

# BED BUGS

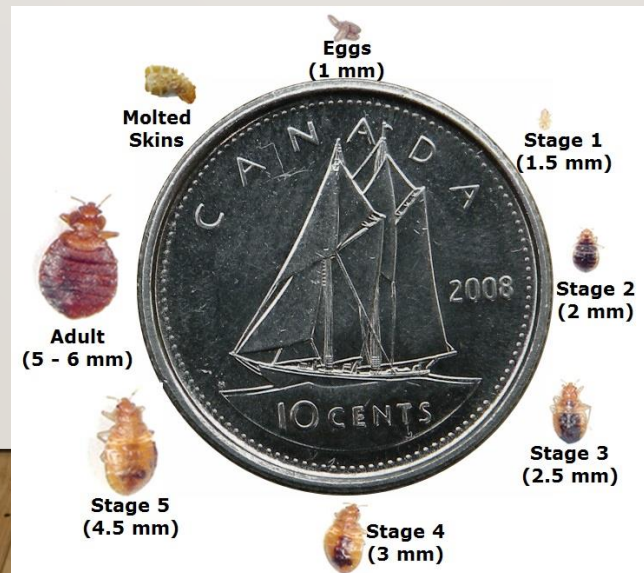
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HOW TO HELP SOLVE THE PROBLEM

# WHAT ARE BED BUGS?

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- Bed bugs are parasites that feed on blood
- They are reddish-brown in colour
- An adult bed bug is approximately the size of an apple seed
- An egg is approximately the size of a pinhead and looks like a grain of rice



# WHY ARE BED BUGS BACK?

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- There has been a resurgence of bed bugs in the past 25 years for numerous reasons:
  - Change of chemicals – DDT is banned due to health concerns
  - Increased travel – both nationally and internationally
  - Larger population but same amount of space
  - Lack of knowledge and awareness
  - The attached stigma



# WHAT DO I DO IF MY TENANT HAS BED BUGS?

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- The first thing to do is make sure you do not blame or shame your tenant. Chances are they are already stressed that they have bed bugs. They may already be blaming themselves and may feel embarrassed. Remember anyone can get bed bugs.
- Inspect their unit or have your pest control company inspect the unit to confirm bed bugs
- Arrange for treatment to occur, ensure tenant is provided with a prep sheet and reasonable time is provided for them to prepare the unit
- Do not encourage tenants to throw out items until a thorough inspection is completed and it is determined that the furniture and items cannot be treated and saved

# INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

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- Integrated Pest Management or IPM is a planned approach to prevent and address bed bugs
- IPM plans are most successful when the landlord, tenant and pest control company work collaboratively to solve the bed bug issue and prevent further issues
- Below is a list of what can assist in making a successful IPM
  - Regular unit inspections – at least two times a year
  - Assisting with prep for tenants who you know are not able to complete the prep properly
  - Not blaming or shaming people
  - Providing education sessions to your tenants
  - Block treatments – the infested unit, the units above, below, both sides and across the hall
  - Rotation of chemicals by pest control company
  - At least 2 treatments, with a follow up dusting treatment



# BENEFITS OF INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

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- Has been proven to drastically reduce the number of infested units in multi-unit homes
- In one study, by using an IPM, infestations were eliminated in 50% of infested units and the number of infested units was reduced by 63%
- In this study, the pest control company did not follow all of the steps in the IPM – did not take number of bed bugs in detectors into treatment plan consideration
- IPMs reduce bed bug activity, not only in units but in common areas as well, as these are built into the treatment plan
- With decreased bed bug activity and early detection monitors in place, the overall continual cost for bed bug treatment drastically decreases

# DUTY TO ACCOMMODATE

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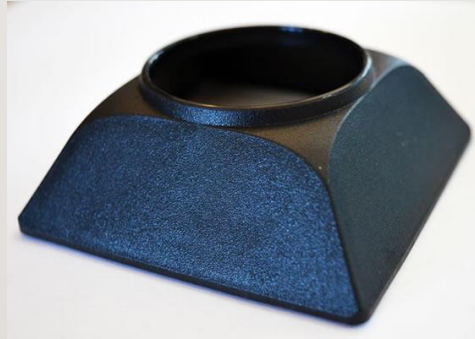
- This means that sometimes you will need to treat a tenant differently to prevent or reduce discrimination
- This could mean that you:
  - Assist with parts of the prep work e.g. remove outlet covers, provide money for laundry, vacuum etc.
  - Pay for a company to do the prep work for the tenant
  - Give the tenant extra time to prepare the unit. This is a timeframe agreed upon by both the tenant and landlord
- This process is a collaborative process between the landlord and the tenant
- Duty to accommodate must be shown up to undue hardship – the point where the landlord can no longer accommodate due to financial burdens or it is interfering with the pleasure of other tenants' experiences and past efforts prove it will not change.



