

The Role of the Resident Services Coordinator in Addressing Bedbug Infestations

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human good



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WHY THIS TRAINING MATTERS

Bed bugs are:

- A growing issue nationwide
- Not caused by poor housekeeping
- Emotionally stressful for residents

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WHY THIS TRAINING MATTERS

- ✿ Expensive to eliminate (pay now or pay more later)
- ✿ A threat to housing stability if not addressed early
- ✿ Capable of spreading quickly in multi-family housing

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WHY THIS TRAINING MATTERS

- ✿ For senior housing providers, successful management requires a coordinated team approach.

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WHY AFFORDABLE SENIOR HOUSING IS VULNERABLE

Risk factors include:

- Shared walls
- Frequent medical appointments
- Home health caregivers
- Visitors

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WHY AFFORDABLE SENIOR HOUSING IS VULNERABLE

- Resident moves
- Limited income
- Mobility limitations
- Cognitive impairment
- Difficulty preparing units for treatment

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WHAT ARE BEDBUGS

Scientific Name: *Cimex lectularius*

Small, reddish-brown insects that feed exclusively on blood.



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WHAT ARE BEDBUGS

- Small, flat insects
- Reddish-brown
- Approximately the size of an apple seed
- Wingless



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BEDBUGS

- Mainly active between midnight and 5am.
- Retreats to hiding places during day.
- Cannot fly, jump or burrow into skin, they can crawl up to 20 feet.



Adult bed bug feeding on a human

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BEDBUGS

- Usually feeds every 5-10 days.
- 6-12 eggs laid every 2-3 days.
- Females can lay between 200-500 eggs during her 6-12-month life cycle.
- Bed bugs can survive months without feeding



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IMPORTANT FACTS

- Do NOT transmit disease to humans.
- Excellent hitchhikers.
- Thrive anywhere people sleep.
- Found in clean and cluttered homes alike.
- Attracted to heat which kills them

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WHERE BEDBUGS HIDE

Common hiding places include:

- Mattresses
- Box springs
- Recliners
- Upholstered furniture
- Baseboards

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WHERE BEDBUGS HIDE

- Curtains
- Wheelchairs
- Walkers with padded seats
- Electrical outlets
- Luggage
- Clothing

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WHERE DO BEDBUGS LIVE?

- Folds, cracks, and crevices of headboards, mattress seams, box springs, baseboards, bureau drawers, nightstands and behind picture frames.
- In-between upholstered cushions.
- Under piles of clothing.

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HOW BEDBUGS SPREAD

Not because someone is "dirty."

Most common methods:

- Luggage
- Visitors
- Clothing
- Wheelchairs

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HOW DO BEDBUGS SPREAD?

They travel by hitchhiking.

Examples include:

- Luggage/backpacks
- Clothing
- Purses, sleeping bags



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WHERE DO BEDBUGS LIVE?

- Actively crawl along wires, pipes behind walls and under doors.
- Spaces between corrugations of cardboard boxes.
- Behind baseboards, wall moldings, picture frames, light switch and electrical outlet covers.



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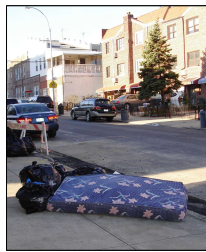
HOW DO BEDBUGS SPREAD?

Passively on anything coming into or from an infested unit; furniture, mattresses, books, etc.

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HOW DO BEDBUGS SPREAD?

- Used furniture
- Laundry baskets
- Public transportation
- Medical transportation



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HOW BEDBUGS SPREAD

- Moving boxes
- Walkers/scooters
- Laundry baskets
- Healthcare equipment

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WE PICK THEM UP AT

Movie theaters, public libraries, gym lockers, department stores, funeral homes, nursing homes, daycare centers, college dorms, thrift stores, etc.

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SIGNS OF AN INFESTATION

Residents may notice:

- Blood spots on sheets
- Black fecal stains
- Shed skins



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SIGNS OF AN INFESTATION

- Dead insects
- Live insects
- Eggs

Remember:

Not everyone develops bites.

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BEDBUG BITES



Itchy welts can take a week or longer to appear.

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BEDBUG BITES

Clusters of 3 to 4 Rows of bites



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REACTIONS TO BITES

- 54% - NO initial reaction!
- 46% - more than a week to react.
- 30% - people with bugs show no bites.
- Some older adults are most likely to not react at all.

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HEALTH CONCERNS

Good News:
Bedbugs do not transmit
diseases.

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SECONDARY REACTIONS

- Skin infections, openings in skin from scratching.
- Anxiety, depression and PTSD.
- Sleep deprivation and insomnia.
- Raised bumpy skin, itchy welts and hives.
- Chemical sensitivities and allergic reactions to pesticides and insecticides.

