

**Bed Bug Policy Committee
February 2012**

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Springfield Public Schools Bed Bug Policy and Protocols

POLICY

This policy is to identify specific procedures and responsibilities for responding to a bed bug incident in a school. Springfield Public Schools recognizes that it is necessary to take a proactive approach to dealing with bed bugs in schools.

PROCEDURE

The following procedures will be implemented when students are suspected to have bed bug bites or bed bugs are on their belongings or when bed bugs are suspected at the school.

Role of School Nurse

The following practice will be implemented:

1. If a student is suspected of having bed bugs on his or her body or belongings or if bed bug bites are suspected on a student, the child will be discretely sent to the nurse who will place and seal their outer belongings in a clear plastic bag.
2. The school nurse is responsible for coordinating the effort to place the bug specimen in a Ziploc bag in order to confirm the bug's identification as a bed bug and for delivery of the specimen to the head custodian.
3. The school nurse will examine the student and determine whether the student may have bed bug bites. Attention to student confidentiality will be maintained.
4. The school nurse will contact the student's parent or guardian and will provide written and oral directions to the parent on how to treat student bites and potential bed bug infestation. Referral to MD will be done if necessary. The school nurse will encourage the parent to call the City of Springfield Citizen Center at 736-3111 to report the information on an infestation in the home.

Role of Building Custodian

The following practice will be implemented:

1. Collect Sample - If a bed bug is found in building, the Custodian will keep the sample until Integrated Pest Management (IPM) technician identifies the specimen. The custodian will complete an entry in the Pest Sighting Log in the IPM Notebook located in the Principal's office with information on where the bug was found and under what conditions.
2. Collect Sighting Information - The custodian will talk to the staff person reporting the sighting and record that information in Pest Sighting Log in the IPM Plan Book.
3. Assist IMP Technician - The custodian will provide the sample, any evidence and the sighting information to the IPM Service Technician during their visit, and show them the sighting location(s).
4. Participate in Management Activities - The custodian will review the IPM technician's recommendations and the school's IPM Plan for guidance.
5. Supplies - The custodians will provide to the appropriate staff, including the nurse, clear plastic bags for segregating, containing and sealing clothes and other items that are infested with bed bugs.

6. Notification - The custodians will notify the Facilities Zone Chiefs of a possible bed bug.
7. Notification - The custodian will report to the nurse the findings on whether a bed bug was confirmed by the Pest Control Technician.

Role of the Springfield Department of Parks, Buildings and Recreation Management, Facilities Division

1. Schedule Services - Facilities Zone Chiefs will schedule the Pest Control Technician to review the school's IPM Pest Sighting Log, to inspect rooms for evidence of bed bug infestation, to identify the specimen (if available), and to interview staff as necessary (with minimizing disruption to school activities).
2. Notification - Facilities Zone Chiefs will communicate with Custodial Supervisors, the senior custodian, and at times, the Principal regarding the IPM services and management recommendations of Pest Control Technician.
3. Update IPM Plan - Facilities Zone Chiefs will work with IPM Contractor to update IPM Plans

Role of Principal – in conjunction with their staff, all principals are responsible for:

1. Guidance Documents: The principal will review and make available to pertinent staff as needed:
 - SPS Bed Bug Policy and Protocols with Bedbug Management Flow Chart
 - School Building IPM Plan for that specific building
2. Notifications:
 - The principal will send SPS Parent Notification Letters to families based on the type of evidence found. If a bedbug or bug bites (suspected to be from bed bugs) are found on a student, then the principal will send a letter notifying that student's parents. If a bedbug is found in the classroom or hallway, then the principal will send home letters to all parents of students in the affected classrooms.
 - If a bed bug is found on a student or on school premises, the principal will contact the Facilities Division to schedule the Pest Control Technician to make a service visit. The Principal will ensure that the Technician receives all of the pertinent information, pest sample, and has access to staff and locations where the bedbug and/or evidence was found.
3. Education:
 - The principal will be responsible for ensuring that staff are educated on SPS's bed bug policy and appropriate preventative measures. Training will be available by the school nurse, facilities staff or others at a staff meeting, and all staff will have access to SPS bedbug information and policy.

