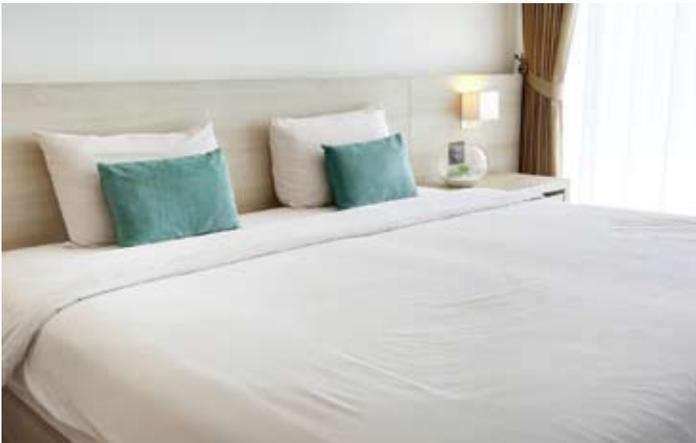


RESPONSE ^{TO} BED BUGS IN HOTELS & LODGING



DEVELOPED BY THE NATIONAL PEST MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION



Commercial lodging is particularly vulnerable to bed bug problems because of the steady stream of guests constantly arriving. Each guest is a potential source of bed bugs hitchhiking on luggage and clothing. Lodging facilities and brands can suffer damaging public relations if the media learns that guests have been bitten by bed bugs and they can also face the risk of lawsuits. Managers need to be proactive in monitoring for bed bugs and aggressive in dealing with them to prevent angry guests and bad publicity. This protocol provides guidelines for lodging managers to help them recognize and effectively respond to bed bug problems.

WHAT TO AVOID

- Do not ignore guest complaints of bites or bugs.
- Do not simply let a room go out of service for a few weeks and expect the bed bugs to go away.
- Do not try to control bed bugs without an experienced pest management professional.
- Do not ignore rooms adjacent to (as well as above and below) those with a bed bug problem.
- Do not put a room back in service until reasonably sure that the bed bugs have been eliminated and all old evidence of bed bugs has been removed.

BE PROACTIVE

Develop a written “bed bug action plan” with specific policies, directions, and responsibilities for the following:

- Detecting bed bug evidence through housekeeping, maintenance, and professional inspections.
- Responding to a bed bug complaint.
- Responding to guests making reservations or at check-in who want to understand the hotel’s practices concerning bed bugs.
- Satisfying affected guests.
- Eliminating bed bugs.
- Returning a room to service.
- Managing public relations, including social media, associated with guest reports of bed bugs.

Provide training for front desk, maintenance, and housekeeping staff on the following topics:

- How bed bugs are introduced and spread in lodging facilities.
- How to look for and identify signs of bed bugs.
- Basic bed bug biology and habits.
- What to do if they find evidence of bed bugs.
- How to avoid spreading bed bugs from one room to another.
- How to respond to a bed bug complaint.
- Steps to satisfy affected guests.
- Consider posting written information about bed bugs and your property’s proactive control plans.

RESPOND QUICKLY TO A BED BUG INCIDENT

- Respond empathetically to a guest complaint and treat all reports as the highest priority. At a minimum, offer to move the guest to a new room.
- Take the suspected room out of service until bed bugs have been eliminated or inspection reveals that the initial report was incorrect.
- Arrange for an inspection by a pest management professional as soon as possible.
 - The inspection should include the room in question, as well as rooms adjacent to, above, and below the initial



suspected room. The room to which the affected guest was moved should also be inspected.

- Any room confirmed to have bed bugs should be taken out of service immediately.
- Immediately schedule all rooms discovered to contain bed bugs for professional pest control service.
 - Every room receiving bed bug control service should be re-inspected following treatment and serviced again as necessary. The appropriate time frame for re-inspection will be determined by the pest management professional, based on the type of treatment performed.
 - Rooms should stay out of service until control has been confirmed by a pest management professional.
 - After rooms have been placed back in service, have them re-inspected regularly for two to three months to ensure that low-level populations have not been missed.
 - Thoroughly document all actions.



checking mattress for bed bugs



bed bug on skin

TAKE ACTION TO DETECT BED BUGS EARLY AND PREVENT THEIR SPREAD

- Consider scheduling regular bed bug inspections of all rooms (including public areas) by a pest management professional.
- Housekeeping staff should inspect for evidence of bed bugs during every room service, and maintenance staff should remove and check behind headboards and under box springs periodically.
- Consider enclosing mattresses and box springs with bed bug proof encasements.
- Follow proper laundry handling practices to reduce the risk of spreading bed bugs:
 - Keep clean and dirty laundry separate at all times.
 - Keep carts in the hallway during room service.
- Take precautions if removing beds and furniture from infested rooms:
 - If items are to be removed from infested rooms, wrap mattresses, box springs, and furniture in plastic and tape them to avoid dropping bed bugs or their eggs while transporting the items out of the building.
 - Do not store infested items with other furniture until they have been disinfested.
- Eliminate bed bug hiding places where possible. Examples of bed bug hiding places include peeling wallpaper and paint, cracks and holes in wall and floors, crevices around head boards, crevices along baseboards and molding and around heating and A/C units.
- Avoid used or reconditioned furniture and furnishings (including antiques) or have them inspected and disinfested before installation.
- Vacuum rooms thoroughly including often overlooked sites such as drapes, the back side of pictures, and the underside of furniture, all known hiding spots for bed bugs.
- Consider ways to make bed bugs easier to detect when redesigning guest rooms. Consider fewer fabrics, less clutter, white bedding, etc. as possible considerations.

For detailed information on bed bugs, control options, guidance on working with professionals or to find a local pest management professional, please visit www.pestworld.org.