



Bed Bugs in the Workplace

Starting in the 1990s, bed bugs (members of the insect family Cimicidae, commonly *Cimex lectularius*) began an explosive comeback that continues today. They are now in many homes, hotels, college dormitories, and many other places. With that, an increasing number of people are unknowingly carrying them into offices, schools, hospitals, and other types of non-residential public and commercial buildings.

What do bed bugs look like?

Adult bed bugs are oval, wingless and reddish-brown in color; immature bed bugs are lighter in color. They have flat bodies, with antennae and small eyes; adults are about ¼ inch in length. They have been described as the size of apple seeds. After feeding, their bodies swell and become brighter red in color. The typical life span of a bed bug is about 10 months; they can survive for weeks to months without feeding.



What does a bite feel and look like?

A bed bug bite is typically painless and rarely awakens a sleeping person. Bites can produce large, itchy welts on the skin. Welts from bed bug bites **do not** have a red spot in the center – those welts are more characteristic of flea bites.

Do bed bugs spread or cause disease?

Bed bugs may be a nuisance to people, but they are not known to spread or cause disease. They are known to cause allergic reactions from their saliva in sensitive people. Constant scratching of bites may result in secondary infection.

How are bed bugs introduced into the workplace?

There are two distinguishing characteristics of workplace bed bug incidents:

1. The bugs are usually brought in accidentally, and may continue to be brought in by one or more persons whose residence is infested. It is typical for these insects to conceal themselves in clothing and belongings, such as briefcases, handbags, laptops cases, and backpacks. They can also be brought in by office visitors, clients, students, and vendors. In a large organization, there can be more than one carrier.
2. Because opportunities for feeding are very limited in most office environments, introduced bed bugs may wander extensively in search of a better habitat. Therefore, infestations in typical workplaces are likely to differ from those in residences, often involving relatively small numbers of non-breeding bugs that are highly scattered, making it difficult to both control them and to precisely locate their point of origin.

How do I know if I have bed bugs in my work area?

- Be on the alert if a co-worker complains of bedbugs in their home.
- Be on the alert if you provide services to at-risk populations (e.g.; college students living in campus housing, the indigent, institutionalized clients, frequent traveling coworkers etc.).
- If you have reason to believe there are bed bugs in your work place, you may be able to confirm by using a flashlight and looking:
 - ♦ Between cracks and crevices of walls and floor moldings
 - ♦ Where carpeting meets walls
 - ♦ In upholstered furniture and dresser drawers



- ♦ In seams of curtains that touch the floor
- ♦ In the crevices of picture frames and wall hangings
- ♦ In switch plates and outlets
- ♦ In clothing, TVs and, smoke detectors

What are the signs of bed bug infestations?

Signs of infestations in the workplace may include:

- Presence of itchy skin welts on staff
- Heavily infested areas have a “musty” odor

Who should be called if you suspect bed bugs are in your workplace?

Contact UMNDJ Physical Plant/Environmental Services:

Newark/Scotch Plains

Campus Manager - James Campoli:
Office: 973-972-7770 ♦ Cell: 973-214-8797
Executive Housekeeper - Carolyn Barker:
Office: 973-972-6438 ♦ Cell: 973-868-9503

Piscataway/New Brunswick/Somerset

Campus Manager - Michael D' Aquila:
Office: 732-235-4800 ♦ Cell: 973-986-2498
Executive Housekeeper - Otis French
Office: 732-235-2830 ♦ Cell: 973-207-4393

Stratford/Camden

Executive Director of Physical Plant - Michael Manchello:
Office: 856-566-6006 ♦ Cell: 856-261-1149
Executive Housekeeper - Michael Wright:
Office: 856-566-6028 ♦ Cell: 609-315-3877

If you have bed bugs in your home:

The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services recommends that homeowners hire a pest control professional licensed by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to evaluate and confirm the identity of the pest and to exterminate, if required. Generally, pesticides will need to be applied along with non-chemical control methods to get rid of bed bugs.

For more information:

Bed Bug Fact Sheet (New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services)
www.nj.gov/health/eoh/phss/documents/bedbugfactsheet.pdf

Bed Bugs Fact Sheet FS1098 (Rutgers Cooperative Extension 732-932-5000)
www.insect-interceptor.com/rutgers_facts.pdf

Preventing and Getting Rid of Bed Bugs Safely Español and English (NYC Health Department)

Stop Bed Bugs Safely Español and English (NYC Health Department)
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/vector/vector-faq1.shtml>

What's Working for Bed Bug Control in Multifamily Housing
Reconciling best practices with research and the realities of implementation (National Center for Healthy Housing)
www.nchh.org/Portals/0/Contents/bedbug_report.pdf

Bed Bugs Biology and Management (Harvard School of Public Health)
<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/bedbugs/>

Controlling Bed Bugs (United States Environmental Protection Agency)
<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/bedbugs/>



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(973) 972-4812 ♦ Fax (973) 972-3694

Piscataway/New Brunswick Campus
(732) 235-4058 ♦ Fax (732) 235-5270

Scotch Plains Campus
(908) 889-2486 ♦ Fax (908) 889-2496

Camden/Stratford Campus
(856) 566-6189 ♦ Fax (856) 566-6352

Website ♦ <http://www2.umdnj.edu/eohssweb>