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HEALTH CONCERNS

- Children/Pets
- Other infected sores
- Cellulitis
- Impetigo
- Diabetics – unhealed ulcers



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HEALTH CONCERNS

Recent (UN) studies link bedbug and cockroach infestations with Bronchial Asthma and Anemia.



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DON'T USE AEROSOLS OR FOGGERS!

- Total release foggers and sprays do not kill bed bugs.
- Bugs become resistant to pesticide/insecticide chemicals.
- Does not penetrate well.
- Creates toxic fog
- Leaves poison residue.
- You soak it up!



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PESTICIDES

Residents should be encouraged to NOT use illegal products or any insecticide or pesticide.
(Delta Dust/bombs)



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SOCIAL REACTIONS

- Stigma and Shame
- "Blacklisting"
- Loss of belongings
- Reluctance to go out
- Lack of visitors
- Increases isolation & depression
- Lack of funding or services
- Reluctance of family and care providers
- Experienced pest control companies

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EMOTIONAL IMPACTS ON OLDER ADULTS

Residents may experience:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Embarrassment
- Isolation

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EMOTIONAL IMPACTS ON OLDER ADULTS

- Sleep disturbances
- Fear of visitors
- Financial stress
- Staff should respond with empathy.

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WHY BED BUGS ARE BACK

- Increased global travel.
- Increase in infested locations.
- Pesticide/insecticide resistance.
- Lack of preparedness.

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WHY THEY'RE BACK

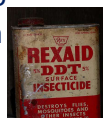


Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) outlawed DDT in the U.S. in 1972 after research was triggered by Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* which was published in 1962.

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DDT BANNED

- Potent insecticide, gained popularity during WWII.
- Effective at wiping out bed bug infestations, species was nearly wiped out in many countries.
- Environmental movement of the 60's led to an agricultural ban of DDT; Worldwide ban at 2001 Stockholm Convention.



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BATTLING BEDBUGS DEPENDS ON

1. Increasing awareness. (Education)
2. Early detection and treatment is key.
3. Detecting and preventing severe infestations.

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MATTRESS ENCASEMENTS

- Ensure a snug fit, zip, seal, and check for rips
- Must keep intact for 2+ years.
- Starves bedbugs trapped inside the mattress encasement.
- Cover any sharp points on the bed frame with tape or felt.



*Mattresses and furniture
may not have to be
thrown out!*

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NOT ALL ENCASEMENT COVERS OFFER THE SAME PROTECTION



It comes down to the quality of the zipper.

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INTERCEPTOR CLIMB UP TRAPS

- Insect Interceptor traps and starves bedbugs
- Useful in determining how bad an infestation is
- Helpful for residents who may be experiencing MH conditions

Passive, moat-style interceptor



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HUD GUIDELINES

- Respond to resident's report within 24 hours
- Complete inspections within 3 days
 - All adjacent units
 - HUD funds available to PHA – no cost to tenant!
- Complete an IPM Plan

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HUD GUIDELINES

- Treat using multiple methods; do not rely on pesticides.
- Provide non-chemical follow-up to prevent reinfestations.
- Residents may not be denied leases, evicted or retaliated against because of Bed bugs

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GOT BEDBUGS? NOW WHAT?

- Encourage residents to report bedbugs immediately to their Property Manager or Resident Services Coordinator.
- Will residents be evicted or charged for pest control treatment. (bedbug policy, lease addendum, HUD-funded, guidelines?)

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GOT BEDBUGS? NOW WHAT?

- If controlled early the spread of bedbugs can be stopped.
- Property Manager takes the lead in contacting the Integrated Pest Control Management Professional (IPM)

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WHAT IS IPM?

- Integrated:** Uses multiple approaches that work together.
- Pest:** Use chemicals that are effective in eradicating bedbugs.
- Management:** Use of the most economical means with the least possible risk to people, property, and the environment.

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WHAT IS IPM?

Integrated Pest Management combines:

- Inspection
- Monitoring
- Education
- Resident cooperation
- Non-chemical controls

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IDENTIFICATION

Confirm:

- Bed bugs
- NOT
- Carpet beetles
- Bat bugs
- Fleas

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WHAT IS IPM?

- Professional pesticide use when needed
- Follow-up inspections
- Prevention
- Documentation

It is considered the most effective approach for multifamily housing.

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CHOOSING AN IPM COMPANY

- Ask for references from bed bug customers
 - Don't go low-bid!
 - Ask to see their license
- Pest management program should be multidimensional
 - Inspection based
 - Doesn't rely solely on pesticides
- Should provide education for residents



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CHEMICAL CONTROLS

Only licensed pest professionals should apply pesticides.

Never recommend residents use:

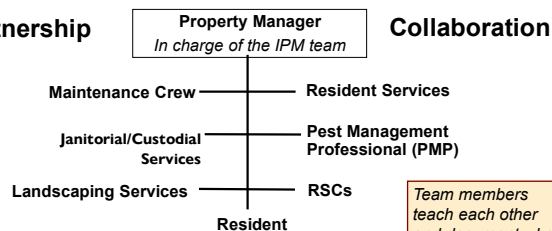
- Foggers
- Excessive sprays
- Homemade pesticides

These can worsen infestations or create health risks.

