BEATING BED BUGS

What is a bed bug?
• Two species of bed bug feed on humans:
  Common bed bug *Cimex lectularius* L.
  Tropical bed bug *Cimex hemipterus* Fabr.
• Blood feeders on humans and pets.
• Adults are the size of an apple seed; nymphs and eggs are much smaller.
• Brown colored, flat, oval, with six legs and two antennae. They do not fly (no wings) or jump.
• They feed at night and hide by day.
• Development 5 to 8 weeks from egg to adult.

Do you have bed bugs?
• Unexplained, often itchy red spots appearing on skin usually in rows or clusters (skin reactions may be more severe). Drugs, medical, mental conditions, and allergies may mimic insect feeding.
• Look for scattered brown spots on bed linen and/or mattress seams, or favorite seats.
• Look for small oval brown insects on beds or chairs.
• Get expert to identify insects if found; carpet beetles, fleas, ticks, and small cockroaches can be mistaken for bed bugs.

What to do if you have bed bugs
• Don’t panic; feelings of violation, disgust and stigma are common.
• If bed bugs are confirmed, tenants should notify landlord; property owners should contact pest control professionals with experience. Delays in treatment can make control harder.

Self treatments don’t work
• Cooperate with your service professional. This may mean cleaning (clutter) ahead of treatment.
• Educate yourself. Be careful surfing the web. University (“.edu”) and government (.gov) sites are preferable, because information has been reviewed.

Bed protection during infestation
• Move bed 4”-6” away from wall.
• Put bed feet into insect interceptors or wrap legs with packing tape, sticky side out.
• Put mattress and box spring in encasements.
• Vacuum cracks of bed (not a perfect remedy, but it will offer some relief).
• Wash linen, remake bed; have nothing touch the floor.

Preventing bed bugs
Bed bugs may be found on:
• Discarded furniture, beds, appliances or other abandoned articles. Never bring home items found on the street.
• Purchased used furniture, TVs, linens, clothes, boxes, etc.
• Items from self-storage facilities.
• Rental furniture.
• Items carried by rental, moving or delivery trucks.
• Belongings of visitors, friends, or family members who have traveled or stayed in long-term care, hostels, universities, colleges, cruise ships, etc.
• Used gifted items from friends or family.
• Also, self infesting by bed bugs themselves, moving from room to room, apartment to apartment.

Travel precautions
When you travel:
• Select hot drier and wash tolerant travel clothes.
• Hard smooth luggage is preferable to fabric luggage.
• Pack plastic bags to seal purchases and/or items that may have become infested.
• At destination, inspect bed area for signs of bed bugs on headboards, mattress seams, adjacent furniture, and objects near to the bed.
• At destination, keep luggage off floors and beds, place them on high luggage racks.
• Do not unpack clothes.
• Always keep luggage closed.
• Place hanging items on shower rail.
• Keep shoes away from bed.
• Before checking out, seal suspicious items in plastic bags.
• On arriving home, unpack materials outside residence and take laundry, etc. directly to washer and/or drier for immediate cleaning.
• Delicate items or objects can be frozen in a freezer for 5 days to kill all stages of bed bugs.