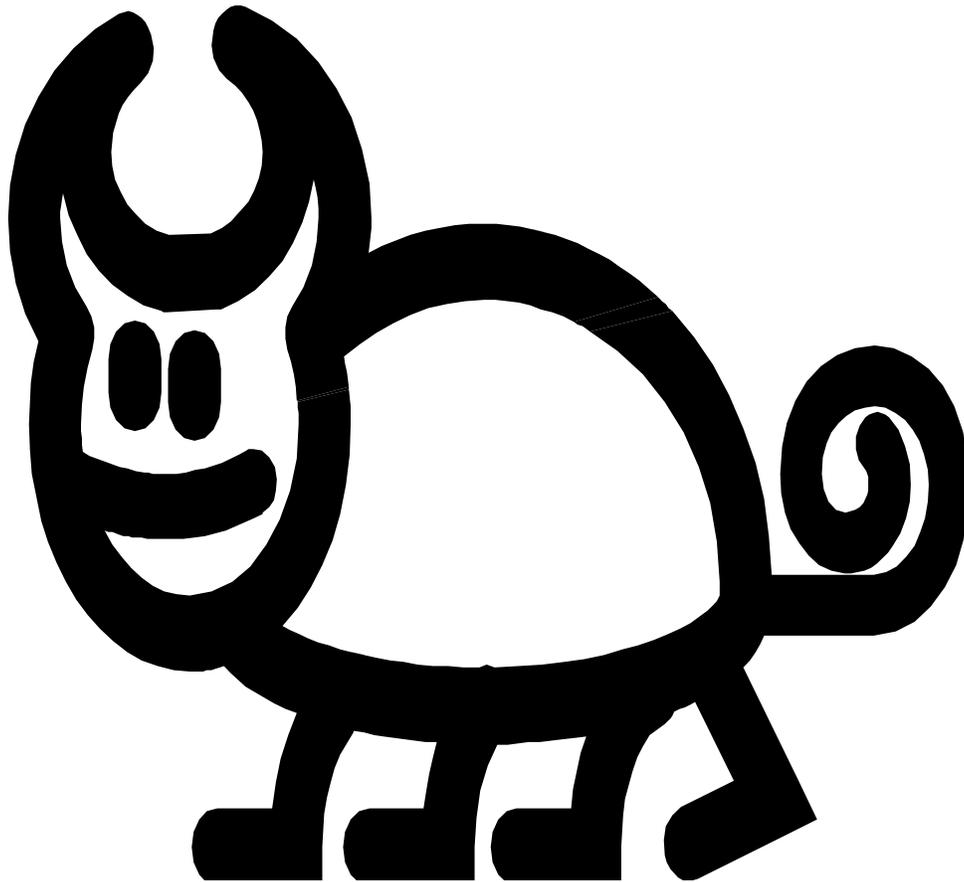


# A Bed Bug Policy



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Taylor, Michigan

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## Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION
2. RESPONSIBILITIES
  - 2.1 FACILITIES CONTRACTOR
  - 2.2 MEMBER
  - 2.3 PEST CONTRACTOR
3. EDUCATION & TRAINING
  - 3.1 TRAINING AIDS
  - 3.2 STAFF
  - 3.3 MEMBERS
  - 3.4 EXTERNAL AGENCIES
4. DOCUMENTATION
  - 4.1 DATABASE FOR BED BUG INFESTATIONS
5. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY
  - 5.1 STAFF INDUCTION
  - 5.2 PERSONAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT
  - 5.3 DISINSECTION FACILITIES
  - 5.4 MATERIAL SAFETY & DATA SHEETS
6. ERADICATION PROCESSES
  - 6.1 OVERVIEW
  - 6.2 BED BUG INSPECTION KIT
  - 6.3 SUSPECTED BED BUG INFESTATION
  - 6.4 CONFIRMED BED BUG INFESTATION
  - 6.5 BED BUG MANAGEMENT PLAN
  - 6.6 PRE-TREATMENT
  - 6.7 POST-TREATMENT
7. PREVENTATIVE MEASURES
  - 7.1 OVERVIEW
  - 7.2 THE TRAVELLER
  - 7.3 NEW MEMBER INTAKE PROCEDURES

