

Attachment 1

Combattling Bed bugs in Toronto

September 29, 2010
City of Toronto



Why the City cares about bed bugs

- Can affect anyone
- They don't observe jurisdictional boundaries or income levels
- Detrimental to personal and community well being
- Impact services for which the City is responsible

Bed bugs can be beaten

- The good news: there are effective practices, treatments and strategies
- New approaches are being introduced by pest control entrepreneurs
- Best practice is ongoing integrated pest management programs that include early detection, treatment and education
- Toronto has developed many best practices
- But we cannot do it alone

Vulnerable suffer the most

- The elderly, the poor, the disabled, those with mental or physical health issues or addictions
- Lack funds for treatments, furniture replacement
- Less physical, mental and emotional strength
- Many need expert intensive case management to assist with preparing homes for treatment, recovery, and avoidance of repeat outbreaks
- City focussing on helping the most vulnerable

Toronto is bed bug proactive

- Since 2004 dedicated funding to working with operators of emergency shelters to share best practices and create bed bug protocols
- Since 2005, Toronto Public Health has collaborated with other City divisions, community agencies, non-profit housing providers, including TCHC, tenants and tenant groups, pest control operators, private landlords
- City has, with MOHLTC, funded research

Toronto Bed Bug Project

- Multi-stakeholder initiative
- City divisions, community agencies, hospitals, health care organizations, social services, pest management professionals , landlords and tenants
- Mandate: develop a Toronto specific strategy to prevent, treat and recover from bed bug infestations

Toronto bed bug resources

- Toronto Public Health responds with information and inspections
- Work skills program for men in shelter to assist vulnerable households to prepare units before pest control measures take place
- Made linkages to provide assistance for treatment and furniture replacement through Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program
- City provides extensive information resources and public education

Toronto Community Housing response

- Invested \$1.8 million on safe, effective, green pest-control measures, including \$800,000 for bed bugs
- Hosted 5 pilot projects to identify the most effective bed-bug control practices
- Approach involves at least two treatments as well as “block treatment” to inspect and, if necessary, treat units on either side, above and below an infested unit

What TCHC is doing

- Sealing wall and floor cracks as part of Unit Refurbishment Program
- Replacing common-area carpeting with solid surfaces that can be scrubbed
- Making 250 inexpensive and powerful vacuums available for tenants to borrow
- Supplying 200 mattress encasements for tenants
- Offering incentives to tenants who prepare units for treatment

What TCHC is planning

- Developing tenant education materials that are accessible to vulnerable tenants
- Examining programs to train young tenants to help others who need assistance to prepare for treatment
- Looking at a tenant apprenticeship program with pest control vendors, building on the success of cleaning and carpentry apprenticeships

What Toronto needs

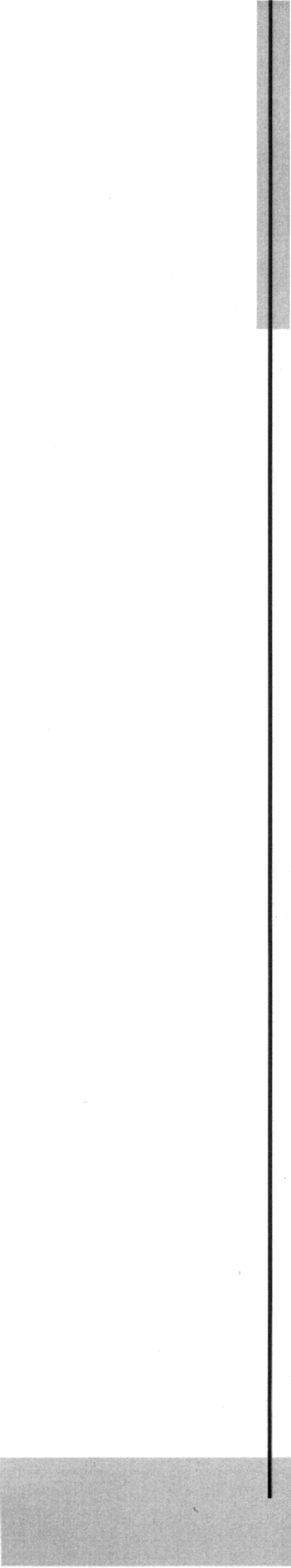
- Toronto is looking for funding partners to further develop services that respond to vulnerable people and provides education, best practices and advice for all
- Toronto is also looking for service partners from across the Province to work with us to further develop best practices in responding to bed bugs

What Toronto needs

- A dedicated centralized resource to manage and coordinate bed bug efforts of City divisions and ABCs and liaise with external partners and stakeholders
- Streamlined system to accurately track infestations and monitor progress
- Additional resources for inspections, education and outreach

What Toronto needs

- More resources to provide high support case management for vulnerable people including unit preparation and follow up support
- Assistance in enhancing response for people on social assistance who must deal with bed bug infestations
- Resources to support vulnerable people who are not on social assistance



www.toronto.ca/publichealth

Questions and suggestions:
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