Attachments:

1. Bed Bug School Response Flow Sheet
2. Parent Notification Letter (when a bedbug is found in classroom)
3. Parent Notification Letter and Home Inspection Report for Parents (when a bedbug is found on a student)

4. Parent Notification Letter and Home Inspection Report for Parents (when bug bites are found on a student (suspected to be a bed bug)
5. Parent Fact Sheet: What should I do if I think I might have bed bugs in my home?
MA DPH brochure frequently asked questions can be found at:
<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/environmental/edu-materials-order-form.pdf>

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The Public Schools of Springfield Massachusetts
Bed Bugs Parent Notification Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We recently found a bed bug in your child's classroom in our school. Although it is unlikely that this situation will affect your child or your family, we wanted to inform you and to explain how we are addressing this situation.

Bed bugs are a nuisance, but their bites are not known to spread disease. Bed bugs are usually active at night. The bite does not hurt at first, but it may become swollen and itch, much like a mosquito bite. This itchiness is from an allergic reaction. The bite may become infected if scratched. Watch for clusters of bites, usually in a line, on exposed areas of the body. If you have any medical concerns for you or your child, please contact your doctor.

The source of bed bugs often cannot be determined, as bed bugs can be found in many places including hotels, planes, and movie theaters. They can be carried from place to place in people's belongings such as backpacks and clothes. Although they hide in clutter, their presence is not a result of poor housekeeping.

Even though it is unlikely for bed bugs to cause an infestation in a school, the Springfield Public Schools will work with a professional Pest Control Company to safely address this issue.

Every school has an Integrated Pest Management Plan. It provides information on how pests are managed in each school building. It is located in my office, and can be reviewed during school hours. A fact sheet for parents is enclosed and is also available on the school website at <http://www.sps.springfield.ma.us/>. This information will help families determine if they have a problem and what they can do about it.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at the number listed at the top of this letter.

Sincerely, Principal



The Public Schools of Springfield Massachusetts

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Today, a bug, believed to be a bed bug, was found on [your child] [in your child's belongings] [or _____]. While this does not necessarily mean that the bed bug was brought to school by your child, it is extremely important to your family and to the school community that you inspect your home for signs of bed bugs.

Bed bugs are a nuisance, but their bites are not known to spread disease. Bed bugs are usually active at night. The bite does not hurt at first, but it may become swollen and itch, much like a mosquito bite. This itchiness is from an allergic reaction. The bite may become infected if scratched. Watch for clusters of bites, usually in a line, on exposed areas of the body. If you have any medical concerns for you or your child, please contact your doctor.

Enclosed is a fact sheet for parent on bed bugs.

If you or your landlord hires a pest management company to inspect or treat your home for bedbugs, we recommend that you use a company that practices *integrated pest management* techniques, which are the safest and least toxic (hazardous) methods to address the problem.

Once you have inspected your home, please fill out the form below and return to the school office by [insert two weeks].

Sincerely,

School Principal

I have been informed that a bug suspected to be a bed bug was found on my child at school. I have read and understood the educational materials provided to me regarding bed bugs, and have:

- inspected my family and home for signs of bed bug infestation by myself, my landlord or apartment manager, or
- hired a pest control company to check my family and home for signs of bed bug infestation.
Name of pest control company: _____

I understand that bed bugs can be spread to other homes if they are brought to school in backpacks, clothing, and other belongings. I understand that if bed bugs are repeatedly found on my child, that the school may take additional actions to protect the school community.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Pest Control Company Signature: _____

Landlord Signature or Apartment Manager Signature: _____



The Public Schools of Springfield Massachusetts

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Our school nurse found bug bites on your child today. They may be from a bed bug. While this does not necessarily mean that bed bug bites came from bed bugs in your home, it is important to inspect your home.

Bed bugs are a nuisance, but their bites are not known to spread disease. Bed bugs are usually active at night. The bite does not hurt at first, but it may become swollen and itch, much like a mosquito bite. This itchiness is from an allergic reaction. The bite may become infected if scratched. Watch for clusters of bites, usually in a line, on exposed areas of the body. If you have any medical concerns for you or your child, please contact your doctor.

If you or your landlord hires a pest management company to inspect or treat your home for bedbugs, we recommend that you use a company that practices *integrated pest management* techniques, which are the safest and least toxic (hazardous) methods to address the problem.

Once you have inspected your home, please fill out the form below and return to the school office by _____.

Sincerely,

School Principal

I have been informed that bug bites were found on my child. I have read and understood the educational materials provided to me regarding bed bugs, and have:

- inspected my family and home for signs of bed bug infestation myself, my landlord or apartment manager, or
- hired a pest control company to check my family and home for signs of bed bug infestation.
Name of pest control company: _____

I understand that bed bugs can be spread to other homes if they are brought to school in backpacks, clothing, and other belongings. I understand that if bed bugs are repeatedly found on my child, that the school may take additional actions to protect the school community.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Pest Control Company Signature: _____

Landlord Signature or Apartment Manager Signature: _____

Parent Fact Sheet: What should I do if I think I might have bed bugs in my home?