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IPM TEAM MODEL

Partnership



Collaboration

*Team members
teach each other
and document what
they see and do.*

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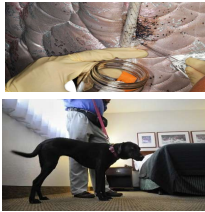
BEDBUG CANINE

- Complete thorough inspection of the entire room in approximately 2-3 minutes.
- Special attention given behind bed headboard, under mattress, box spring, night stand, etc.
- Through scent, detects that bed bugs are present, alerts by sitting, pointing, or wagging their tail.

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CONDUCTING A BEDBUG INSPECTION

- Two types
 - Visual: Use a flashlight.
 - Scent detecting canine.
- If bed bugs are found, all adjacent units should also be inspected and treated.



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CONDUCTING A BEDBUG INSPECTION

Check around the seams of mattresses and upholstered couches/chairs, futons, recliners.



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FECAL SPOTS

- Current bedbug infestation cannot be confirmed by fecal spots alone.
- Fecal spots are bedbug droppings.
- Live bedbugs must be found.



Severe infestation

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TREATMENT OPTIONS

Mild to Moderate Bedbug Infestation

- Insecticides sprayed on wall or injected directly into wall.
- 2nd treatment two weeks after initial treatment (bedbug eggs hatch in 10 days)
- 3rd treatment 2 weeks after 2nd treatment
- Canine does a final inspection

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TREATMENT OPTIONS

Severe Bedbug Infestations

- Heat: 120-140F, requires resident and their pets to be out of their unit for 8-10 hours.
- 99.99% effective, more time consuming and expensive.

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NON-CHEMICAL CONTROLS

- Vacuuming
- Steam treatment
- Mattress encasements
- Heat treatment

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NON-CHEMICAL CONTROLS

- Decluttering
- Laundry
- Sealing cracks
- Monitoring traps

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ACTION STEPS FOR RESIDENTS

- Don't panic.
- Learn to identify bedbugs
- Put mattress encasements on all beds and box springs
- Use interceptors under the legs of beds.
- Inform property manager as soon as they suspect bed bugs

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TREATMENT PREPARATION

Residents may need assistance with:

- Laundry
- Bagging belongings
- Furniture movement
- Transportation

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TREATMENT PREPARATION

- Temporary relocation
- Disability accommodations

Reasonable accommodations should be considered for residents whose disabilities affect their ability to prepare their units.

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PRE-TREATMENT

While waiting for your home to be treated

- Remove pets from apartment unit.
- Unplug all electrical equipment
- Remove all objects from walls, i.e., headboards, picture frames, etc.

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PRE-TREATMENT

While waiting for your home to be treated

- Place all your clothes in plastic bags.
- Remove all bed clothing, wash in hot water, place in dryer for at least 20 minutes.
- Remove all items from the floor, off closet floor and from under the bed.
- Move all furniture at least 2 feet from walls.

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PRE-TREATMENT

While waiting for your home to be treated

- Remove any item that may be damaged or items that may be spoiled by high heat treatment/contaminated by insecticide.
- Vacuum and sweep floors, mattress and furniture.
- Remove vacuum bags immediately, seal in a plastic garbage bags and place in outside dumpsters.

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POST TREATMENT

After your home is treated

- Continue to monitor your home by conducting follow-up thorough inspections.
- Vacuum and discard vacuum bags immediately to an outside garbage dumpster.

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POST TREATMENT

After your home is treated

- Use a commercial Laundromat to wash all clothes in hot water and place them in the dryer at highest setting for at least 20 minutes.
- Place work order to seal any holes in the walls, moldings and cracked electrical or light switch covers to prevent migration back into the unit.

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POST TREATMENT

After your home is treated

- Eliminate or remove clutter and piles of clothes.
- Reassemble your home, etc.
- Prevent the return of bedbugs.

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VIGILANCE

- Set up bed bug prevention policies & protocols and stick to them.
- Train everybody for signs, detection and identification.
- Respond to complaints/reports immediately.
- Contract with an experienced Integrated Pest Control Management provider.

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ROLE OF THE PROPERTY MANAGER

- Coordinate licensed pest control
- Document inspections
- Schedule treatments
- Communicate timelines

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ROLE OF THE PROPERTY MANAGER

- Enforce lease obligations appropriately
- Track repeat infestations
- Coordinate with maintenance
- Budget for prevention

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ROLE OF SERVICE COORDINATOR

Member of the Integrated Pest Control Management Team.

Resident Services Coordinators DO NOT perform extermination.