- 7.4 SECOND HAND FURNITURE
- 7.5 LINEN & BEDDING
- 7.6 ROOM FURNISHINGS & ROOM CONSTRUCTION
- 7.7 ONGOING MAINTENANCE
- 7.8 BED DESIGN
- 7.9 MATTRESS DESIGN & MATTRESS ENCASEMENTS
- 7.10 HYGIENE
- 7.11 RISK ASSESSMENT
- 7.12 LINEN HANDLING
- 7.13 PEST INSPECTIONS
- 7.14 DESTRUCTION OF INFESTED ITEMS
- 8. MEDIA
- 9. BED BUG DATABASE
- 10. BED BUG LIFECYCLE

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This Bed Bug Management Policy was initially developed to assist community housing groups who were experiencing recurrent bed bug problems. For such organizations having a bed bug policy in place will ensure that the proper management processes are undertaken, which will increase the likelihood of a successful treatment, reduce the risk of bed bugs spreading over the long term, save money and potentially decrease the risks of litigation. It is important to note that not all sections of this policy will be applicable to every organization and thus some degree of individual tailoring will be required.

The key areas within this policy include; defining responsibilities, education, documentation, occupational health and safety, eradication processes, bed bug prevention, and handling the media.

## **2. RESPONSIBILITIES**

The responsibilities of the main stakeholders in relation to bed bug management include:

### **2.1 Facilities Management**

- Implementation of this management policy
- Acting promptly to members reports and newly identified infestations
- Contracting Pest Contractor only who have specific training in bed bug management
- Documentations of the infestations
- Education of members (especially to de-stigmatize bed bugs, raise the awareness of the signs of an infestation, and to ensure that members do not attempt control)
- Inspection and monitoring
- Coordination of pest management

- Liaising with Pest Contractor as to requirements for room preparation
- Informing Pest Contractor of members with health problems (e.g. chemical sensitivities, respiratory issues, etc.)
- Ensuring that all infested bedding and furniture earmarked for disposal is rendered unusable
- Identification of risk behaviors for bed bug introduction and spread
- To undertake bed bug risk minimization

## **2.2 Member**

- Minimizing clutter to reduce potential bed bug harborages
- Maintaining a regular regimen of vacuum and bed linen laundering
- Regular examination of bed and room for bed bugs
- Prompt reporting of suspected bed bugs to management
- Transporting of all laundry in sealed plastic bags
- Not to attempt bed bug control
- Prepare room for treatment according to the directions of the Pest Maintained Personal.
- Not to collect beds and furniture found on the street

## **2.3 Pest Contractor**

- To develop a bed bug management plan for any infestation
- To liaise with the Facilities Management

# **3. EDUCATION & TRAINING**

## **3.1 Training Aids**

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

- Bed bug images
- In house bed bug procedural guidelines

Other useful training aids include:

- Samples of dead bed bugs, preferably preserved in 70% ethanol
- Images of bed bug activity from other units

- Records of where bed bugs have been found (HUD Reg.)
- Samples of infested mattresses and furniture (it is essential that these have been thoroughly disinfected and should be stored in a clear sealed bag which remains unopened)
- Online training guides (Health Department )
- Further reading materials

### **3.2 STAFF**

There should be designated staff members at each site that have the responsibility of dealing with the bed bug infestations.

Such staff need to be trained in:

- How to identify bed bugs and signs of activity
- Where to look for bed bugs
- Tools to assist in bed bug inspections
- Bed bug biology
- How to handle and treat infested linen and items
- How to conduct themselves in a bed bug infested room
- Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and its use
- Documentation procedures
- How to educate members and other staff to minimize possible bed bug exposure
- A basic understanding of the control process
- The proper disposal of infested items
- Preventative measures
- Tenant risk behaviors that could increase the chance of introducing or spreading bed bugs
- What constitutes the inappropriate use of insecticides (e.g. insecticide “bombs”)

These staff should also be responsible for the continuing education of other staff members, ensuring that all bed bug training records and infestation records are properly maintained, and that bed bugs are a regular item on staff and meetings. The designated bed bug expert should also be

responsible for ensuring that the relevant bed bug information is included in new staff and new members training.

For other staff, there should be a bed bug component within staff induction. Information should include:

- What are bed bugs and how to identify them
- The staff member/s designated to deal with bed bug infestations
- An overview of the contractor processes
- Where to find more information

### **3.3 Members**

Members need to be educated in the following:

- How to recognize bed bugs and their signs
- Where to look for bed bugs
- Laundering handling procedures (especially when an infestation is present)
- Procedural policies of the unit if bed bugs are detected or suspected
- How to prepare the room for treatment by the Pest Manager
- What not to do in an infestation (such as using insecticide bombs, which can spread an infestation and pose a fire risk)
- How to avoid bed bugs

### **3.4 EXTERNAL AGENCIES**

Those from external agencies who need to access bed bug infested rooms or areas, or may be inadvertently exposed to bed bugs, must be informed of the risk. Details of how they can minimize the risk of acquiring bed bugs should be the induction training.

