



Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health Bed Bug Protocol

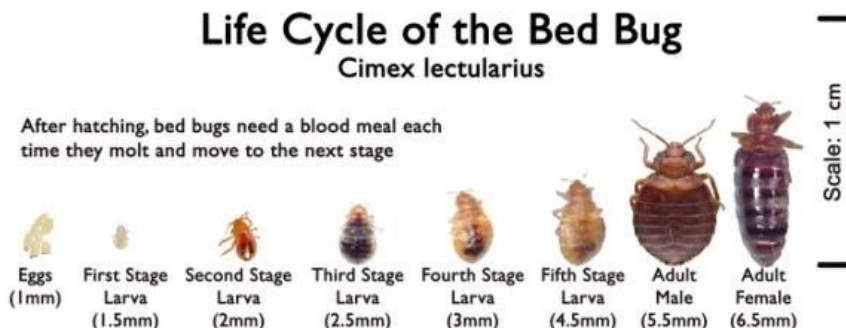
PURPOSE

This risk reduction protocol will serve as a resource to field staff and intends to minimize staff exposure to bed bugs in the home of a patient receiving services and prevent the spread of bed bugs.

WHAT IS A BED BUG?

The bed bug is a small flat, reddish-brown insect. It is wingless and unable to fly or jump. Bed bugs hide within the seams, folds and tufts of fabrics and/or the joints and undersides of wooden furniture, preferring to inhabit sleeping areas,

especially mattresses or box springs. The bed bug feeds solely on the blood of humans (or animals if human hosts are not available). The bugs are most active at night, feeding on the host while they sleep. Bed bugs do not transmit disease but usually cause localized skin irritation and mental health effects. Visible bites may take up to 1 to 3 days after the initial bite to manifest.



PROCEDURE

Prevention

A standardized assessment will be conducted by the home care manager and/or nurse when services are set up initially.

- 1) Have you moved in the last 3 months?
- 2) Have you purchased second hand furniture in the last 3 months?
- 3) Have you spent a night in a hotel in the last 3 months?
- 4) Have you previously had a problem with bed bugs?
- 5) Do you have any current bites?
- 6) Do you have a friend, relative, or neighbor who has had previous issues with bed bugs?

If the client answers “Yes” to two (2) or more of these questions, the home care manager/nurse will do an examination of the sleeping area.

**Remember: bed bugs can survive in most environments. The cleanliness of the environment is not a factor in the appearance or survival of these insects.

IDENTIFICATION OF BED BUG CASES

A bed bug case and/or infestation can be difficult to detect due to the size of the insect (a full grown adult is smaller than an apple seed) and symptoms of a bite can be attributed to various causes (mosquitoes, ticks, etc.).



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POTENTIAL OR SUSPECTED CASES

A bed bug case should be suspected if:

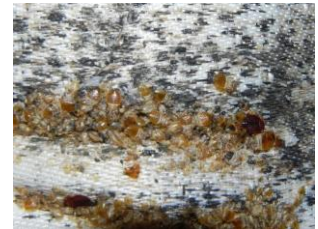
- ✓ A patient complains of itchiness or red welts anywhere on their body, especially if the symptoms were not present before they went to bed.
- ✓ At least one insect is seen (usually along the seam, fold, or other area of the mattress or sleeping area).
- ✓ Small rusty brown spots/smears are noted along the seams/creases of the mattress or sleeping area.
- ✓ Mentions of a nearby apartment unit that has had or currently has bed bugs.

If any of the above items are detected, a thorough examination of the sleeping area(s) should include the:

- mattress/mattress seams and underside of mattress (if applicable)
- box spring(s)
- recliner or other upholstered sleeping area
- bedding

MODERATE/HEAVY CASES

- ✓ Established case (4-12 months since initial arrival of bed bugs).
- ✓ Many live bed bugs spotted, of multiple sizes.
- ✓ Visible rusty brown spots present in multiple areas (staining on mattress, sheets, pillows, bed frames, bedside tables, dressers, books, walls, baseboards, curtains, chairs, couches, behind pictures, on carpets, etc.).
- ✓ The bed bug population has spread out from initial “hot spots” to multiple locations throughout the residence (at this point this poses a threat to neighboring units above, below, and to sides).



