

## BED BUG SUPPLEMENT



# CUSTOMER EDUCATION IS KEY TO COOPERATION

Securing customer cooperation is difficult regardless of the pest, but it is particularly problematic in bed bug accounts. **Here's what you need to do.**

By Richard Cooper

*Editor's Note: In this excerpt from the Mallis Handbook of Pest Control, veteran PMP Richard Cooper shares his "real-world" recommendations for securing customer cooperation in your bed bug accounts.*

**A**n informed pest management professional is important for effective bed bug control. It is equally important to educate the client as well as to impress upon them the importance of their cooperation in the eradication effort. The need for effective training cannot be over-emphasized. Technicians need to be well versed in a wide variety of topics such as the biology and behavior of bed bugs, proper identification, inspection tools and methods, as well as management tools and techniques. Effective communications — both written and verbal — are im-

portant skills for technicians engaging in bed bug work. Prior to providing service on their own, technicians should undergo field training in order to learn how to effectively conduct inspections, implement control measures, and recognize the challenges and obstacles that may prevent elimination of the infestation.

Pest management professionals also should receive training to prevent personal injury and/or the transfer of bed bugs onto their clothing or equipment when leaving an infested location. Inspection and treatments often require technicians to move heavy furniture or to inspect in areas of clutter, under cushions and other sites they would not normally inspect, thus increasing the risk of personal injury. Not only should technicians be trained in proper lifting and handling techniques for heavy furniture, but they also should be aware of the hazards associated with cuts that may occur from “sharp” when inspecting under cushions, inside dresser drawers, etc.

Client education is equally important. Clients should clearly understand their role in the management process and must be dedicated to working in a cooperative fashion with their pest control vendor in resolving bed bug infestations. This is especially true for difficult or complex situations that may be nearly impossible to solve without the cooperation of the client. For single-family residences, the education process may be limited to verbal communication or a simple fact sheet, while environments such as lodging facilities, apartments, office buildings, hospitals, nursing homes and shelters will typically require a greater degree of education.

Pest management professionals can offer in-service presentations to clients to educate staff members and department heads about the role they and their staff will play in solving the bed bug problem. It is also necessary to communicate recommendations to the residents and/or the occupants of the structure. Presentations at community meetings can be offered or fact sheets and checklists provided to the occupants. Educational materials also may need to be prepared in more than one language for multi-lingual situations.

Gaining the cooperation and commit-

ment of the client is one of the keys to an effective management effort. In many cases the degree of cooperation between the client and the pest control vendor will determine the level of success achieved. Some examples of the type of cooperation that may be required include requesting

changes in laundering practices, emptying dressers or closets, or eliminating clutter that may provide harborage for bed bugs. Physical changes to the environment may also be required, such as the removal of old paneling or caulking and the sealing of cracks and crevices.



Contact us today and  
ask about our limited  
time pricing!!

The Bugstop® HotHouse kills bedbugs in dense furniture and deep mattresses in **3** easy steps:

1. Open HotHouse Heat Chamber and lay flat.
2. Place bedbug infested furniture inside and zip closed.
3. Connect heat tubes from heater to chamber and turn on the heater.

Forced air will penetrate to the furniture's core delivering  
**99.7% MORTALITY** in 4 hours or less.\*



\*Call for details and test results.



**THE  
BUG  
STOPS  
HERE!**

**AMERICAN** BEDBUG SOLUTION PRODUCTS

www.amcanproducts.com ~ (877) 411-0053 ~ info@amcanproducts.com

# BED BUG SUPPLEMENT

Obtaining the level of cooperation necessary to effectively control a bed bug infestation can be difficult. Often, client cooperation is sufficient at the onset

of the program, but due to the tenacity of the pest, clients begin to lose their patience and the degree of cooperation soon begins to wane. Financial consider-

ations also can affect the degree of cooperation a client is capable of providing. Shelters and other non-profit organizations simply may not have the financial

## Bed Bug Inspections: What You Need to Know

When dealing with active infestations, inspection and the implementation of control measures go hand-in-hand and are often done in conjunction with one another rather than as separate activities.

The most common type of inspection is a visual inspection; however, canine scent detection is another option that may be done in conjunction with, or in place of, visual inspections. Bed bug traps are another tool that can be used to aid in the detection and monitoring of bed bug activity. Regardless of the inspection methods employed it is important to recognize that it is virtually impossible to declare a dwelling 100 percent bed bug-free using the inspection tools

and methods currently available.

A number of key points have significant implications in the successful management of bed bugs and should be kept in mind and used to guide the bed bug eradication effort.

