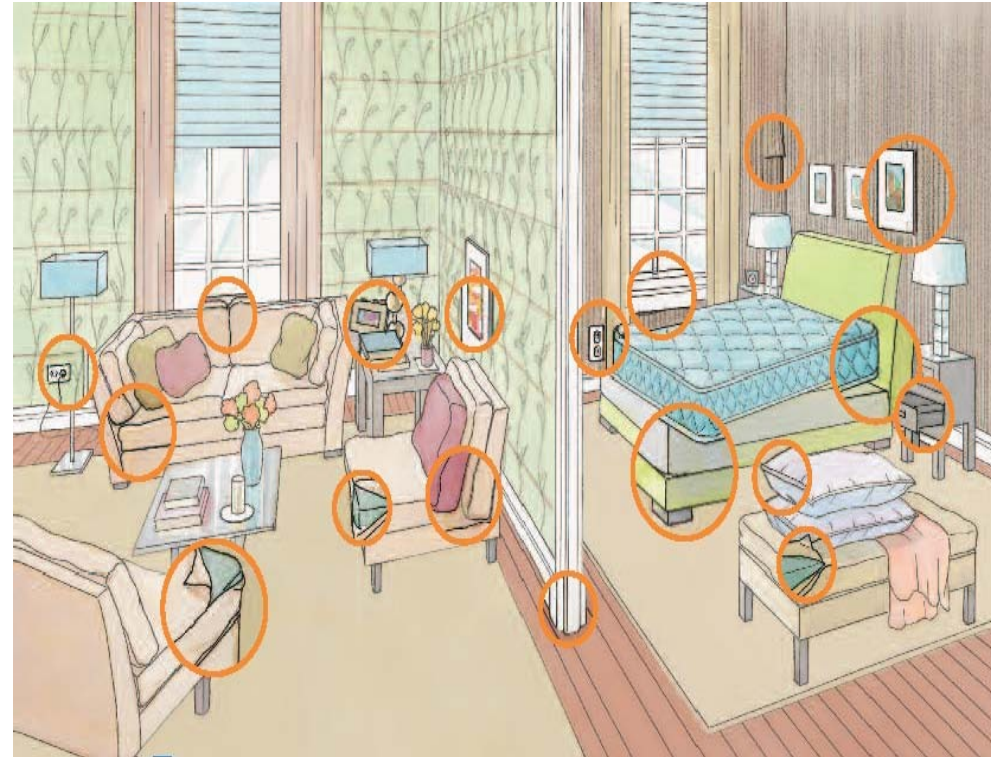




## Preventing and Getting Rid of Bed Bugs Safely



**Provided by a collaborative effort of  
the following Gila River Indian  
Community Departments:**

Health Resources Department

Community Services Department

Department of Community Housing

Department of Environmental Quality

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Cut Labels and tape onto discarded furniture:



## Key Messages About Bed Bugs

- Learn to identify the signs of bed bugs.
- Dirty living conditions do not cause bed bugs but cleaning and removing clutter will help in controlling them
- Anyone can get bed bugs. Seek help immediately if you find them.
- Sealing cracks and small holes will help to reduce hiding places and prevent bed bugs from crawling between adjacent rooms.
- Cooperate with your neighbors, Community Housing, Service Center, and pest management provider. Getting rid of bed bugs needs to involve everyone.
- Do not use pesticide bombs or foggers to control pests. They can make conditions worse and create a fire hazard.
- It is hard, but not impossible to get rid of bed bugs. The advice in this guide will help.

### Special Thanks To:

NYC, Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene

NYC, Dept. of Housing Preservation & Development

### For more information:

Health Resources Department: 520-562-5100

Community Services Department: 520-562-4015

Department of Community Housing: 520-796-4550

Department of Environmental Quality: 520-562-2234

[www.CDC.gov/parasites/bedbugs](http://www.CDC.gov/parasites/bedbugs)

[www.epa.gov/bedbugs/](http://www.epa.gov/bedbugs/)

## Using This Guide

**Bed bug infestations are becoming more common within the Gila River Indian Community. There are steps that can be taken to prevent bed bugs from infesting your home.**

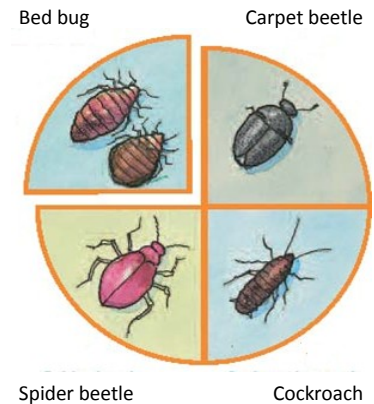
### This guide will help you:

1. Learn more about bed bugs and how they thrive.
2. Prevent bed bugs from infesting your home.
3. Safely rid your home of bed bugs if they do occur.
4. Select and work with a pest control professional.