Instead, they:

- Educate residents
- Reduce stigma

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ROLE OF SERVICE COORDINATOR

- The Resident Services Coordinator's role is to support residents while remaining within the scope of their position. RSCs are educators, advocates, coordinators, and connectors—not pest management professionals.
- Compassion, clear communication, and coordinated teamwork are essential to minimizing stigma, encouraging timely reporting, and helping older adults remain safely housed during treatment.

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ROLE OF SERVICE COORDINATOR

- Coordinate supportive services
- Arrange volunteers
- Locate housekeeping assistance
- Arrange laundry support
- Coordinate transportation
- Provide emotional support
- Monitor resident cooperation

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ROLE OF SERVICE COORDINATOR

- Connect residents with disability accommodations
- Encourage reporting
- Assist with treatment preparation
- Connect residents to community resources
- Communicate with Property Management
- Document interventions and supportive interventions

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ROLE OF SERVICE COORDINATOR

- Advocate for continued tenancy on behalf of the resident.
- With permission from the resident, enlist the assistance of family members, friends, neighbors, church members, etc.

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WHAT RSCS SHOULD NOT DO

- Diagnose infestations
- Apply pesticides
- Remove infested furniture
- Promise treatment outcomes
- Enter heavily infested units without following agency procedures
- Transport infested belongings in personal vehicles

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WORKING AS A TEAM

Resident Services	Property Management	Maintenance	Pest Control
Education	Coordinates treatment	Unit preparation support	Inspection
Resources	Resident notices	Repairs	Chemical/heat treatment
Emotional support	Vendor communication	Monitoring	Follow-up inspections
Documentation	Policy enforcement	Access assistance	Clearance recommendations

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PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- Do not threaten residents with eviction.
- Create Bed Bug Literacy!
- Educate residents and team members.
- Invest in encasements for mattresses and box springs.
- Use Climb Up Interceptors.

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PREVENTION STRATEGIES

The best strategy is early
detection.

Educate Your Residents.

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PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Topics

- Travel safety
- Used furniture risks
- Reporting immediately
- Visitor awareness

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RESIDENT PREVENTION

Encourage residents to:

- Report bites or sightings immediately.
- Avoid picking up discarded furniture.
- Inspect donated furniture.
- Reduce clutter.
- Wash and dry linens on high heat.
- Cooperate with treatment preparation.

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COMMUNITY PREVENTION

Encourage:

- Reporting concerns immediately
- Regular inspections
- Avoiding used mattresses
- Safe furniture acquisition
- Resident education
- Routine monitoring in high-risk situations

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COMMUNICATION TIPS

Instead of saying:

"You have bed bugs."

Try:

"We found evidence that suggests bed bugs may be present. This happens in many apartment communities, and we'll work together on the next steps."

- Avoid blame.
- Focus on partnership.

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PROTECT YOURSELF WHEN VISITING RESIDENTS' HOMES

- Avoid sitting on couches, beds, stuffed chairs.
- Avoid placing personal items on potentially infested surfaces and furniture.
- Wear gloves and other protective gear when touching and moving infested items.

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PROTECT YOURSELF WHEN VISITING RESIDENTS' HOMES

- If possible, bring your own folding stool.
- Wear light colored clothing, shoes and socks that can be thrown in the dryer.
- Ankles, pants & shoes may be sprayed with DEET.

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PROTECT YOURSELF WHEN VISITING RESIDENTS' HOMES

- Take along an extra set of clothes and Ziplock bag in case you suspect infestation of clothes
- Only take necessary items into the home.
- If you have a handbag, set/hang it on your stool.

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DOCUMENTATION BEST PRACTICES

- Treatment dates
- Inspection reports
- Resident cooperation
- Education provided
- Resources and referrals offered

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DOCUMENTATION BEST PRACTICES

- Supportive services
 - Resident concerns
 - Preparation assistance
 - Follow-up visits
- Avoid documenting assumptions.

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STAFF SELF-CARE

- Working around bed bugs creates anxiety.
- Perform visual awareness without excessive fear.
- Conduct visual checks before leaving work (Shake & Bake)

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EMPLOYEES CAN REDUCE RISK BY:

- Engaging education and training; reduces fear.
- Inspecting personal belongings after work.
- Changing clothing.
- Washing clothing in hot water after high-risk visits.

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STAFF SELF-CARE

- Carry minimal personal items into units.
- Avoid placing bags and other personal belongings on upholstered furniture.
- Report any suspected infestations immediately

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STAFF SELF-CARE

- Remember that bed bugs do not live on people like lice and are not known to spread disease.
- Following prevention practices greatly reduces the likelihood of taking bedbugs home

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STAFF SUPPORT

- Develop clear guidelines for unit preparation
- Wear proper gear (poly-propylene suits, shoe covers, and latex gloves)
- EAP, L&I and financial compensation



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STAFF PREVENTION

- Conduct visual checks before leaving (Shake & Bake)
- Tuck pants into socks
- Wear shoe covers if agency policy permits
- Keep work bags off floors and beds.