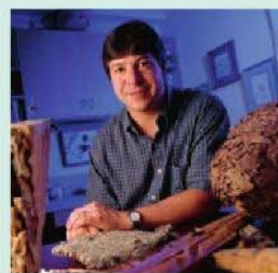
### The majority of bed bugs are found in close association with sleeping and resting areas.

It is important to identify all areas being used as sleeping and/or resting areas as these will influence the distribution of the infestation. While beds may be the usual infested area, infestations are also common in upholstered furniture, such as sofas or chairs, where people may doze off or sleep.

Don't overlook desk chairs where people sit for extended periods of time while working on computers. Infestations under carpet edges as well as on, under, and behind baseboards and floorboards should be expected when people are sleeping on the floor.

### The number of bugs away from sleeping and resting areas tends to increase and becomes less predictable overtime.

Newly introduced infestations tend to be fairly localized, while the percentage of bed bugs and eggs will become more widespread and less predictable the longer the infestation goes



Richard Cooper

# KILLS BED BUGS PLUS KILLS BED BUGS AND THEIR EGGS

TESTED ON BED BUG EGGS THAT WERE 242 TIMES MORE RESISTANT THAN LAB STRAINS

## PLUS:

- Kills Roaches
- Kills Dust Mites
- Kills Ants
- Labeled For Mattress And Furniture Treatment
- 12 Week Residuals



No. 217P  
17.5 oz. Aerosol  
6 Per Case



Scan Code With Your Smart Phone  
For More Information About  
Bed Bug Products

FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED  
**JT EATON**  
SINCE 1932

800.321.3421  
www.jteaton.com

www.pctonline.com/use reader service #74

resources to institute all of the measures required to eliminate an infestation. When the necessary level of cooperation is not received, eradication of the prob-

lem may not always be possible and both the client and the pest management professional may need to agree that management of the population at low levels is

the best that can be accomplished under the circumstances. **PCT**

The author is vice president of Cooper Pest Solutions.

undetected. Adult females have a tendency to disperse away from primary harborages as the population increases. As this occurs, females will deposit eggs in sites away from primary harborages in locations that are unpredictable and difficult to locate. Bugs and eggs that escape detection are often the cause for control failure and set the stage for a population rebound.

**Feeding activity and egg hatch complicate control efforts and necessitate follow-up visits.** Bed bugs do not feed everyday but instead may go several days to a week or more between blood meals. As a result, bugs that are between blood meals are not likely to encounter treated surfaces for up to a week or more when residual materials are generally not as effective. Eggs typically require 7-10 days to hatch and often go undetected. Any eggs escaping detection will continue to hatch, providing a steady stream of bugs following treatment. Follow-up treatments are typically required in order to address the intermittent feeding activity and the incubation period of eggs.

**Bed bugs will readily move between units in multi-occupancy dwellings.** The movement of bed bugs between units in multi-occupancy settings makes it essential to include neighboring units in the scope of the control effort. Neighboring units will continue to be at risk for infestation until the primary infestation has been completely eliminated. Failure to expand the scope of the control effort can result in widespread infestations affecting numerous occupants within a building as well as other buildings within the same community.

**Behavior of bed bugs in the absence of a host is poorly understood.** Once an infested dwelling or unit is vacated the behavior of bed bugs becomes unpredictable. Bed bugs can survive for several months or more without a blood meal and can remain in the vacant structure until it is eventually reoccupied and a host is once again available. In multi-occupancy settings, bugs in vacated units also may be stimulated to migrate to one or more of the surrounding units in search of a host. In many cases, both activities occur, resulting in the continued infestation of the vacated unit and the spread of bugs to other units. — *Richard Cooper*

## BED BUGS ARE TOUGH.

### YOU NEED TO BE TOUGHER.



Beat bed bugs with the Exterm-A-Therm Portable Pest Control System, an innovative, one-treatment, proven solution that gives you a competitive edge. Designed and manufactured by the heat control experts at ADC, it eliminates bed bugs in a safe and environmentally-friendly way right on-site with standard 120V/20 amp electricity. It's completely portable, highly efficient, and easy to set up and use. **Bottom line: more success for you.**

*Mention this ad and receive a free, optional insulating floor blanket with purchase.*



**EXTERMATHERM™**  
PORTABLE PEST CONTROL SYSTEM

sales@extermatherm.com

extermatherm.com • 508.678.9000

**ADC**  
PROUDLY MADE IN THE  
USA

Distributed by Atlas Pest Control  
an affiliate of American Dryer Corporation

www.pctonline.com/use reader service #78

WWW.PCTONLINE.COM MARCH 2015 // 9