## **4. DOCUMENTATION**

Documentation should include:

- Procedural guidelines
- The recording of bed bug mitigation activities
- The documenting of bed bug infestations and treatments

Having procedural guidelines in place facilitates and directs control. This ensures that control is less ad hoc, thereby reducing the risk of the spread of the insect and decreasing contractor costs in the long-term. Proper documentation of actual and suspected infestations is a vital part of bed bug management. This provides evidence that procedures have been completed and undertaken in an appropriate order and fashion. All bed bug infestations should be recorded as an incident report and/or logged into a specific database as described below.

The following should be documented as part of the bed bug mitigation processes:

- Records of staff, agency and member training/educational programs
- Routine bed inspections for bed bugs
- If outside agencies had to enter an infested room and if they have gone through induction training
- Vacuuming regimen: vacuum bag changes, treatment and disposal
- Vacant room inspections
- Full details of any bed bug infestation as described in the proposed database below
- The Bed Bug Management Plan as provided by the Pest Cooperative
- The Pest Manager treatment report

#### **4.1 DATABASE FOR BED BUG INFESTATIONS**

A standardized database should be used to document bed bug infestations. This has a number of advantages; it can help ensure that procedures are undertaken, it can help in the tracking of people and potential infestations, it can be used to review the procedures within a cooperative, and the economic impacts of bed bugs can be recorded.

### **5. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY**

#### **5.1 Staff Induction**

The following matters specifically relating to bed bug management should be added to the induction of all new staff who may be called upon to deal with bed bug problems:

- How to conduct oneself in an infested room (avoid leaning or sitting on beds, take the minimum of equipment into the room, avoid placing items on the bed, etc.)
- What PPE should be used
- How, when and where PPE should be disposed of
- How bed bug infested items should be handled
- Manual handling processes (if for example, staff need to move beds and mattresses for inspection)
- How to disinfect one's own clothing, or items taken into an infested room
- The limitations of the individual staff's duties (e.g. when a qualified trades person must be consulted)
- Spray Bottle of alcohol 70%

## **5.2 PERSONAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT (PPE)**

PPE that should be available to staff includes:

- Disposable overalls
- Disposable gloves
- Disposable boot covers
- Dust masks
- Insect repellent (used in heavy infestations and should be applied to clothing)
- Ziploc bags for holding disposable items after leaving the room
- Durable plastic garbage bags (for quarantine large items, e.g. Clothing)

## **5.3 DISINFECTION FACILITIES**

Each facility should provide the following for staff who have to deal with bed bugs infestations;

- Hot water washing machine

- Hot dryer
- Plastic zip lock bags for potentially infested clothing or dissolvable alginate bags
- Change room and clothes for storage facility
- Durable plastic garbage bags

#### **5.4 MATERIAL SAFETY AND DATA SHEETS (MSDS)**

A current MSDS for each insecticide used to treat the bed bug infestation should be kept and be available for staff and members if requested. These can be obtained from the Pest Management company that undertakes the treatment.

### **6. ERADICATION PROCESSES**

#### **6.1 OVERVIEW**

The following principles must be adhered to:

- All bed bug control activities must be in accordance with the Bed Bug Policy
- Management must act promptly (preferably the same day) in dealing with potential or actual bed bug infestations
- All real or suspected bed bug infestations must be documented
- Only licensed Pest Contractor must be used, and they should provide evidence of external training on bed bug infestatives
- The Pest Company must provide a Bed Bug Management Plan
- The procedures outlined below must be followed in the event of a suspected or confirmed bed bug infestation, as well as the procedures outlined pre and post-treatment, along with the preventative measures.