## Recognizing a Bed Bug

### From its appearance

Bed bugs are small insects that feed mainly on human blood. A newly hatched bed bug is semitransparent, light tan in color, and the size of a poppy seed. Adult bed bugs are flat, have rusty red colored oval bodies, and are about the size of an apple seed.



Bed bugs can be easily confused with other small household insects, including carpet beetles, spider beetles and newly hatched cockroaches (nymphs).

### From its markings, droppings and eggs



Blood stains, droppings and eggs can be found in several locations including:

- Mattress seams and tufts, sheets, pillow cases and upholstered furniture.
- Crevices and cracks in furniture.
- Baseboards of walls.

## From it's Bite

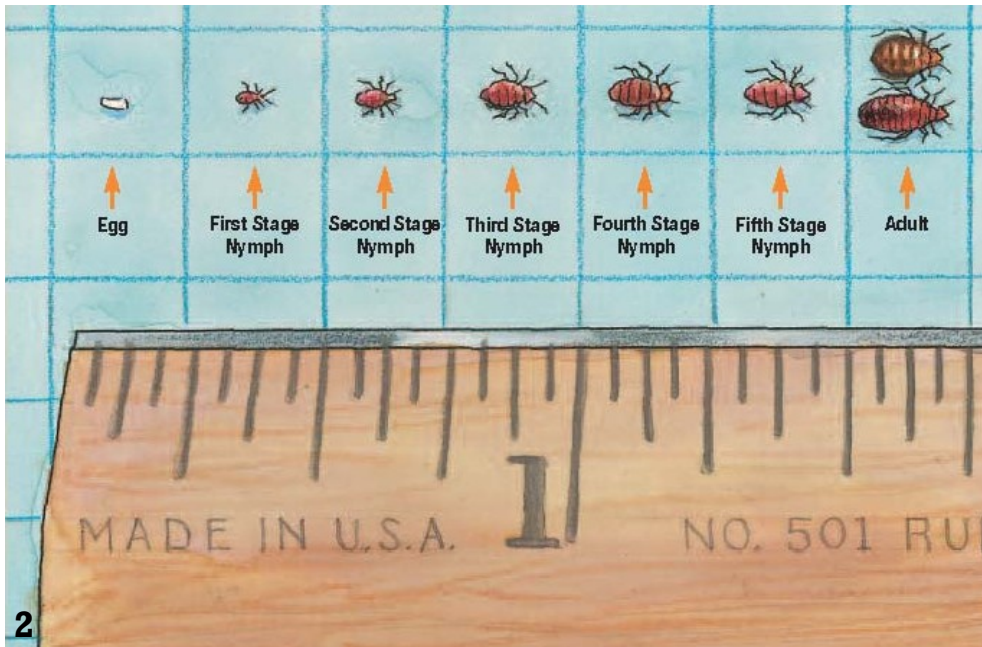
Some people do not react to bed bug bites. But for those who do, bite marks may appear within minutes or days, usually where skin is exposed during sleep. They can be small bumps or large itchy welts. The welts usually go away after a few days. Because the bites may resemble mosquito and other insect bites, a bump or welt alone does not mean there are bed bugs.



## How Bed Bugs Grow and Reproduce

Bed bugs are most active when we sleep. They crawl onto exposed skin, inject a mild anesthetic and suck up a small amount of blood. Most people never feel the actual bite.

Bed bugs need a blood meal to grow and lay eggs. A female lays 57 eggs per week and if fed, will lay 200-500 eggs in her life. Eggs take about 10 days to hatch. Bed bugs are fully grown in 2 to 4 months and can live as long as a year.



## Seal Cracks and Crevices

Repair cracks in plaster, repair or remove any loose wallpaper and tighten light switch covers.

Apply caulk to seal crevices and joints in baseboards and gaps on shelving or cabinets.



## Getting Rid of Infested Items

Usually, it is not necessary to get rid of furniture or bedding at the first signs of bed bugs. Cleaning and enclosing mattresses with especially designed covers is often adequate.

Box springs should only be discarded if they cannot be enclosed and are heavily infested.

Use plastic sheeting (shrink/pallet wrap) or place securely in sealed plastic bags any items to be thrown away. Label with a sign that says

“INFESTED WITH BED BUGS”



## Clean and Disinfect

On hard and fabric surfaces, wipe off dead bugs, blood stains, eggs and droppings with hot soapy water.

