Contra Costa County Bed Bug Task Force
Bed Bug Checklist for
Apartment Building Managers & Landlords

BE PROACTIVE

☐ Use good building practices and maintenance to prevent pest problems.
  • Caulk baseboards, loose tiles, and 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 if it cannot be treated
  • 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 (e.g., discourage use of “curb side” 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 profession steam cleaner (with continuous steam and a boiler temperature close to 300°F) and training staff to operate it, and/or making serious repairs to building (i.e., replacing carpeting with a hard-surface flooring).

This fact sheet was adapted from a fact sheet written by the Safer Pest Control Project of Chicago.
RESPONDING TO A COMPLAINT

- Respond sympathetically and avoid blame
- Arrange for a professional inspection—a bed bug sniffing dog can inspect many units quickly and accurately
  - 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 (consult the company’s protocol)
  - Discourage them from throwing away belongings and/or furniture, unless instructed to by the pest control company

ONCE AN INFESTATION IS CONFIRMED

- Educate tenants on how to prepare for treatment
  - Consider providing dissolvable laundry bags for affected tenants so that bed bugs are not dropped throughout the building as laundry is being taken to be washed or dried
  - Consider providing free dryers to tenants to kill bed bugs on clothing and other items
  - Consider providing a dumpster for clutter removal
- 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 providing affected tenants, and those in adjacent units, with bed bug proof mattress and box spring encasements
  - 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, if disposal is necessary
  - 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. | 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 | Beware of the lowest bidder | Beware of any “guarantees” |

For more resources (such as tenant fact sheets, detailed control manuals, and more) go to the Contra Costa County Health Services website: www.cchealth.org/bedbugs.