspected for bed bugs as soon as possible by an experienced and qualified pest controller.

Confirmed Bed Bug Infestation:

In addition to the above procedures, the following should be implemented upon the confirmation of a bed bug infestation:

- If the guest has been moved to another room, then the second room should also be inspected and treated once the guest has vacated (again ensuring all above procedures are documented).
- The washing of the guest's clothing in hot water prior to room reallocation may help to reduce the risk of further spreading.
- In the event of a confirmed bed bug infestation, the facility should provide information to the guest on how to avoid spreading bed bugs to others.
- If there is any suspicion that others may have stayed in the infested room then they should be contacted by management about the infestation.

Preventative Measures

- Second hand furniture should be thoroughly inspected by an appropriate expert before being placed into rooms.
- All linen should be laundered in hot water and hot dried.
- All furnishing and construction elements should be 'bed bug unfriendly', i.e. of materials that are smooth and contain few cracks and crevices.
- All cracks and crevices should be sealed, and loose wallpaper removed or re-glued.
- All beds that are newly purchased should be constructed of metal without springs.
- Mattresses without edge beading should be used, with the alternative being the use of bed bug mattress encasements
- There should be a regular documented vacuuming regimen to all areas within the facilities, including both common areas and guest rooms.
- Vacuums should be the type with a disposable bag, which must be routinely changed, sealed and disposed of in a sanitary manner. The vacuum appliance when not in use should be stored to minimise the risk of bed bug transfer.
- When linen is laundered externally, it is important that the linen is bagged within the guest's room, and the used linen is stored in a bed bug 'unfriendly' area and away from the clean linen.
- In facilities with ongoing bed bug infestations, there should be regular documented bed inspections. The frequency of inspections would depend on the level of activity and modified according to the rate of new infestations.
- All infested beds and furniture earmarked for disposal must be labelled as 'Bed Bug Infested' and rendered unusable before disposal.