

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

17.01

BEDBUGS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SOP 17.01

BEDBUGS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

I. INTRODUCTION:

What are bedbugs? They are small, flat, wingless insects with six legs that like mosquitoes, feed on blood from animals or people. They range in color from almost white to brown, but they turn rusty red after feeding. The common bedbug doesn't grow much longer than 0.2 inches and can be seen by the naked eye to the astute observer. Bedbugs get their name because they like to hide in bedding and mattresses. They can hide in beds, floors, furniture, wood and paper trash during the day. They feed on humans during the night, with peak biting time activity just before dawn. Feeding can be completed in as little as three minutes at which time they drop off the host and crawl into a hiding place. They can live for ten months and go for weeks without feeding.

Does the host know when the bedbugs are feeding? No! Bedbugs will feed on you without you waking up. You don't feel their bite because they inject a numbing agent into your body, along with an anticoagulant to keep your blood flowing as they suck. The first sign of bedbugs may be itchy, red bites on the skin, usually on the arms or shoulders. Bedbugs tend to leave straight rows of bites.

BEDBUG FACTS:

- Bedbugs can live up to one year without feeding
- Bedbugs feed every few days
- Bedbugs can reach maturity in as little as one month
- Females lay hundreds of eggs over their lifetime
- Bedbugs do not discriminate

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Bed Bugs: Photo by nobugsonme on August 7, 2007



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Photo copied from: <http://bedbugphotos.com/>

Bed bugs are usually transparent, but turn red after feeding due to the blood they consume



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BEDBUG MYTHS PER THE US EPA

Myth: You can't see a bedbug

False: You should be able to see adult bedbugs, nymphs and eggs with your naked eye.

Myth: Bedbugs live in dirty places.

False: Bedbugs are not attracted to dirt and grime; they are attracted to warmth, blood, and carbon dioxide that humans exhale. Clutter offers more hiding spots for a bedbug and makes them more difficult to control.

Myth: Bedbugs transmit disease.

False: There are no cases that indicate bedbugs pass disease from one host to another. Lab tests have shown that it is unlikely that the insect is capable of infecting the host.

Myth: Bed bugs won't come out if the room is brightly lit.

False: While bedbugs prefer darkness, keeping the light on at night will not deter these pests from biting you.

Myth: Pesticide applications alone will easily eliminate bed bug infestations.

False: Bed bug control can only be maintained through comprehensive treatment strategy that incorporates a variety of techniques and vigilant monitoring. Proper use of pesticides may be one component of strategy, but will not eliminate bed bugs alone. Bed bugs have developed resistance to any commonly used pesticides. Some products and application methods may actually make the problem worse. Schools **MUST** consult a qualified licensed IPM pest management professional upon the discovery of bed bugs.

II. SCHOOLS AND BED BUGS

Bedbugs get into schools in a variety of ways:

- Bugs and eggs “hitchhike in” on clothing, student book bags, stuffed toys, lunch boxes, computer bags, etc....
- Infested items (furniture- couches, overstuffed arm chairs clothes, etc..) brought into the school.
- Wild animals (bats, squirrels and rodents) pets brought in to school
- Apartment to apartment, house to house then student to student then to school
- Travelers who have stayed in hotels, motels, cruise ships, and planes.

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

III. PROCEDURE

Bed bugs will appear in public facilities because they are able to crawl on and travel with a person and this is the case with any type of insect that has these capabilities.

