

# Bed Bugs

## A Resource for Employees

**Q:** Are bed bugs a health hazard?

**A:** No. Bed bugs are not considered a health hazard as they do not transmit disease.

**Q:** Should employees be concerned when they are aware of a confirmed or potential bedbug issue?

**A:** It is important to be knowledgeable about bed bugs and bed bug control measures when entering a workplace, home or public building reporting bed bugs.

Precautions can be taken by employees to protect themselves from bringing bed bugs back to their office, workplace or home. It is important to remember that bed bugs are primarily active at night and hide in cracks and crevices during the day. Whenever necessary, concerns should be discussed with your employer.

**Q:** What precautions can employees take to prevent carrying bedbugs with them back to the office, workplace or home?

**A:** **Limit Belongings.** Remember that bed bugs cannot jump or fly. To transport themselves, bed bugs latch onto personal belongings. Always ensure unnecessary items (briefcases, purses, coats, equipment etc.) are left in your vehicle. Take only what you need! This is important in areas where an infestation may exist.

**Be vigilant of your actions.** Try not to lean up against or sit on furniture that could be potentially infested. Generally, wooden or cloth covered furniture with lots of crevices and seams will provide more locations for bed bugs to hide if there is an infestation. If possible, sit in a metal or plastic chair.

**Clothing.** Try not to wear pants with cuffs as bed bugs may hide in the cuff if they attach themselves to the pants. Tucking pants into socks and wearing light coloured clothing aids in detection of bed bugs. Some individuals have found that having an extra set of clothing available to wear at work helped to prevent the spread of bed bugs to their workplace, vehicle and home.

**Laundering.** If bed bugs have attached themselves to clothing, it should be bagged immediately to prevent any bugs from moving to a new location – especially if they are not going to be laundered right away. Heat kills bed bugs and their eggs. Once clothes are washed, they must be placed in a dryer on high heat for at least 20 minutes. Once the laundry is completed, it is recommended that an inspection of the items take place to ensure no bed bugs are present.

*It is recommended that when entering a home/business/workplace known to be infested, that a separate set of clothing is available to change into following a site visit, as this may reduce the risk of bugs being spread to a new location.*

**Vehicles.** Placing a light coloured sheet in the back of a vehicle and front seats can help better detect bugs. Vehicles can also be vacuumed and steam cleaned. Paying attention to seams and crevices will help eliminate any bed bugs that may be present.

**Inspection.** If entering a known infestation, ensure once you leave that you carefully check shoes, pants, belongings etc. for bugs. Be vigilant of your actions to prevent the spread to your office, workplace or home.

**Q: If I have further questions related to personal protection who should I talk to?**

**A:** Discuss further with your employer.

**Q: Do we need a policy for employees?**

**A:** Depending on the type and frequency of service being provided, your organization may wish to develop a policy. Samples are available in *The Bed Bug Resource Manual* below.

**Q: Do we have any resources that are approved for distributing to clients?**

**A:** Yes, refer to the list below.

**Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit**

- [Bed Bugs FAQ](#)
- [Myths and Facts about bed bugs](#)
- [Info for Tenants and Homeowners: What to do if bed bugs are in your home](#)
- [Bed Bug Pre-treatment Checklist](#)

**Health Canada: Bed Bugs - Pest Note**

**Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care**

**Toronto Public Health**

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**Woodgreen Community Services**

<http://www.woodgreen.com/Resources/Publications.aspx>

- ***The Bed Bug Resource Manual***
  - This document serves as a resource for agencies or persons working with vulnerable populations, social housing, support agencies (CMHA, Community Services etc.). There are templates, sample policies and fact sheets located within the appendices which can be tailored as required.
- ***All About Bed Bugs- An Information Guide***
  - This document is also produced by Woodgreen Community Services and provides straight forward information and is better suited for the general public when compared to the first document.

**Health Canada**

***Bed Bugs – Pest Note:***

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/pest/notes/bedbugs-punaisses-lits/index-eng.php>

**Government of Ontario**

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