# TOOLS TO HELP MONITOR BED BUGS

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- There are many different tools that can be used to help monitor for bed bugs and become part of a prevention plan. Some of these tools include:
  - Volcanos
  - Interceptors/moats
  - Encasements
  - Ortho bed bug b gon
  - Diatomaceous earth





# MYTHS VS. FACTS

Myth	Fact
Only dirty people get bed bugs	Bed bugs are attracted to carbon dioxide and blood. They do not care how clean or dirty a person is
Bed bugs can jump and fly	Bed bugs cannot jump or fly. They travel by crawling
I don't have bites so I don't have bed bugs	1/3 of the population does not react to bed bug bites
I need to throw out all my clothes, bed and couch.	Clothes can be laundered. Beds and couches can be treated – only dispose of these items if acceptable treatments cannot be found
Bed bugs are only found on the bed	Bed bugs can be found anywhere a human is. They will nest in the area that a human spends the majority of their time

# MYTHS VS. FACTS

Myth	Fact
Bed bugs cannot live if they do not feed	Bed Bugs can live up to a year without feeding
Bed bugs can cause the spread of disease	Bed Bugs have not been shown to cause or spread disease
Bed bugs cannot be seen by the naked eye	Although small, bed bugs can be seen by the naked eye. An adult is the size of an apple seed
Bed bugs are only active and bite at night	Bed bugs can be active and bite any time of the day, however they do tend to be more active at night
Bed bugs can be treated with store bought products	Store bought products are ineffective in the treatment of bed bugs. Bed bugs are building a resistance to chemicals. Over the counter “treatment” options do not have residual effects, therefore they do not have long term success in treatment

# BED BUGS IN THE WORKPLACE

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- There are precautions that can be put in place to protect yourself and your employees
  - Education – knowledge is power.
  - When in tenant's unit
    - Do not lean on any surfaces
    - Do not sit on any furniture
    - Take in as little as possible
    - Wear shoe covers if a bad infestation
    - Do the bed bug dance when you leave the unit
    - Do not wear baggy, flowing clothing or jackets
  - Use hard surface seating in common areas
  - Do not have carpet flooring in common areas, offices or units
  - Select light coloured furniture



# BED BUGS IN THE WORKPLACE CON'T

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- If meeting with someone in your office, do not let them put their belongings on the floor. Request that they place any belongings on a table
- Inspect your office after the meeting is completed – vacuum and wipe all surfaces with disinfectant wipes
- Do not deny services to anyone because they have bed bugs. Take precautions to not have them transfer to you. By denying services the stigma surrounding bed bugs is only reinforced. This could lead to people not reporting in the future.
- Be empathetic!



# BBAP – WHAT DID IT DO?

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- One of the main services BBAP provided was organizing prep work for tenants who were unable to complete it themselves
- What did this entail?
  - Working collaboratively with landlords, tenants, the prep company and treatment company to arrange prep prior to treatment
  - Educating tenants and landlords on bed bugs, their rights and their responsibilities
  - Referring to other community agencies for support
  - Continued education for self to stay up to date on most recent methods and tools for best practice

# HOW TO IMPLEMENT BBAP PRACTICES INTO YOUR COMPANY

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- Connect with a reputable treatment company that is knowledgeable, willing to share information and create an IPM
- If your pest control company does not provide prep services, find a reputable company that will do prep. Use this company as part of your IPM
- There may be times when you will need to pay for prep work, or your tenant may want to pay for a company to do the prep work. Having a “go to” company will assist in the process.
- Provide ongoing education to tenants, starting from the time they sign the lease
- The landlord, pest control company and tenant need to work collaboratively to ensure that the process runs smoothly
- If the tenant seems resistive or accusatory refer them to the Community Legal Clinic



# THANK YOU!

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For more information please go to the following links:

[www.housinghelpcentre.ca](http://www.housinghelpcentre.ca)

[www.hamilton.ca/bedbugs](http://www.hamilton.ca/bedbugs)

<https://www.hamilton.ca/home-property-and-development/pest-control/pest-control-landlord-responsibilities>

[https://www.hamilton.ca/sites/default/files/media/browser/2019-11-11/bed\\_bug\\_guidelines\\_2018.pdf](https://www.hamilton.ca/sites/default/files/media/browser/2019-11-11/bed_bug_guidelines_2018.pdf)