#### **6.2 BED BUG INSPECTION KIT**

For staff who have the task of undertaking regular inspections for bed bugs, the following tools may be of assistance:

- PPE, as described above
- A powerful flashlight with spare batteries
- A 10x magnifying lens (to inspect for live bed bugs and eggs)

- Collection bottles (for gathering bed bugs for later conformation of identity, sticky tape can also be used for gathering bugs)
- Fine tipped forceps (for picking up bed bugs)
- Screwdrivers and spanners for dismantling items
- An inspection mirror
- Plastic bags (large and small) to hold bottles, tape, infested items, etc.
- Notepad, for recording details of the infestation
- Digital camera for recording infested sites (the digital images or printouts also can be used as educational material)

### **6.3 SUSPECTED BED BUG INFESTATION**

If a member lodges a complaint suggestive of bed bug involvement, or if the staff detect bed bugs or their signs, or if a medical practioner 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
- Management should document when the suspected infestation was reported, the unit number, if and where the bed bugs were observed, and any adverse clinical reaction (whether bite marks were evident)
- The facility should attempt to collect bed bug specimens and have them identified by an appropriate expert.
- If members develop a severe reaction to the bite, the cooperative management should encourage and assist the member to seek medical assistance. The cooperative staff and management should never provide medical advice. Records of adverse reactions should be documented along with action taken
- Management should demonstrate empathy with the member by explaining that bed bugs are becoming increasingly common throughout the entire housing industry, and that the cooperative now has strict policies in handling and responding to an infestation
- The room should be inspected for bed bugs as soon as possible by appropriately trained staff or preferably a Pest Company. IF the room

cannot be inspected on the same day, then preferably it should be vacated until an inspection is undertaken

#### **6.4 CONFIRMED BED BUG INFESTATION**

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

- The washing of the members clothing in hot water prior to room reallocation may help to reduce the risk of further spreading bugs
- In the event of a confirmed bed bug infestation, the cooperative should provide information to the member on how to avoid spreading bed bugs to others
- If there is any suspicion that others may have stayed in the infested room (either prior to the current member moving in or since) then they should be contacted by management about the infestation
- If the member regularly visits friends or family or has a care giver in other properties, or has recently moved, then these facilities should be informed of the activity (assuming no privacy laws are violated)

#### **6.5 BED BUG MANAGEMENT PLAN**

A Bed Bug Management Plan must be provided to the cooperative for the treatment of all bed bug infestations by the Pest Company. This can also serve as the service contract. The plan sets out the pest control processes by detailing the work to be undertaken. It must be stated up front that the aim of treatment is to achieve complete eradication of the infestation. Following an initial site assessment, the Bed Bug Management Plan should include:

- The finding of the initial assessment (where bed bugs were evident, the degree of the infestation, and photographs where possible)
- The treatment process. This would include:
  - Estimated treatment commencement date and time frame for the treatment process
  - Estimated number of treatments required to achieve eradication

- Non-chemical means of control
- Insecticides to be used
- Where the insecticide will be physically applied
- Times when the member needs to vacate the premise and can re-enter
- Any members duties prior to and after treatment (such as the placement of a mattress cover over the insecticide treated mattresses)
- The requirements for follow up inspections and treatments
- That the plan follows the Cooperatives Policy
- Warranties, limitations and restrictions
- Period of validity of the plan and quote
- The charge for the treatment

In the plan, it must be stated that inspection of adjoining rooms (both vertically and horizontally) should be undertaken.

## **6.6 PRE-TREATMENT**

Prior to treatment, but following the inspection by the Pest Company, the following should be undertaken if agreed to by the Pest Company:

- All bed linen, curtains and clothing must be removed from the infested areas. It is essential to handle all such items as infectious; they must be bagged before removal from the room and washed in the hottest water possible (>55c) and/or dried in a hot-air clothes drier. Alginate bags are preferable for infested linen, as the bags with the linen enclosed can be placed directly into the washing machine and the bags will dissolve. This reduces extra handling of infested linen and reduces potential cross-contamination in laundry facilities. Delicate items can be placed into a freezer after bagging. If a linen contractor is used, then all potentially infested linen must be kept isolated, with instructions to wash separately in hot water
- Likewise, all wardrobes, drawers and cupboards must be emptied and the contents treated as above. After clothing and materials have

- received the heat treatment, these should not be returned to wardrobes but kept sealed in plastic bags until the infestation is eliminated
- All wall hangings including framed picture and photographs, posters, flags, etc. need to be removed and decontaminated
  - All loose articles must be removed from the floor
  - Cover up any fish tanks or preferably remove them from the room to be treated
  - Members must vacate the premises and/or area of treatment
  - For infested rooms, the room must be kept closed upon bed bugs being detected until the infestation is declared eradicated
  - If possible, the Pest Company should be provided with a plan of the building so that the location of all bed bug infestations can be recorded and that all adjoining rooms are inspected and, if necessary, treated. A copy should be kept by management
  - If the infestation is exceptionally heavy and the room cluttered, then all items will need to be treated, or else discarded. To treat the items it will be necessary to bag all items so that they can be taken to a fumigation facility, or treated by heat. None of the items should be returned until the infestation is declared eradicated.

