

# Fact Sheet

October 2008

## **Bed Bug Treatment Protocols for Landlords**

The Toronto Bed Bug Project in conjunction with the Structural Pest Management Association and its members has developed a set of “Best Practices” and is a minimum standard guideline for the treatment of bed bugs in multi-unit dwellings for Pest Management Professionals (PMP).

### **Inspection**

Before any treatment plan has been initiated, a pre-inspection must be done to determine whether there are bed bugs. The inspection stops when bed bugs are confirmed. If the Pest Management Professional is required to utilize any equipment during the inspection then it becomes part of the treatment and should be charged accordingly. It is recommended that all units surrounding the infested one be inspected as well to determine if an infestation exists. All infested units should be treated together.

### **Preparation of unit**

The customer is accountable for the preparation of the unit. In order to perform a proper treatment, the unit must be prepared according to the instructions of the pest management company. The client should be informed that treatment may fail if the unit is not prepared properly and the PMP should not discharge any chemicals. See Bed Bug Preparation Form.

### **Treatment**

Vacuum cleaners should be used in all treatments to remove all bed bugs (both dead and alive) and any fecal matter and eggs.

### **Residual insecticides**

Dusting should be done behind switch plates, duplex receptacle plates, cable wire plates etc. Dusting should also be done in gaps in the base boards and other accessible voids. Due to liability issues, it is not the responsibility of the technician to remove any plugs in the receptacle or any receptacle plates. In cases where the unit is heavily infested with bed bugs, where applicable, small ¼ inch holes will be drilled through the walls close to the baseboards and the wall voids will be dusted. It is recommended that a minimum of 3 holes be drilled per wall. PMP will immediately caulk these holes following treatment.

Residual insecticides will be used to spray all baseboards, door frames, bed frames, the underside of the box spring, shelving, furniture (where possible) and other areas within the unit.

The choice of products used is at the discretion of the applicator/PMP and in accordance to the product label.

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## **Aerosols**

The use of Pyrethroid aerosols should not be used unless there are visible signs of bed bugs. Since this is a contact insecticide it serves no purpose if not sprayed directly on the bug. The use of Pyrethroid aerosols can be used as a flushing agent to find suspected areas of activity where no live evidence is found. It is not recommended that this be used in wall voids as the pyrethrum can flush the bed bug further into the walls and perhaps into adjoining units.

## **Follow-up service**

It is recommended that at least one follow-up service be done 2 – 3 weeks after initial service. The follow-up service will consist of an inspection, spot treatment and if necessary a full treatment. The follow-up service will also consist of a baseboard perimeter treatment throughout the unit. The client will need to prepare the unit again if a re-treatment is required.

## **Length of time for treatment**

The length of time it takes to treat a unit for bed bugs varies on size of unit, amount of furnishings to be treated and severity of infestation. Approximate treatment times vary from 30 - 45 minutes for a bachelor apartment or a student resident room to more than 3-4 hours or more.

## **Reporting**

The PMP should fill out a report on all units treated stating the unit number, condition of the unit, bed bug activity found and follow-up on recommendations for additional treatment/s if necessary.

## **Steam treatment**

If budget permits, steam treatment is recommended for treatment of bed bugs. The mattress and box spring and sofa should also be steamed. This is a time consuming process, but steam kills all stages of bed bugs.

## **Mattress encasements**

Mattress and box spring covers specifically designed to exclude bed bugs should be used to salvage the mattress and box spring and protect them from future infestations. To help mitigate further infestation in the building, landlords should supply the tenant with mattress bags or moving wrap for disposal.