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MAKE OFFICES UNFRIENDLY TO BED BUGS

- Keep clutter down (impedes detection/solutions)
- Caulk cracks, crevices & paint walls a light color
- Use plastic or metal furniture

99

MAKE OFFICES UNFRIENDLY TO BED BUGS

- Keep a plastic bin on floor next to chair for resident's handbag, backpack, etc.
- Use bed bug barriers on feet of desks or cubicle walls (e.g. Climb Up Interceptors)
- Report any concerns immediately to your Supervisor or property Manager

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RESOURCES

- Volunteer organizations
- Housekeeping assistance
- Laundry assistance
- Moving assistance
- Senior services agencies
- Faith-based organizations
- Family caregivers
- Adult Protective Services (when appropriate)

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NATIONAL RESOURCES

- [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Bed Bug Information](#)
- [EPA Integrated Pest Management Guidance](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Bed Bugs](#)
- [CDC Bed Bug Communication Resources](#)

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PACIFIC SOUTHWEST RESOURCES

California

- [University of California Statewide Integrated Pest Management Program \(UC IPM\)](#)
- [California Department of Public Health – Environmental Health](#)

Arizona

- [University of Arizona Cooperative Extension – Urban IPM](#)
- [Arizona Department of Health Services](#)

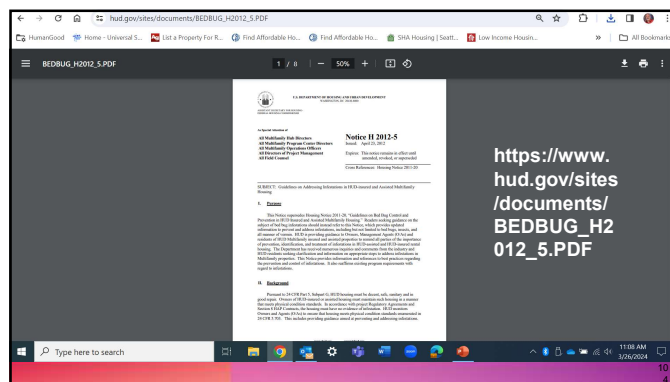
Nevada

- [University of Nevada, Reno Extension](#)
- [Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health](#)

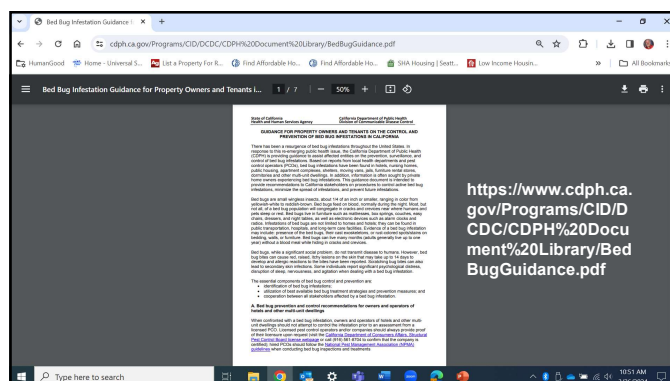
Hawaii

- [University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources](#)