## **6.7 POST-TREATMENT**

The following should be undertaken post-treatment:

- Members should be encouraged not to re-enter the treated area until after the chemical has completely dried
- The floors and upholstered furniture should not be vacuumed for at least 12-14 days after the final treatment so that the residual insecticides are not removed
- The room should be kept vacant until the Pest Company declares the area free of bed bugs in a follow-up visit. As the eggs take 10-12 days to hatch, this should be the minimum period for any follow-up visit. However, in heavy infestations more than one follow-up visit will be required before bed bug elimination can be assured

- All past signs of the infestation should be removed, such as dead bugs and the blood spotting on walls and mattresses, to avoid future confusion
- Preventative measures should be undertaken as outlined below

Any report from the Pest Company should be attached to the incident report or linked to the Bed Bug Database. The Pest Company report must include details of the treatment regimen and the insecticides used, if different to the Bed Bug Plan.

## **7. PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

### **7.1 OVERVIEW**

Bed bug prevention is essentially about risk reduction and harm minimization. Each facility should have a multidisciplinary approach to prevention with various strategies against the four main phases of a bed bug infestation. The most important aspect in relation to bed bug risk management is prompt action.

### **7.2 THE TRAVELLER**

Advice should be given to members on avoiding bed bugs while staying away and reducing the risk of introducing the insects into the facility. This includes checking beds and storing unpacked luggage in plastic bags,

If there is a suspicion that the member may have been exposed to bed bugs while travelling, then the following should be undertaken;

- On return back to the cooperative, luggage should be inspected and kept isolated from the bedrooms (such as in a storage area that can be readily treated)
- If kept in the room, then luggage should be stored in plastic bags.
- All clothing should be hot washed and/or dried on the hot cycle of a clothes dryer for a minimum of 30 minutes
- If there is any possibility an infestation may have been acquired, cooperative office should be contacted immediately

- Document the incident and the Pest Company action as an incident report as discussed above

### **7.3 NEW MEMBER INTAKE PROCEDURES**

There should be an intake procedure for new members whereby they are interviewed and asked if they may have been exposed to bed bugs at their previous location. If they have had exposure or deny this yet have possible bed bug indications (obvious bites on the body or spotting on furniture), then those disinfection procedures described in the previous section should be undertaken.

### **7.4 SECOND HAND FURNITURE**

If feasible, second hand furniture should be banned. If not, then such furniture should be thoroughly inspected by an appropriate expert before being placed in unit.

### **7.5 LINEN & BEDDING**

All linen should be laundered in hot water and hot dried.

### **7.6 ROOM FURNISHINGS & ROOM CONSTRUCTION**

All furnishing and construction elements should be 'bed bug unfriendly' of materials that are smooth and contain few cracks and crevices. For example:

- Avoid using wicker furnishing and MDF materials
- Avoid having fixed cupboards
- Avoid fixed bed heads
- Render and paint walls that are open brickwork
- Have linoleum or tiled floors rather than carpet

### **7.7 ONGOING MAINTENANCE**

All cracks and crevices should be sealed, and loose wallpaper removed or re glued.

### **7.8 BED DESIGN**

All beds that are newly purchased should be constructed of metal without springs. Ensemble bases should be avoided.

## **7.9 MATTRESS DESIGN AND MATTRESS ENCASEMENTS**

Mattresses without edge beading should be used, with the alternative being the use of bed bug mattress encasements.

## **7.10 HYGIENE**

There should be a regular vacuuming regimen to all areas within the unit, including both common areas and member rooms.

The 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 minimize the risk of bed bug transfer.

## **7.11 RISK ASSESSMENT**

All past infestations should be analyzed to examine for patterns or behaviors that may assist in the identification of new or potential infestations.

## **7.12 LINEN HANDLING**

When linen is laundered externally, it is important that the linen is bagged within the member's room, and the used linen is stored in a bed bug 'unfriendly' area and away from the clean linen. The used linen hopper should be of a construction that can help contain bed bugs and is easy to decontaminate.

## **7.13 PEST INSPECTIONS**

In unit(s) 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 vacated units should be thoroughly inspected before new members move in.

#### **7.14 DESTRUCTION OF INFESTED ITEMS**

All infested beds and furniture earmarked for disposal must be labeled as 'Bed Bug Infested' and rendered unusable before disposal.