Get rid of clutter to reduce places bed bugs can hide. After checking them for bed bugs, consider putting non-essential belongings into storage until the bed bugs are gone from your home. Check all items again before returning.

Wash all items showing bed bug stains in hot water (140°F) and dry on the highest setting for at least 20 minutes. Other clean items suspected of having bed bugs should be placed in a hot dryer for at least 20 minutes to kill bed bugs. After drying store items in sealed plastic bags until you are sure you have gotten rid of bed bugs.

Vacuum carpets, floors, bed frames, furniture, cracks and crevices daily, using the brush and crevice tools. Empty the vacuum or seal and dispose of the bag in a trash container outside of your home after each use.

Enclose infested mattresses and box springs in a cover that is labeled "allergen rated," "for dust mites," or "for bed bugs" for at least a full year. Periodically check for rips or openings and tape these up.



## The Health Effects of Bed Bugs

Although bed bugs and their bites are a nuisance, they are not known to spread disease.

- Bed bug bites can be very itchy and irritating. Most welts heal in a few days but in unusual cases, the welt may persist for several weeks. Usually an anti-itching ointment will help, but if bites become infected, people should see their doctor.
- The anxiety about being bitten can lead to sleeplessness, which can affect one's wellbeing. Properly and effectively responding to bed bugs helps to keep anxiety in check.

Some people become so desperate that they use illegal or excessive amounts of pesticides that can lead to poisonings. This guide provides advice on how to get rid of bed bugs safely.

## Preventing Bed Bugs from Infesting Your Home

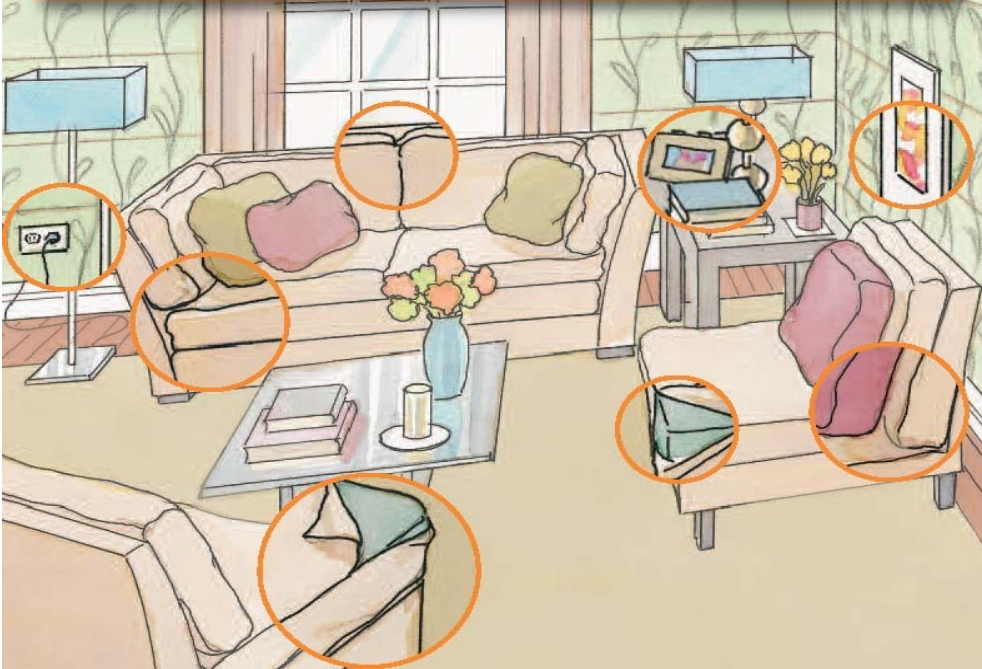
Bed bugs can enter homes by latching onto used furniture, luggage and clothing, and by traveling along connecting pipes and wiring.

- Never bring bed frames, mattresses, box springs or upholstered furniture found on the street into your home.
- Check all used or rented furniture for bed bugs.
- When traveling, inspect the bed and furniture. Keep suitcases off the floor and bed, and inspect them before you leave.
- If you suspect you have been around bed bugs, immediately wash and dry your clothing on hot settings or store them in a sealed plastic bag until you can.
- Seal cracks and crevices with caulk, even if you don't have bed bugs. This will help prevent bed bugs and other pests from coming in.



## Inspecting for Bed Bugs

Look for bed bugs, blood stains, droppings and eggs (a flashlight and a magnifying glass will help). Start by looking in an area 10-20 feet around where you sleep or sit. That's the distance a bed bug will usually travel. Keep a written record of every room and location where you find signs of bed bugs. Share this record with a pest control professional.

