

Contra Costa County Bed Bug Task Force

Guidelines for Reducing the Risk of Transporting Bed Bugs

These guidelines were modified from a set of guidelines compiled by the Central Ohio Bed Bug Task Force. These practices may help you avoid transporting bugs from one client to another or into your own home.

All employees who visit consumers **in their homes or apartment units** are strongly encouraged to abide by the following:

- 1.) **Required** for all employees who conduct home visits.
 - a) All employees must attend a bed bug training
- 2.) **Recommended guidelines for in-home visits:**
 - a) On intake or prior to first home visit with client ask if he or she has had any known infestation or treatment for any pests including bed bugs.
 - b) Wear washable, light-colored clothing so that it is easier to see any bed bugs that might be walking on your clothing. Wear protective booties when a client states there is a known infestation or when conducting a home visit in a client's unit that is located in a building with a known infestation. When in doubt, wear the booties. A protective suit should be worn if you will be moving items or touching things in the residence known to be infested. Explain that these measures are to protect the client as well as other clients who might be visited later.
 - c) You may want to keep a separate pair of shoes and a jacket (best if light-colored) for use in client homes. Keep these in your car in a sealed plastic bag.
 - d) Keep the following items in your car:
 - i. Protective booties and suit
 - ii. Sealable plastic bags to contain contaminated booties and suits
 - iii. Trash bags large enough to contain your clothing and/or equipment in the event it becomes contaminated
 - iv. A change of clothes and shoes
 - v. Plastic stool
 - vi. A spray bottle containing a 70% solution of isopropyl alcohol to kill any bed bugs you find on your equipment, clothing, or person. **WARNING:** isopropyl alcohol is extremely flammable. Keep away from any open flame and lighted cigarettes.
 - e) Bring only items necessary for the visit into the home. Store personal items securely in your vehicle prior to arriving at the location.
 - f) Carry materials you will need for the visit in a smooth plastic box with a snap-on lid. Include protective booties and sealable plastic bags for used shoe covers.
 - g) Do not sit on cloth-covered furniture or on beds or bedding.
 - h) Avoid placing any items on or near upholstered furniture or bedding, on carpeted floors, or near walls.
 - i) Perform a self-inspection for bed bugs immediately after leaving and before entering another facility or a vehicle:
 - i. Remove protective booties immediately following the visit. Do not leave on the protective booties as you walk through a building. Place them in a sealed plastic bag. Put on a new pair of booties for each home visit. Dispose of the bag after the last visit of the day. Alternatively, the booties can be placed in a dryer set to "high" for at least 20 minutes. Open the plastic bag inside the dryer and shake it out vigorously. Seal the bag again before bringing it out of the dryer and inspect it for bugs.

- ii. Pay particular attention to the inside and outside of shoes, lace holes, socks, leg area and around hands and arms.
 - iii. If you observe live bed bugs, spray isopropyl alcohol directly on the insect.
 - iv. If a protective suit was worn, the suit should be removed so that it is turned inside out as it is taken off so as to trap any bugs inside the gear. Immediately place all protective gear in a plastic bag and seal it; then dispose of the bag in an outdoor receptacle. Alternatively, the suit can be placed in a dryer set to “high” for at least 20 minutes using the instructions above.
- j) Employees who find bed bugs on their clothing or person should follow these steps:
- i. Notify a supervisor and return to your home
 - ii. Remove all clothing in the garage or just inside the entry door to the home, preferably on a light-colored sheet or a hard, smooth floor. Immediately place clothing and shoes (and sheet) in a trash bag, which then should be tightly closed via a knot or twist tie.
 - iii. Take a bath or a shower.
 - iv. Wash contaminated clothing in hot, soapy water and dry in a dryer using the highest heat setting. Any items that cannot be washed should be placed in a dryer on “high” for at least 20 minutes.
- k) Keep the car clean and free of clutter, vacuum weekly, and monitor for infestation

Information You Can Give to Clients

1. **There is no evidence that bed bugs transmit disease.**
2. **Do not try to get rid of bed bugs using over-the-counter pesticides.** These pesticides do not work well on bed bugs and will cause the bugs to scatter and move to other rooms or other apartments. *Do not* spray pesticides on clothing, bed clothes, mattresses or other furniture. Pesticides can be harmful to people, especially children.
3. **Alert the landlord or apartment manager.** Bed bugs are practically impossible to get rid of without the help of a professional pest control company that has experience in treating bed bugs.
4. **Remove as much clutter as possible.** It provides many more hiding places for bed bugs.
5. **Seal cracks and crevices** in walls, baseboards, and furniture with caulk and paint to reduce the number of hiding places.
6. **If possible, vacuum regularly.** Do not share vacuum cleaners because they can be a means of spreading bed bugs. If using a vacuum in an infested residence, it is a good idea to finish up by vacuuming up a small amount (~1/4 cup) of cornstarch or baby power (the fine powder will clog the bed bugs’ breathing holes causing them to die). Then immediately place the vacuum bag in a plastic bag, seal tightly, and discard it in a container outdoors. This prevents captured bed bugs from escaping into the home.
7. **Do not bring furniture or other items left on the street into the home.** Bed bugs are great hitchhikers, and it is more and more likely that these items are infested. Thrift store items may be another source of bed bugs.
8. **Do a self inspection** after visiting an area suspected of being infested with bed bugs. Use the information above to explain to the client how to do this.