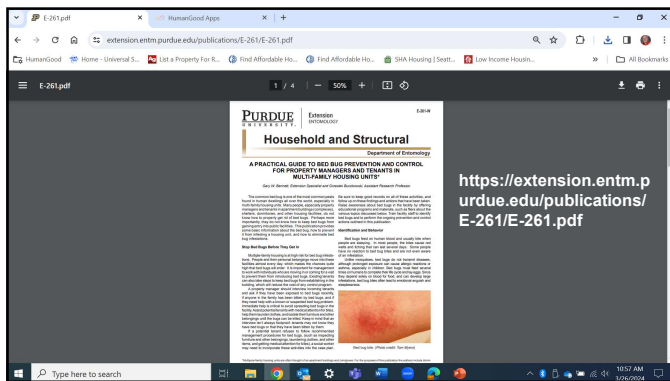
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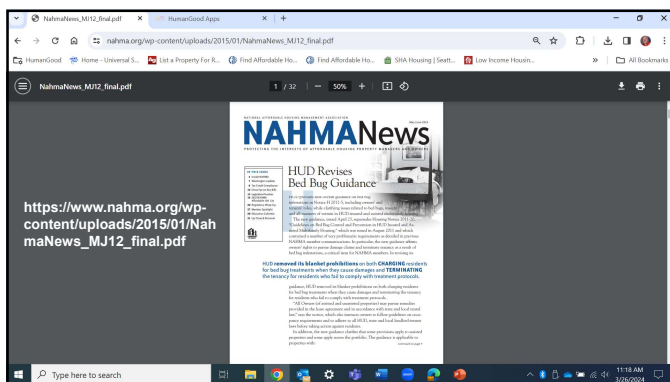
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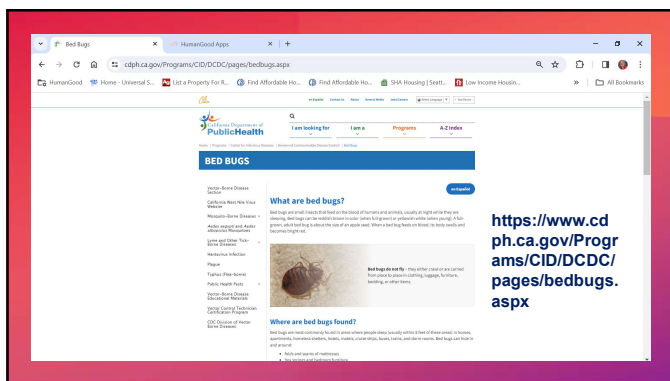
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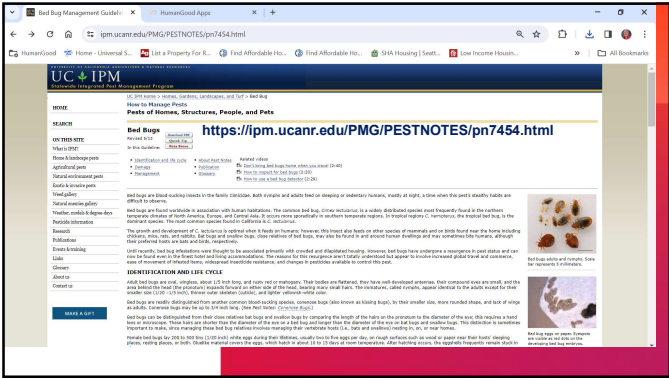
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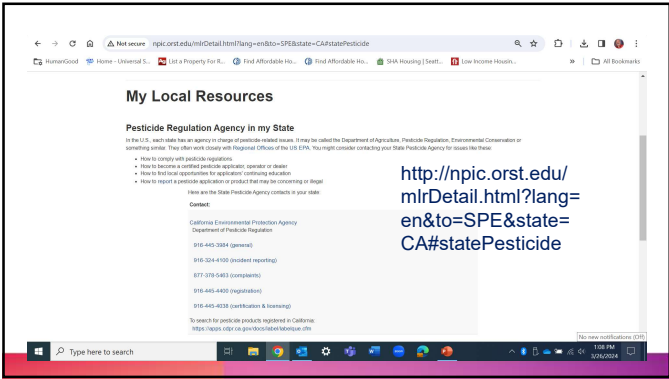
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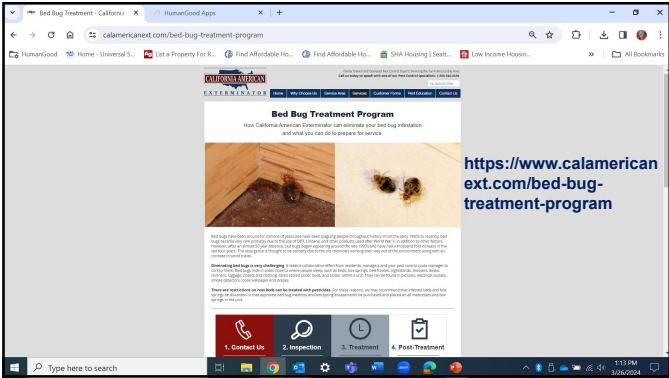
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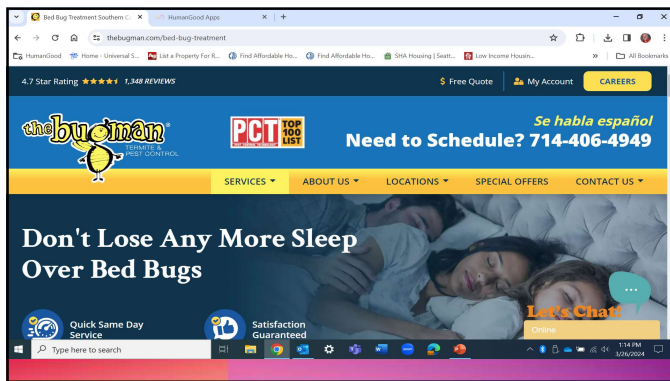