What are bed bugs?

Bed bugs have become a serious pest across the U.S. They are found in all types of indoor spaces, including homes, schools, hotels, hospitals, etc. Pest companies that used to get a call or two a year, are now receiving calls every week. Although they can be difficult to control, they can be eliminated and prevented.

Bed bugs, like mosquitoes, are insects that bite to feed on blood from people, animals and birds. They usually bite at night when people are sleeping. They feed for 3-15 minutes and then leave the person. It is rare to find bed bugs feeding.

They can live for up to 1 ½ years, and they can live more than a year without feeding. They can tolerate a wide range of temperatures, from nearly freezing to 122 degrees F.

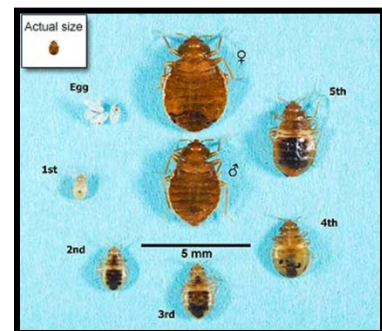
Bed bugs can breed all year. Under the right conditions, they can lay up to 500 eggs a year.

What do they look like?

Adults are flat until they feed. They are oval shaped and reddish brown color. They are about 1/4 inch-long.

Bed bugs size can vary from that of a poppy seed to an apple seed-size, depending on their age.

Bed bugs may be confused with other household insects such as cockroaches, beetles, etc.



Where are bed bugs found and how do they get there?

Bed bugs live in the home, primarily around the bed where their food is! They spread out to other places (as their numbers increase) such as nightstands, dressers, other furniture, baseboards, under carpet tack strip, any small cracks, behind posters, clocks, etc. near the bed as they want to stay as close to their food as possible! They hide in cracks and crevices during day. They will also live in upholstered chairs and sofas. When you see them farther away from the bed, it may be a sign that there is a good-sized infestation.

They cannot fly or jump, but can run fast. Thus, they can travel through a building, including through openings in walls to adjacent rooms.

They can catch a ride on people's belongings such as backpacks, clothes, etc. Since they are often found on thrown-out furniture, you should not take furniture from the street.

Do I have bed bugs?

The first sign of bed bugs is usually a group of bites. Check the following locations for bugs and stains:

- sheets, pillows and blankets
- bed frame, in seams & puckers of mattress and box spring
- floor, carpet edges and moldings
- inside and underneath drawers
- radios, phones, clocks near the bed or on a nightstand



Will bed bugs make my family sick?

Bed bugs do not transmit diseases to people. Their bites can cause an allergic reaction that forms a red swollen welt that itches.

They tend to bite all over the body, especially on areas exposed while we sleep, such as the face, neck, arms, and hands. Bites are painless, and most people do not know they are being bitten until they wake up.



What do I do if I find bugs or bug bites?

- Get Help – DON'T PANIC, but seek help quickly, within 24 hours.
 - Contact your landlord or building manager to arrange for someone to inspect.
 - Contact a pest control company. You can contact the National Pest Management Association or the New England Pest Management Association to find a company. You can ask the company to give you references of other families they have worked with. Ask the company if they use integrated pest management practices, which are the safest.
 - Inspect your home.
- Get a Sample
 - If you see bugs or evidence of them, capture them on sticky tape or on a tissue and store them in a sealed plastic bag in the freezer for identification by a pest control company. Don't assume that they are bed bugs.
 - Do not move belongings until confirming that you have bed bugs.

How do I prepare my house for an inspection?

Preparation of a room for inspection and treatment is essential to the successful management of bed bugs. Most pest control technicians prefer to conduct an inspection BEFORE any cleaning or rearranging has occurred. This helps them see the full extent of the problem, and also prevents the disturbance and spread of bed bugs before treatment. However, once bed bugs have been located and the size of the problem has been estimated, you must prepare the room to ensure that the pest control technician has access to treat. Suggested room preparation steps include:

- Remove all blankets, sheets, covers, pillows, bath towels, and drapes/curtains from the bed and room. Place them into bags for transport to the laundry.
- Empty drawers and closets and place into clear plastic bags for transport to the laundry. Shoes, pillows, and children's stuffed toys should be bagged for the laundry.
- Plastic toys, books, electronics, and anything that cannot be washed should be bagged separately for inspection.
- The room should be empty of all cloth and plush items, except upholstered (has fabric) furniture. If possible, the pillows of furniture should be removed and laundered. Move furniture at least 18 inches away from the walls.
- Remove electrical outlet covers and switch plates on all walls.
- Remove picture frames from the walls and clean.
- All clothing, linens and other items must be cleaned (free of bed bugs). They must be kept separated until the bed bug problem is eliminated.