- **THE IMPORTANT THING IS FOR ALL STAFF MEMBERS TO CONTINUE TO BE OBSERVANT AND NOTICE AND CATCH THE PROBLEM BEFORE IT BECOMES TOO BIG.**
- **IPM METHOD FOR BED BUG CONTROL IN SCHOOLS**
 - a. **BUILDING ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF**
 - Inspect suspected areas and surrounding spaces
 - Observe student book bags, outer garments and clothes for signs
 - Do not allow any second hand items such as sofas or couches or chairs in your school
 - Reduce clutter in the classroom where bed bugs or insects in general can hide
 - Eliminate bed bug habitats
 - Raise awareness in school through education and prevention of bed bugs.
 - b. **CUSTODIAL STAFF**
 - Correctly identify pests so the proper target insect is being addressed
 - Keep accurate records of application dates and locations and dates monitors are put into place
 - Physically remove bed bugs through cleaning and vacuuming (dispose of vacuum bags)
 - c. **LICENSED CERTIFIED PERSONNEL**
 - PESTICIDES ARE ONLY TO BE APPLIED BY LICENSED PERSONNEL, NJDEP LAW.
 - Staff **CANNOT** bring in sprays from home. It is against the law.
- **Steps if a suspected bed bug is found**
 - a. Notify the principal or school nurse who should be the first to identify a student or staff member transporting bed bugs. The utmost discretion and diplomacy should be used in approaching the individual, keeping in mind their right to dignity and legal considerations, it is very important to

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

address the issue with care and sensitivity. There is no association between cleanliness and bed bug infestations. Anyone can experience an infestation.

- b. If a live insect is observed, while wearing latex gloves, grab the insect using a piece of tissue or tape or forceps. It should then be immediately attached to a piece of clear cellophane or Mylar sticky tape. The tape with the insect should be placed on a piece of plain white paper (index card) and then placed in a zip lock bag. Appendix A, bed bug specimen data form must also be filled out. The same procedure is to be used for a dead insect. If possible, **DO NOT CRUSH THE INSECT DURING THIS PROCESS.** (hard to identify)
- c. In addition, IPM Appendix A must be completed, if the Chief Custodian is notified and Appendix J must be completed by the nurse, when the individual is brought to the Nurse's office.
- d. The next step is to determine if the SUSPECT insect is in fact a bed bug. Please notify the Paterson Public School IPM Coordinator. The nurse, principal, or chief custodian should collect all the information, prior to the IPM coordinator being notified.
- e. The IPM Coordinator will make an initial assessment and if warranted, the licensed pest control vendor will be notified.
- f. If warranted, the pest control vendor will be notified.
- g. The PPS IPM Coordinator will file all necessary notification under the NJAC IPM Rule. Notification will be sent to the building administrator and Chief Custodian will instructions.
- h. The pest control vendor will need access to the entire room, personal items, backpack, etc... to determine the extent of the situation.
- i. If the specimen is confirmed to be a bedbug, the principal and nurse will be notified immediately. Student belongings such as backpacks, coat, personal affects can be isolated in a tight sealing container or bags to help reduce the potential for bed bug dispersal while the problem is being resolved. **DO NOT WAIT FOR CONFIRMATION TO IMPLEMENT THIS IMPORTANT STEP.**
- j. The Executive Director of Facilities and the EOHS Officer is responsible for overseeing the IPM Plan in conjunction with the principals and chief custodians. The Chief Custodian is the designated person in each building. Although it is UNLIKELY for bedbugs to spread in a school environment, an inspection will be conducted by the PPS IPM Coordinator and or the licensed IPM Pest vendor and if indicated, treatment of the area where the bedbug was found will be implemented. Monitoring stations may be

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

placed throughout the space in question to determine and confirm if there is a need for space treatment.

k. The EOHS Officer is delegated responsibility to mobilize all resources necessary through the Superintendent/Executive Director of Facilities and is responsible to keep communication lines open, providing the facts in a straightforward manner. The Chief Custodian is responsible in the event of a bed bug incident for keeping a running log of all work performed pertaining to the treatment of a pest problem. The IPM Coordinator will keep a running log of communications, directives and treatment. Together they will include, but not limited to, the following:

- Notify pest vendor to make a site visit- IPM coordinator
- Arrange for inspection of the classroom in which the suspect bed bug is discovered- IPM Coordinator
- Engage the vendor to carefully inspect the desks, floors, walls and storage area where student belongings are stored- Chief Custodian
- The vendor and PPS Team should inspect crevices in baseboards, pictures, student work displays, furniture, window and door casings, wallpaper, electrical switch plate covers, telephones, clocks, wall mounts, art work etc.....
- Look for cast skins, bug feces, and eggs near crevices
- The IPM pest vendor will install monitoring stations in the room if no live insects are discovered and inspect the monitors again within 24-48 hours of placement.
- The room should be thoroughly cleaned with an approved general purpose cleaner, vacuuming with special attention to cracks, and crevices in furniture equipment, walls and floors and laundering of washables in hot water and drying on the hottest heat setting. Vacuum collection bags should be removed and sealed in plastic and then disposed of outside the school to prevent re-infestation or movement within the school.- Custodial Staff
- Insure the IPM log book is kept current and provide a general description of work done on a daily basis during the event- Chief Custodian
- Note any unusual occurrences and items requiring follow up or clarification- IPM Coordinator/Chief Custodian
- Document any health department or PEOSH visitor or inspection. Nurse/EOHS Officer

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Similar to head lice, the school nurse should manage the case including re-inspecting belongings, desks, classroom etc.. until the problem is resolved. The IPM Coordinator and Facility staff can also assist.
- Special Permission granted by the parent or legal guardian to check children where bedbug bites are suspect. A special permission form, Appendix C should be kept on file. In an emergency situation, verbal permission from the parent should be obtained and documented..
- When investigating the source of bedbugs, it may be necessary to check the children for bedbug bites. This will ONLY be done within a limited scope: arms, lower portion of limbs and neck area.
- Student belongings such as backpacks can be isolated in a tight sealing plastic container or bags to help reduce the potential for bedbug dispersal while the problem is being resolved.
- Parents of all students in the classroom where the bedbug was found should be notified and provided with basic information about bedbugs including a description, signs and symptoms, strategies to monitor for and eliminate infestations in their home. This should include cleaning laundering, and specially designed mattress cover and box spring covers that can help entrap bed bugs and reduce harborage opportunities. The information packets should also include sources of assistance especially in multi-housing situations. Use Appendix B “sample letter”

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APPENDIX A

BED BUG SPECIMENT DATA SUBMISSION FORM

School _____ Date _____

Name of person filing form _____ Position _____

Choose (1)

- _____ on a student
- _____ on a student's belongings
- _____ on a staff member
- _____ on a staff member's belongings
- _____ on furniture/wall within a room

- Room number _____
- Area where suspect insect
may have traveled in building _____
- School principal name _____
- School principal phone # _____

Enclosed is a suspected bed bug specimen. Please confirm the identity of this specimen so that, if appropriate, the School Nurse can notify the parent/guardian of a possible home infestation.

Comments: _____

Submitted by: _____

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APPENDIX B

Sample Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We have recently found a bedbug specimen in your child's classroom. Bed bugs are a nuisance, but their bites are not known to spread disease. They are usually active and feed on blood at night. The bite is usually painless; but may become swollen and itch, much like a mosquito bite. If you have concerns for you or your child you should contact your physician. On a voluntary basis, you may also wish to consider supplying your child with a plastic bag to contain his/her personal belonging while at school. This would serve as a proactive measure.

The source of bedbugs often cannot be determined, as bed bugs may be found in many places including hotels, planes, motels, trains, and movie theatres. Even though it is unlikely for bed bugs to be spread in schools, Paterson Public Schools will conduct an inspection and if indicated, treatment of the area where the bug was found.

Paterson Public Schools will continue to work to identify bed bugs, provide thorough inspections of schools and have licensed pest control specialists treat the rooms if a problem is found.

If you have any questions regarding bed bugs within your school, please contact the principal or the PPS IPM Coordinator, 973-321-0593.

Sincerely,

Principal PS _____

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APPENDIX C

BEDBUGS ARE A POTENTIAL PROBLEM AND THE DISTRICT MUST MAKE EVERY ATTEMPT TO PINPOINT THE SOURCE.

It may be necessary in limited circumstances to examine students for bedbug bites. This will be limited to arms, lower portion of legs, neck and possibly the abdominal area.

As the parent or legal guardian of _____, I give permission for the school nurse to examine my child.

Print Name

Signature

Date

Please return to the school nurse as soon as possible.

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REFERENCES:

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8. No Bugs on Me website
9. National Pesticide Information Center