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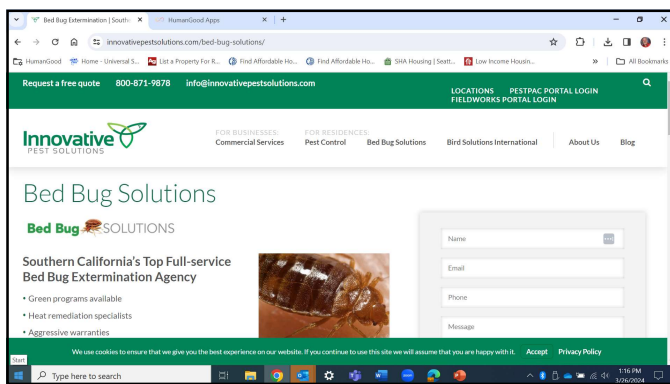
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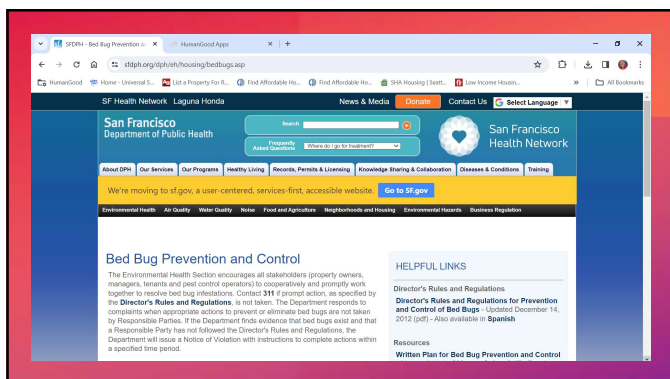
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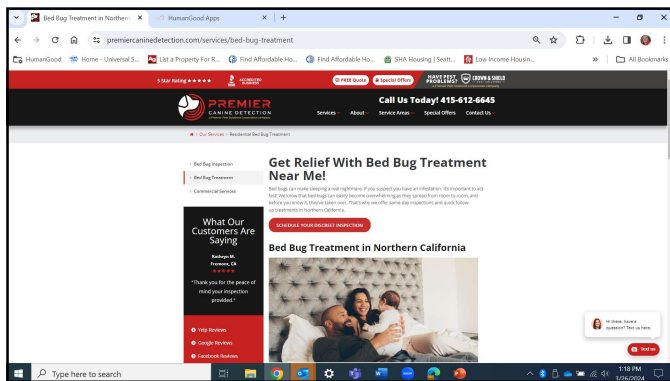
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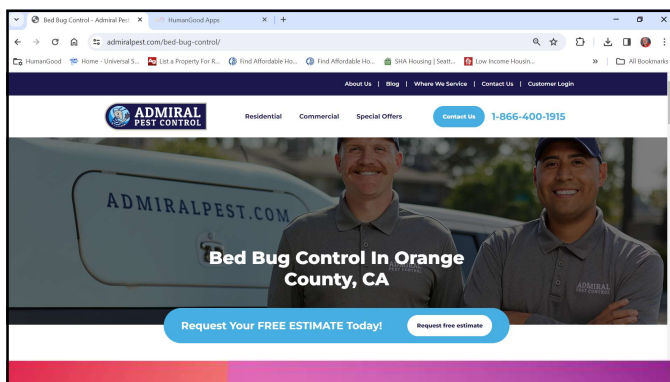
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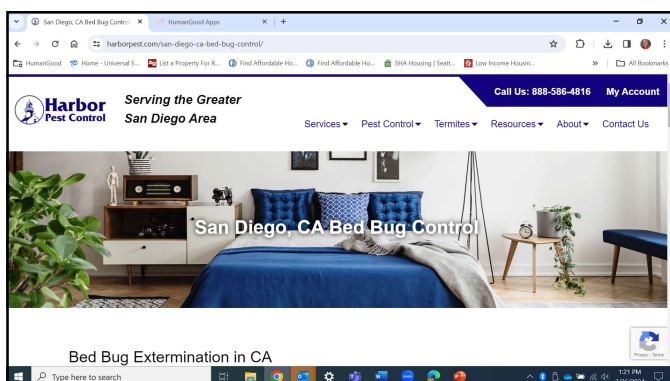
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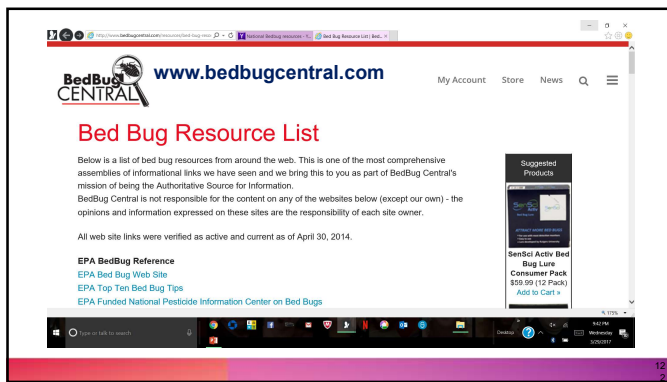