How can I get rid of bed bugs?

DO's - Clean your living space thoroughly if someone confirms that bed bugs are present. Although they are not due to poor housekeeping, removing clutter eliminates places for them to hide. It is a critical step in getting rid of bed bugs. It includes the following tasks:

- **Inspect** (see also list above)
 - Inspect personal belongings (shoes, coats, pillows, children's stuffed toys, backpacks, etc.) and household items (linens, small rugs, mattresses, etc.).
 - Seal in plastic bags or bins. Do not use cardboard boxes as bed bugs can hide in folds and will deposit eggs there. Unless you are sure that there are no bed bugs on personal belongings, they should remain in the sealed bag or bin until they can be carefully inspected or washed.
 - Open and inspect outlets and electrical switch plates. Be careful!
- **Wash Laundry** – Washing does not kill them 100%. Drying laundry on HIGH (113 °F) for an 1 hour is more important than washing:
 - Wash and dry all clothing, bed sheets, blankets and pillowcases on hot settings. Do not overstuff the dryer as the heat must reach all of the items.
 - Shoes, pillows, curtains, coats, plush toys can all be placed into a dryer at a medium to high temperature. They do not need to be washed first.
- **Seal and Store Cleaned Items**
 - Seal newly laundered items in fresh bags to prevent re-infestation. You can get dissolvable laundry bags that will limit the possibility of bed bug escapes because you can put the bag with the laundry into the washer without removing the items.
 - Use clear plastic bags so that you can see the bugs inside of them.
 - Keep cleaned items separate from items that have not been checked or cleaned.
 - Store them away from the problem area.
- **Remove Clutter and Create Access to Areas for Inspection**
 - Pick up and organize your personal belongings to reduce the amount of clutter.
 - Provide access to all walls, closets, space around the bed and furniture.
- **Clean and Vacuum**
 - Empty the room of all personal belongings.
 - Vacuum the floor with a brush attachment. Afterwards, clean all washable parts (such as the brush attachment) in hot water and detergent. Seal vacuum bags in plastic and dispose of them immediately as they can contain live bed bugs.).
 - Wash the floors.
 - Vacuum the mattress and box spring to remove any live bugs and debris. Immediately put the mattress in a sealed cover.
 - Wash hard furniture, floors, and walls liberally with soapy water.



- ❑ Wash in and around any non-electric heating units (such as steam pipes or radiators).
- **Freezing** items at 23°F for five days will also kill the bugs.
- **Steam Cleaning** will also kill bed bugs at all stages.
- **Encasements (covers)** for mattresses and box springs are effective way to deal with an infested mattress and to prevent one from becoming infested. They must not have any holes or tears. If the mattress and box spring is infested, it must stay in the encasement for 18 months.
- **Follow more thorough instructions** given to you by the building’s management staff or pest control technician. Have them determine which items can be kept and which ones need to be disposed of. Without your cooperation, the bugs will not be eliminated. There are no simple ways to kill bed bugs.
- **Notification** – if you live in multi-family housing and your landlord is going to have the pest control technician use pesticides to treat the bed bugs, they are required to notify you in writing with 2 to 7 days prior to the treatment. They are required to reinspect about two weeks after treatment.

DON'Ts

1. **Do not use** any over the counter “bug bombs” or insect killers on your own. You will only spread the bed bugs further into your living space and belongings. Also, pesticides are toxic and can harm your family. Young children, the elderly and people with compromised immune systems are particularly at risk.
2. **Do not pick up discarded items** on the street. Although there are many valuable items being tossed away, today many of these items, including clothes and shoes, are already infested with bed bugs. **Carefully inspect any used furniture.**

Adapted from:

1. Guidelines for Prevention and Management of Bed Bugs in Shelters and Group Living Facilities by J. Gangloff-Kauffman, J. and C. Pilcher. 2008
2. Protocols for Prevention and Control of bedbugs in Multiunit Housing, 10/09, University of Massachusetts IPM Program, Boston Public Health Commission, NY IPM Program Cornell University, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Boston Inspectional Services, Boston Housing Authority, Rivard’s Resources

Springfield Public Schools - Bed Bug Management Flow Chart