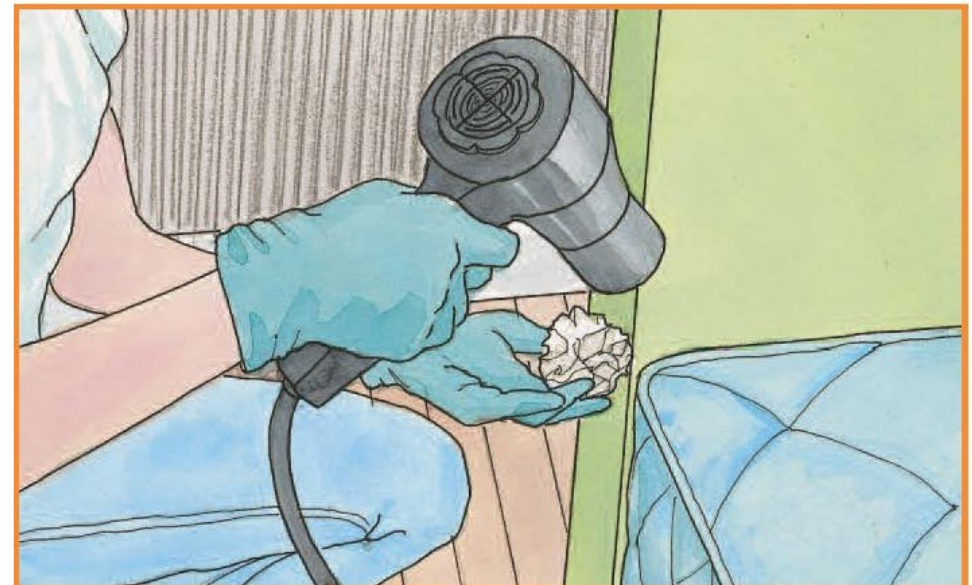


- **Check mattresses, box springs, bed frames and bedding.**
  - Check the top and bottom seams, tufts and any rips in the covers of mattresses and box springs
  - Look underneath the bed and along the bed frame and headboards.
- **Check cracks and crevices in bedroom furniture, floor boards and baseboards, windows and door frames.**
  - Use a flashlight to inspect cracks and crevices of furniture, windows and door frames.
  - Swipe a putty knife or playing card into cracks and crevices to force bed bugs out. A hairdryer on a low setting will also work. If bugs do come out, crush them with a paper towel and throw them away in a trash container.

## Trap and Kill Bed Bugs

Force bed bugs out of cracks and crevices with a putty knife or playing card, or with hot air from a hairdryer on low setting.

Catch them with sticky packing tape or crush them in paper towels. The heat from hairdryers will kill bed bugs after 30 seconds of continuous contact.



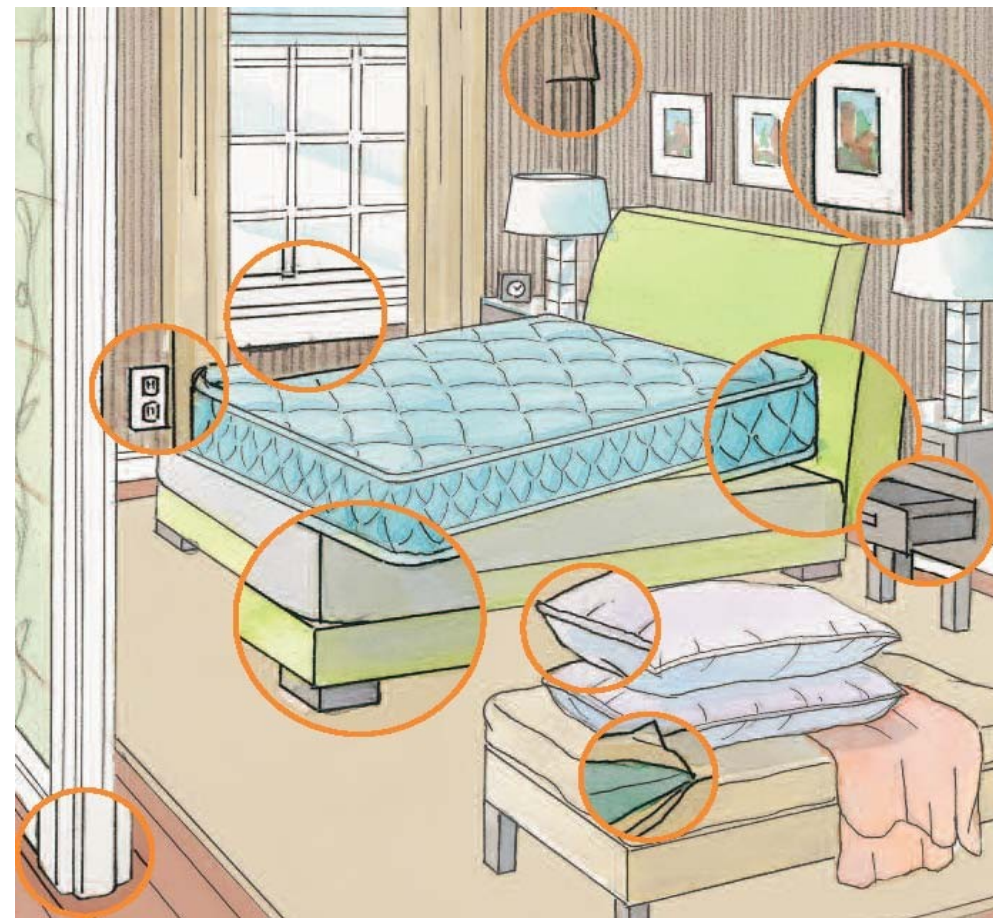
## What Can Be Done to Support the Work of a Professional

