



Healthy Communities VT

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EMPOWERING
FAMILIES

WHAT
LANDLORDS
NEED TO
KNOW

COMMON
SENSE
FOR
HOME
VISITORS

RESOURCES
AND TOOLS
YOU CAN
USE



BED BUG ACTION PLAN FOR THE WORKPLACE

- **Bed Bugs:**
 - A Special Problem in Office Buildings
- **Prevent Transporting Bed Bugs Home**
- **Steps to Take if Bed Bugs are Found**
- **Preventive Actions Employers Can Take**
- **Bed Bug Control Tactics for Offices**



BED BUG ACTION PLAN FOR THE WORKPLACE

Bed Bugs: A Special Problem in Office Buildings

Unlike in residential settings, bed bugs in the workplace do not have sleeping and resting areas to infest; instead they wander and spread around the office before anyone is aware of them, making early detection difficult.

In homes, bed bugs are typically most active at night. In offices, bed bugs are active at night at first, but since they cannot find food sources (i.e. human blood) they often shift their activity to daylight hours.

In offices, bed bug numbers tend to be low, increasing by periodic reintroductions rather than through reproduction.



BED BUG ACTION PLAN FOR THE WORKPLACE

Prevent Transporting Bed Bugs Home

Bed bugs are hitchhikers, transferring to new locations on purses, briefcases, clothes, shoes, books and other items. Bed bugs are carried into the workplace by employees, vendors, custodial staff, visitors, customers, clients and others. While at the work location, take these precautions:

- Minimize the number of items brought into and out of the workplace. Keep personal items off of the floor including any extra shoes.**
- Hang bags, briefcases and coats from a door knob or hook or store these items in a tightly sealed bag or plastic bin when not in use.**



BED BUG ACTION PLAN FOR THE WORKPLACE

Prevent Transporting Bed Bugs Home

While at the work location, take these additional precautions:

- As much as practical, eliminate office clutter.**
- Avoid wearing pants with cuffs when possible.**
- Be proactive. Monitor the work area and personal belongings for bed bug activity. Look for small black (fecal matter) or dark red (blood) stains along with both live and dead bed bugs.**



BED BUG ACTION PLAN FOR THE WORKPLACE

Additional Precautionary Steps to Take if Bed Bugs are Found at the Workplace

- **Keep a change of clothes at work to avoid wearing work clothes home, in the car, or on the bus or train. When changing clothes, put the clothes in a sealable plastic bag.**
- **When leaving infested offices, inspect yourself and coworkers for bed bugs. Check clothes, shoe treads, cuffs, pockets and collar. Use a hand mirror to help look for bed bugs or eggs.**



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Additional Precautionary Steps to Take if Bed Bugs are Found at the Workplace

- **At home, remove clothes before or immediately upon entering the home, if possible. Place them in a separate bag and keep them apart from the general laundry.**
- **Heat kills bed bugs. Wash clothes at the hottest recommended setting. Tumble dry clothes on high heat (120o F or above) for 30 minutes. Clothes that require dry cleaning should be kept in a plastic sealable bag until dry cleaning.**



BED BUG ACTION PLAN FOR THE WORKPLACE

Actions Employers Can Take to Prevent Bed Bugs at the Workplace

The presence of bed bugs in the workplace is a politically sensitive subject and involves facilities, human resources, public relations and risk management decisions that can have significant financial and legal implications. Management and custodial staff need to be educated about bed bugs. They should be familiar with the myths and misconceptions associated with bed bugs, the challenges of bed bug management, and the limitations associated with many of the control methods. Employers should do the following:



BED BUG ACTION PLAN FOR THE WORKPLACE

Employers should do the following:

- Educate staff on how to prevent bed bugs or treat bed bugs. Bed bug training can be conducted by the local health department, and entomologist or a bed bug experienced pest management company.
- Be proactive. Identify and inspect areas that are susceptible to bed bug infestations.
- Remove clutter and minimize the storage of unnecessary items.
- Vacuum areas that have been identified as having bed bug activity.



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Employers should do the following:

- Seal cracks and crevices with silicone based sealant in areas suspected of having a bed bug problem.**
- Encourage employees to report bed bug sightings and unexplained bites or red marks. It is best to collect a specimen for a positive identification.**
- Provide employees with sealable plastic bags or plastic bins with snap on lids to store personal items off of the floor and away from those of other workers.**

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Employers should do the following:

- Place monitoring devices (sticky traps or climbing deterrents) in areas of concern. Traps should be placed along the edges of the base of cubicle dividers, in areas where personal belongings are stored, next to computers and other heat generating equipment, and in areas where utilities emerge from raised floors. Climbing deterrents, including moats or two sided tape, should be placed on or beneath furniture legs.





BED BUG ACTION PLAN FOR THE WORKPLACE

Employers should do the following:

- When it comes to office furniture, plastic, vinyl and metal surfaces are less appealing to bed bugs and are generally better than upholstered furniture.
- If a bed bug infestation is suspected, promptly contact a bed bug experienced pest management company. The local health department can also be contacted for additional information and assistance.



BED BUG ACTION PLAN FOR THE WORKPLACE

Bed Bug Control Tactics for Offices

Analyze each office infestation and design a customized program with tools and tactics determined by the specific conditions at the site, including:

- Monitoring for bed bug activity on a regular basis and keeping accurate records of bed bug sightings.**
- Providing education on bed bug prevention and identification to all workers in the building.**
- Providing appropriate training for building custodial and management staff.**
- Implementing a routine sanitation program to ensure a clean and clutter-free workplace.**



Additional Resources

Cuyahoga County Bed Bug Task Force



**BED BUG ACTION PLAN
FOR THE WORKPLACE**

[Bed Bug Action Plan for the Workplace](#)

[Protecting Yourself from Bed Bugs in Public Places](#)
[EPA.GOV Bed Bug Clearinghouse](#)

[Prevention and Control of Bed Bugs in Retail Facilities](#)
University of Minnesota ~ Let's Beat the Bed Bug!

[Bed Bug Prevention and Management Guidelines for Shelters and Group Housing \(PDF\)](#)
Polk County Health Department, Polk County Bed Bug Task Force

Summary

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