HOME VISITS

Potential or Suspected Bed Bug Cases

1. Wear simple, light-clothing, if possible. Avoid wearing shirts with buttons and clothing with pockets such as cargo pants or pants with cuffs. Long-sleeved clothing is advisable.
2. Wear protective booties (shoe-covers) when in the patient’s home. If booties are not worn, simple shoes that can be thrown into a hot clothes dryer and that have minimal tread are recommended.
3. Avoid accessorizing, particularly with scarves, jewelry, or handbags.
4. Carry only those items with you that are essential to the home visit.
5. Do not sit on upholstered furniture or the bed, if able. Take a quick look in the cracks of hard chairs before sitting down.



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6. Avoid placing anything on upholstered furniture, bedding or carpeted floors.
7. Provide all potential/suspected case clients with Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health bed bug educational materials.
8. If you discover bed bugs in the residence, remain calm.

Moderate or Heavy Cases

1. Follow same home visit protocol as stated for potential or suspected cases.
2. Decision to complete home visit will be made by supervisor.

At Completion of the Home Visit

1. Remove your protective booties and seal them in a plastic bag before you get into your vehicle.
2. Do a quick self-inspection of your clothing. Observe all clothing and treads of your shoes. A lint roller is recommended to complete the self-inspection in hard to see areas.
3. If you find an insect on yourself, stay calm. Capture the insect for later identification. Inspect the entire area, paying attention to seams, buttons and other bug hiding places.
4. Use items in pest field kit.
5. Change into a spare set of clothes before returning home (preferably at the health department), immediately placing your clothing and shoes in sealed plastic bags.
6. Take clothes wore to home visit to local laundromat to kill bed bugs via high-heat drying (clothes must be put in dryer on the highest heat setting for 30 minutes)—reimbursement will be provided by the health department.

INTERNAL REPORTING PROCEDURE REGARDING BED BUGS (OR SUSPECTED)

1. Collect bed bug(s) or suspected bed bug(s) in pest vial (provided in health department pest field kit)
2. Notify supervisor immediately
 - a. *If supervisor is not available, notify Healthy Homes Coordinator or Environmental Health Service Manager via direct office phone, cell phone, or e-mail.*
3. Deliver pest vial or send photo to Healthy Homes Coordinator/Environmental Health Service Manager to confirm specimen.
4. Supervisor(s)/Healthy Homes Coordinator will begin documentation following any reporting of suspected cases.
5. Supervisor will notify Health Director if bed bug is found on employee, employee's vehicle, or employee's home.

OBLIGATIONS

Employee Obligations:

- The employee shall not have the option to refuse service if assigned, with appropriate personal protective equipment.
- If bed bug or suspected bed bug is found during visit, you must collect the pest in the pest vial or provide sufficient identification photo and follow appropriate reporting process.



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- Report any infestations/sighting immediately.
- Carry a pest field kit (provided by health department) and a spare change of clothes (not provided by health department).
- Ensure pest field kit is fully stocked.

Employer Obligations:

- Provide pest field kit which includes:
 - Booties, pest vial, plastic bag (gallon size for booties), lint roller, large clear garbage bag, small flashlight with batteries, spare set of clothes**items not provided by health department
- Managers will document all cases in which staff find a bed bug on themselves, clothes or other personal objects
- Cover the cost of employee treatment for bed bugs if:
 - Bed bugs are acquired while working for the Cerro Gordo County Health Department
 - The proper reporting was completed immediately following the home visit
 - If bed bug(s) are located in the **employee's** home, following the related home-visit case:
 - The Healthy Homes Coordinator will assess home and set appropriate monitoring devices
 - Based on monitoring device findings and/or bites found on an employee (determined by health department nurse), a department selected qualified pest control company may complete inspection and recommend treatment options, at the discretion of the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health.

DEPARTMENTAL TRAINING/EDUCATION PLAN

- ✓ Every February, the Healthy Homes Coordinator will review policy with field staff through staff meetings or formal in-services.
- ✓ A second in-service training (near September, unless impromptu in-service is necessary) is required for home care aide staff and nursing staff.