Everyone should learn how to identify bed bugs and inspect for them. Cleaning and disinfecting will help to reduce bed bugs and their spread but may not get rid of them totally.

### Tools You Can Use



- Bright flashlight
- Small mirror, ideally one with a handle, available from hardware stores
- Blow-dryer
- Paper towels
- Vacuum with crevice tool, brush and plenty of vacuum bags
- Magnifying glass
- Putty knife, playing card
- Garbage bags
- Plastic packing tape, cockroach sticky traps or mouse glue boards
- Bucket of soapy water and sponge



- Remove drawers from furniture and check the inside, top and bottom, joints and even screw holes.
- Remove and check zippers, seams and tufts in cushions of upholstered furniture, and their frames.
- **Check walls and wall hangings**
  - Using crevice tools such as a putty knife or playing card; check paintings, posters, pictures and mirrors.
  - Check cracks in plaster and peeling wallpaper.
  - Inspect the face plates of electrical outlets and light switches (by eye only - DO NOT insert anything into areas with wires!). Look in phones, clocks, smoke detectors and toys.

## Getting Rid of Bed Bugs

Anyone can get bed bugs however, how you rid your home of them is dependant on a number of criteria:

- Self Help: By following the recommendations outlined in this guide, mild bed bug infestations can certainly be addressed by residents. For moderate or heavy infestations, your involvement will still be required.
  - If you are a tenant of a Department of Community Housing (DCH) unit and require assistance you should contact the DCH Maintenance office to place a work order. DCH will dispatch a licensed professional to assess and assist you in eradicating the pest infestation.
  - If you reside in or own a home on allotted or Tribal land AND are over the age of 55 or are disabled, assistance may be available through your respective Service Center, other criteria may apply.
- If none of the above qualifications apply to you, and you are unable to address the bed bug infestation yourself, hiring a pest control professional would be your next step.
- In all cases, Environmental Health Services is available to provide assessments, education, and recommendations to assist you.

### To choose a good professional...

- Find a company through dependable referrals, directories, or professional associations and check to make sure they are licensed with GRIC's Department of Environmental Quality, Pesticide Office: 520-562-2234.
  - Interview several companies before choosing. Ask about their training, and their approach to controlling bed bugs. Make sure they follow the procedures described in this guide.

- Agree on a service plan and its cost. Expect at least two treatment visits and a third follow-up visit to confirm that bed bugs have been eliminated. Severe infestations or cluttered homes may take more visits to eliminate bed bugs.

### A good company will...

- Inspect your residence before giving you a price quote or begin any pesticide application.
- Give you a written inspection report AND an action plan of how to prepare for treatment and prevent further infestation.
- Base quotes on inspection findings, not flat fees. The cheapest services are rarely the best.
- Visit often until the job is done.
- Employ qualified, well trained pest management professionals.
- Educate you on how to prevent bed bugs.
- Work with you until the bed bugs are gone.
- Treat you with respect.

## About the Use of Pesticides

**Bed bug infestations usually require the use of pesticides. Only professionals should apply pesticides for bed bugs. Foggers and bug bombs are not effective against them. They are also a fire hazard.**

Ask the professional to:

- Use the least-toxic pesticide labeled for bed bugs that will be effective.
- Follow all instructions and warnings on product labels.
- Tell you when it's safe to re-enter a treated room.
- Never spray the top of mattresses or sofas, and if needed, to use only small amounts of pesticides on their seams only.