



## SAFER PEST CONTROL PROJECT

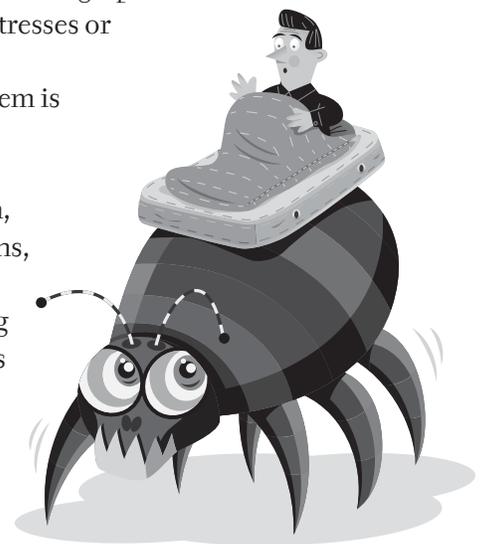
# BED BUG CHECKLIST FOR APARTMENT BUILDING MANAGERS & LANDLORDS

Early inspection and intervention is the key to keeping bed bug problems manageable and affordable. Eliminating bed bugs demands cooperation between the tenant(s), pest control company, and building management. Skipping labor-intensive strategies to save money in the short term will likely result in even bigger problems, and cost you more in the long run. Pesticides alone **WILL RARELY** solve the problem due to bed bug resistance. Improper application of pesticides can even cause bed bugs to spread to other building areas.

Here is a checklist of strategies for preventing, eliminating and containing the spread of bed bug infestations. There is no “magic form” for eliminating bed bug problems - the process will take time and require patience. This is only a suggested checklist since every building is different. Hiring a pest control operator with bed bug elimination experience is recommended (see guidelines Provided). If hired, always follow the pest control operator’s advice.

### BE PROACTIVE

- Use good building practices and maintenance to prevent pest problems.
  - Caulk baseboards, loose tiles, and chair-rail moldings
  - Remove carpeting when possible
  - Fix storage and clutter issues in common areas
  
- Develop a “bed bug action plan” for your building(s).  
Include strategies for:
  - Responding to reports or complaints
  - Containing and eliminating infestations
  - Disposing of infested furniture
  - Educating and advising tenants
  - Managing requests for relocation
  
- Educate tenants and staff about bed bugs before they become a problem.  
Provide information on:
  - The reappearance of bed bugs as a problem around the world
  - What bed bugs are and what they look like
  - How to recognize a bed bug problem
  - How to prevent bed bugs from becoming a problem (i.e., discourage use of “alley” mattresses or furniture; reduce clutter)
  - What to do when a bed bug problem is suspected
  
- If bed bugs are a recurring problem, consider having periodic inspections, buying a steam cleaner (steam heated to at least 170°F) and training staff to operate it, or making serious repairs to building (i.e., replacing carpeting with a hard-surface flooring).

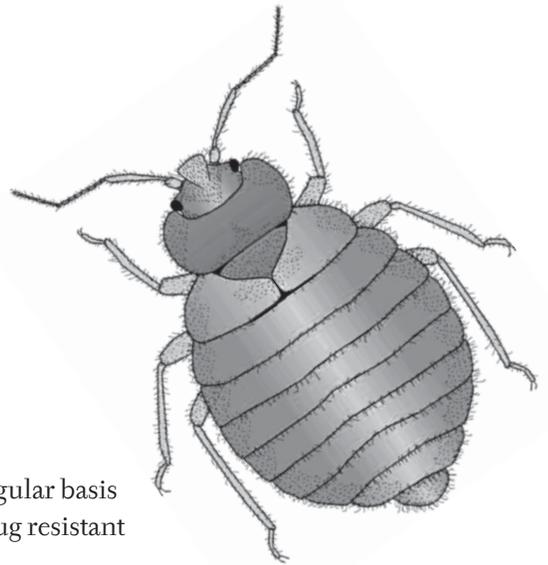


Safer Pest Control Project is dedicated to reducing the health risks and environmental impacts of pesticides and promoting safer alternatives in Illinois.

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## RESPONDING TO A COMPLAINT

- Respond sympathetically and avoid blame
- Arrange for a professional inspection
  - Inspect all adjacent apartments (above, below, and on both sides) of the likely infested unit
  - Schedule an intervention for all apartments where bed bugs are found
- Educate tenants on what they can, and should, do NOW
  - Give them a tenant checklist or bed bug factsheet
  - Explain how to prepare for the pest control company's inspection
  - Discourage them from throwing away belongings and/or furniture, OR explain to them how to do so properly



## ONCE AN INFESTATION IS CONFIRMED

- Educate tenants on how to prepare for treatment
- Educate staff on their role
- Prevent the spread of an infestation by doing the following:
  - Inspect all adjacent apartments above, below, and on both sides on a regular basis
  - Consider buying or encouraging tenants in adjacent units to buy bed bug resistant mattress covers
  - Encourage tenants in adjacent units to be aware and report signs or symptoms of bed bugs immediately
  - Seal and make repairs to infested and adjacent apartments
    - Caulk or seal cracks and crevices near beds such as those along baseboards, around pipe chases, or around heating and AC units
    - Repair holes and other damage in walls
    - Repair molding, peeling wall paper; chipping paint; and any other damage that may provide hiding places for bed bugs
    - Develop a system for furniture disposal
    - Paint or seal hardwood floors and encourage tenants to do the same to bed frames

## HIRING A PEST CONTROL COMPANY: DON'T THROW YOUR MONEY AWAY

To successfully eliminate bed bugs, we recommend hiring a company experienced in the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to bed bug control. Do not hire a company based on price alone. Make sure the company is qualified to do the job right the first time and avoid more headaches later. Here are some tips on how to choose a pest control company for bed bug work:

- Make sure they are licensed and insured
- Ask for and check references for bed bug work
- Insist on an Integrated Pest Management approach – no “spray and pray” pesticide applications
- Have them provide a detailed action plan that recommends pre-treatment preparation activities (Use SPCP factsheet “How to Hire a Pest Professional for Bed Bugs” for help)
- Beware of the lowest bidder
- Beware of any “guarantees”

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