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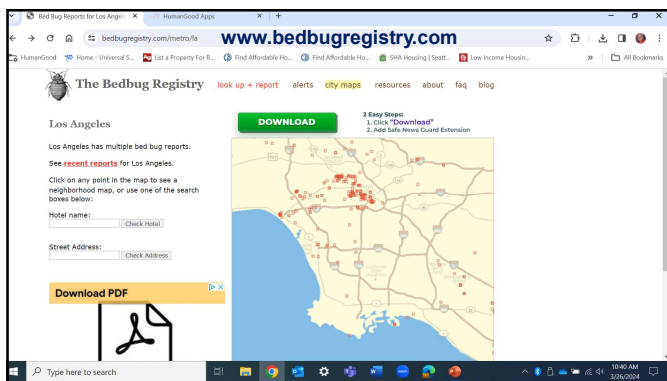
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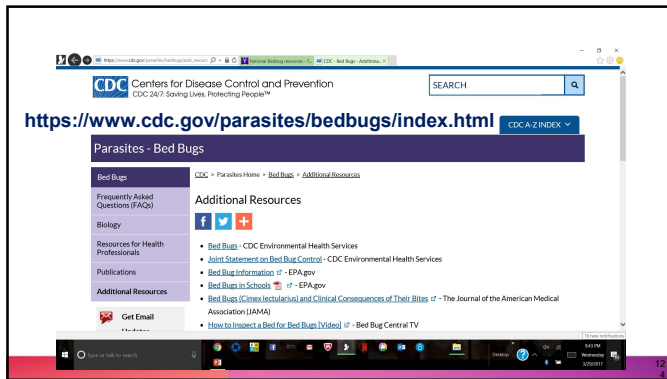
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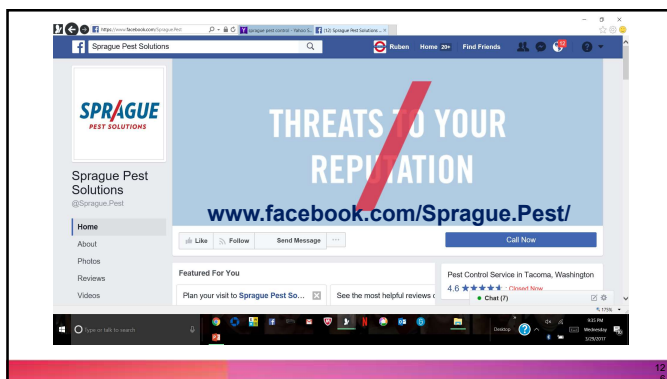
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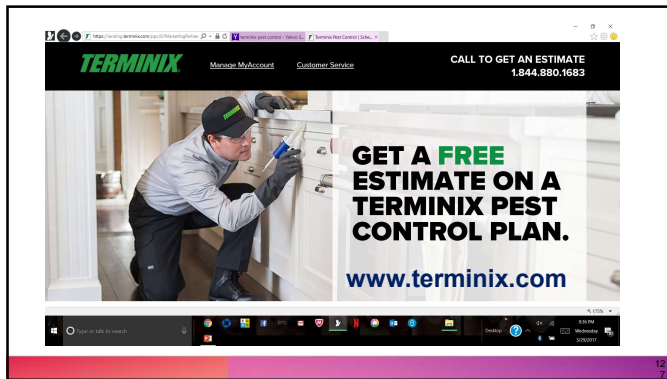
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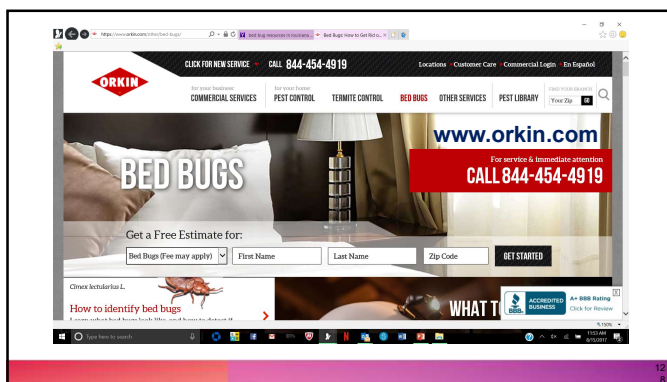
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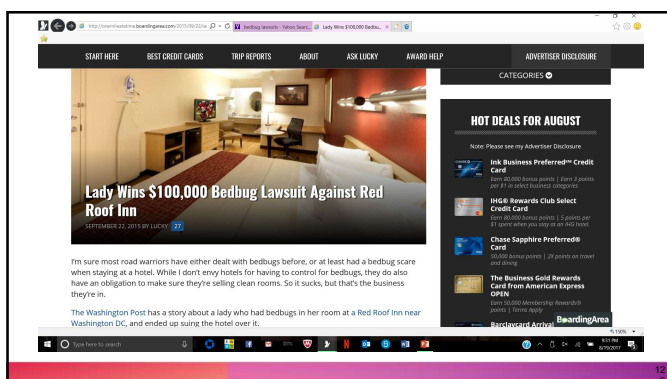
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PESTICIDE HELP

National Pesticide Information Center

- <http://npic.orst.edu/>

- 1.800.858.7378

<http://npic.orst.edu/webapps.html>

Emergency:

- Poison Control Centers:

- 1.800.222.1222

- 24/7, nationwide, answered locally



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