

Bed Bug Fact Sheet



Basic Characteristics:

Bed bugs (*Cimex lectularius*) are small, brownish, wingless, parasitic insects that are active at night and feed on human blood. They are small in size (roughly a pinhead to an apple seed) meaning they can hide just about anywhere! Bed bugs do not stay on humans, but instead feed until they are full and then return to their hiding spot. Adult bed bugs can go 2-12 months without eating, which makes them difficult to spot and hard to kill.

Bed Bug Signs

One of the best ways to identify a bed bug infestation is to locate one or more of the following:

- live bed bugs
- blood spots on mattresses (fecal spots)
- cast skins from molted juveniles
- bites



Where To Look

Likely hiding places include, but are not limited to:

- seams and tufts of mattresses
- around bed frames
- behind headboards
- along baseboards
- behind pictures on the walls
- under loose wallpaper
- behind posters and picture frames
- in/near electrical outlets
- drawers of nightstands
- pet bedding
- in telephones, clocks, radios, and smoke detectors

Bed Bug Bites

Bed bug bites are very similar to mosquito bites. Signs of bed bug bites include:

- red, itchy, swollen bumps that occur in groups of 3-4
- occur on exposed skin of arms, legs, neck and back
- appear after sleeping or sitting on infested furniture



It is important to check with your doctor about any suspected bites, as they are often mistaken for other insect bites or allergic reactions.

Renter/Tenant Information

Often, bed bug issues can be resolved between tenants and landlords. We advise tenants to place a written request with their landlord for treatment of the problem and allow at least 3 days for a response. Make sure to keep a copy of your request.

If the problem is in 2 or more units, and/or a common area, and you are unsatisfied with the landlord's response to your written request, the City of Albuquerque may be able to help address the problem. Please dial 3-1-1 to place a request.

Correction Measures

Working with your landlord or an experienced pest control agency is the BEST way to completely eliminate an infestation. Treating your residence on your own with pesticide sprays or foggers may be illegal and ineffective and expose you and your family to hazardous pesticide residues.

Here are some things YOU can do in the meantime:

- 1) **Remove** all clutter to reduce the number of potential hiding places
- 2) **Vacuum** rugs, carpets, mattresses, and furniture to eliminate visible bugs
- 3) **Make the furniture into islands** by pulling it away from the walls. Do not allow blankets, pillows, or dust ruffles to touch the floor too. This will help discourage bugs from crawling up into furniture.
- 4) **Wash** all bedding, clothing, rugs, etc. in HOT water (120°F) and/or place in a dryer on HIGH heat for at least 10 minutes.
- 5) **Scrub** all furniture and/or hard surfaces to remove any eggs.
- 6) **Store** all clean items in sealed bags or containers to prevent re-infestation.

Furniture and Mattress Disposal

The City of Albuquerque does NOT pick up mattresses, furniture or other articles infested with bed bugs. Consider wrapping affected articles in plastic pallet wrap and bringing them to a disposal facility.

It is often unnecessary to dispose of mattresses and furniture. For more information on mattress covers and suggestions on safe mattress disposal log on to:

www.bedbugcentral.com.

More Resources

For more information on bed bugs log onto the City of Albuquerque bed bug website at www.cabq.gov/envhealth.

To report concerns about a bed bug infestation please dial 311 to place your complaint with your our office.

Photos courtesy of:
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Gary Alpert, Harvard University, Bugwood.org



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