

BED BUGS

FAQs

1. What are Bed Bugs?

Bed bugs (*Cimex lectularius*) are small, flat, parasitic insects that feed solely on the blood of people and animals while they sleep. Bed bugs are reddish-brown in color, wingless, range from 1mm to 7mm (roughly the size of Lincoln's head on a penny), and can live several months without a blood meal.

2. Where are Bed Bugs Found?

Bed bug infestations usually occur around or near the areas where people sleep. These areas include apartments, shelters, rooming houses, hotels, cruise ships, buses, trains, and dorm rooms. They hide during the day in places such as seams of mattresses, box springs, bed frames, headboards, dresser tables, inside cracks or crevices, behind wallpaper, or any other clutter or objects around a bed. Bed bugs have been shown to be able to travel over 100 feet in a night but tend to live within 8 feet of where people sleep.

3. What Health Risks to Bed Bugs pose?

A bed bug bite affects each person differently. Bed bug bites usually do not pose a serious medical threat. Bite responses can range from an absence of any physical signs of the bite, to a small bite mark, to a serious allergic reaction. Bed bugs are not considered to be dangerous; however, an allergic reaction to several bites may need medical attention.

4. What should you do if you think you discovered bed bugs in a school?

Place the insect in a crush proof container or a zip lock bag, or apply a piece of tape to the insect and then stick the tape on a clean, white sheet of paper trying not to crush the insect. Have the principal, assistant principal, or plant manager place an emergency work order request to the LAUSD Office of Environmental Health and Safety: Pest Management (213) 241-3199 for evaluation of the situation. There are other insects that can be confused with bed bugs.

5. What should you do with a person who may have brought bed bugs to a school or work location?

The law does not permit anyone, other than law enforcement officers, to search a person or a person's belongings even if you are just looking for bed bugs. If you are certain bed bugs are emerging from a backpack, a lunch bag, or a jacket or coat, these items can be placed in a trash bag that is then tied to confine the infestation.

BED BUGS

6. **Exclusion:** NONE. If it is confirmed by a District Pest Management Technician that a student's belongings are infested, the parents or guardians should be contacted by the site administrator because they may have a bed bug infestation at home of which they are not aware.

7. **Should the Health Department be contacted if bed bugs are found at school?**

No. Bed bug infestations are not considered a contagious or infectious health issue. The District's pest management department personnel are trained and informed about bed bugs and they are fully capable of resolving bed bug problems.

8. **Should people leave a classroom if bed bugs are discovered there?**

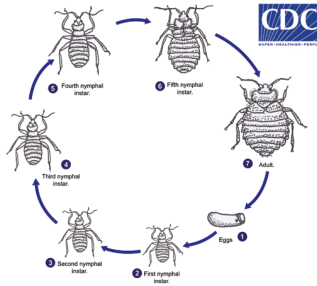
If five or more bed bugs emerge from, or fall out of a student's belongings, the classroom could be temporarily cleared until the situation is rectified. This can be accomplished quickly by vacuuming up the insects. Call the District's Pest Management department for help.

It is important that bed bug situations be handled professionally with diplomacy, tact, and discreetness.



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PARENT INFORMATION



Ways to Prevent Bed Bugs in the Home:

- Encasing mattresses and box springs with bed bug—excluding covers
- Vacuuming, steaming, laundering, and disposing of infested items, including mattresses
- Methods to prevent bed bug infestation (e.g., avoiding the purchase of used mattresses and box springs)

If Bed Bugs are Discovered in Your Home:

- Those who choose to treat their bed bug infestation with insecticides should seek the services of a certified exterminator who uses an integrated pest management approach to avoid pesticide misuse. Those applying insecticides should follow product instructions for safe and appropriate use. Insecticide labels that are easy to read and understand also can help prevent illnesses associated with bed bug control.
- Households with bed bugs should take precautions to prevent transporting bed bugs to schools, daycares or other facilities.
- Laundering is a very effective bed bug control method. The heat in the clothes dryer is extremely effective at killing bed bugs and eggs.
- Wash and dry on the highest heat that the fabric can stand for 60 minutes.
- Clothing to be worn outside of the home, including coats and backpacks, should be washed and dried in a hot dryer for at least 20 minutes. . . . then placed in a tightly sealed container such as a plastic bin until just before the child exits the home.
- Clothing, linens and other items that cannot be washed - dry on high heat for 20-30 minutes.