

BED BUG MANAGEMENT



Adult Bed Bug

Bed bugs are a public health pest that has plagued us for many centuries. In recent times we have seen a resurgence of this pest that we thought was well under control.

Pest Status

Bed bugs are a pest of hostels and backpackers, motels, hotels, restaurants, boats, trains, aircraft and even private homes. While nothing has as yet linked them to be a vector of disease, they do carry disease organisms such as hepatitis. Their bites can cause irritation and allergic reactions. The stigma associated with this pest can cause loss of income both through the 'bad reputation' of an accommodation premises and also having rooms out of service during treatments.

Identification and Life Cycle

The adult bed bug is reddish-brown in colour. It is approximately 4-5mm long and has a flat, oval-shaped body. The juvenile stages (known as nymphs) look similar in appearance to the adults but are smaller and often more transparent.



Bed bug egg cases

Bed bugs can live on average for 6-12 months. Females lay 1-5 small eggs (1mm) per day in cracks, crevices and on rough surfaces mostly in their harbourages. Eggs usually hatch in 6-17 days depending on temperature, but it can be much longer in cooler conditions.



Nymph (Juvenile)

Food and Habitat

The bed bug's only food source is blood of warm-blooded animals. Humans are their preferred host but they can readily feed on poultry, rodents, birds, dogs and cats. They feed on their hosts through piercing/sucking mouthparts. They find their hosts by detecting warmth, carbon dioxide and infra-red radiation. They normally feed at night favouring darkness and dormant hosts, but can feed during daylight hours depending on food supply available.

Bed bugs harbour in dark locations, mostly near their food source. They will hide in cracks and crevices including folds in mattresses, coils of springs, ensembles, bed linings, frames and wheels, bed heads and bedside furniture, skirting boards, door and window frames, hollow curtain rods, light fittings, carpet edges, picture frames, curtains, cornices and cracks in walls, floors and ceilings. Bed bugs tend to stay together. If the infestation is large enough you can smell a sweet sickly odour.

Bed bugs cannot fly but they are very mobile – hitching a ride on luggage, clothing, bedding and furniture – that's why they are an international pest.

Management and Treatment

Management and treatment of bed bugs can only be achieved through a team effort between you and your Amalgamated Pest Control technician. For the treatment to be effective you, the client, must be involved both before and after the treatment. Following these requirements will assist in bringing the infestation under control as quickly as possible.

Preparation for Treatment

Bed Linen & Curtains

Remove all bed linen, mattress protectors, pillows etc and place directly into a plastic bag for transfer to the laundry. Wash in hot water (must exceed 45° C). Any bagged items should not be left too long to stop the infestation spreading to other areas. Check any drapes/curtains, looking carefully at the top tapes and folds. Remove and wash in hot water or dry clean if any bed bugs are present. Heat treatments kill bed bugs and the eggs.

Vacuum Cleaning

Thoroughly vacuum the room using a vacuum cleaner with a disposable bag. This is most important as the bag must be discarded immediately on completion of the task. The bag should be removed carefully and put into a sealed plastic bag and disposed of in a rubbish bin (preferably an industrial bin).

Particular attention should be given to vacuuming the edges of the room and around any fixtures such as bedside tables, wardrobes etc. To vacuum these edges properly a narrow nozzle should be used.

The mattress should also be vacuumed with care being given to any edge beads or creases on both sides as well as the edges of the mattress.

The floor area in general should also be vacuumed.

The Treatment

The treatment must be scheduled as soon as possible after the room has been prepared – preferable the same day. The pest management technician needs to spend considerable time inspecting the room for possible harbourages – identifying locations of infestation and then treating with an approved residual insecticide.

Typically a mist application will be carried out using a residual formulation on all floor surfaces, edges, cracks and joints in walls, furniture and fixtures, bed head and bed base, mattress and other upholstery. Dust formulations may also be used in certain areas. Any furniture that can be moved will be treated on the underside.

At the end of the treatment, the room must be well ventilated. The room cannot be re-occupied until the chemical application has dried, any odours have settled and any re-entry requirements advised by the pest management technician have been met. (NB: Some pesticides require a minimum time before re-entry is allowed).

A follow-up visit will be required within a week to inspect and re-treat where necessary.

Non-chemical control measures can include methods such as carpet cleaning (ie. hot water extraction or steam cleaning) which have limited success since these methods do not reach all harbourage areas of bed bugs.

After the Treatment

When making up the room it is important that cleaning operations are kept to a minimum during the first 10-14 days to prevent removal of residual treatment.

Vacuuming of any edges should not be carried out during this time. When cleaning the room, do not clean closer than 15cm from the floor edges. This will ensure that the integrity of the residual treatment is not compromised. The remainder of the floor can be vacuumed as normal.

It is important to ensure that items from infested areas have not been stored in other areas of the property (e.g. luggage storage rooms). Such additional storage areas must also be treated.

Why Choose Amalgamated Pest Control?

- With over 80 years of industry experience we can provide the solutions to your pest management challenges.
- Our customers come first - We provide prompt service. While the others are arranging, we're doing.
- After-sales service is a priority. Once a treatment is completed, we stand by our work with a free service warranty backup. Should the need arise, a prompt on-call service applies for the entire warranty period.
- Our field technicians carry the latest specialised equipment designed to achieve the safest and most effective application possible. Our treatment methods have proved to be the most successful control measures available.
- We are a quality assured company to ISO9001:2000.
- We are comprehensively insured for your peace of mind.
- An Amalgamated Pest Control Management Program means more than just applying pesticides. We have field supervisors and national technical support available for expert advice on pests and pest management.
- The pesticides used are environmentally friendly and the safest available. Continual testing and research ensures that the latest developments are implemented with your interests in mind.
- We have extensive industry involvement at all levels, and active working relationships with our industry association (AEPMA), State and Federal Government bodies covering Health, WorkCover, Forestry, Primary Industries and Employment and Training.
- We can provide your complete pest management solution.

Our services include:

- o All general household and commercial pests including rodents
- o Mosquito and biting Midge Management
- o Termites and other timber pests
- o Bird and fly management
- o Specialist compliance in HACCP and AQIS systems

References:

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