

Don't Let Bed Bugs Drain Your Rating



Hospitality, Office Building & Apartment Industry Guide
to Bed-Bug-Proofing Your Company's Reputation



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04-06

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Avoid Creeped-Out Consumers

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Bed bugs can live for a long period—over a year—without a blood meal.

Here's the bad news...

they feed only on blood, mostly human blood, while people are sleeping at night. They're not necessarily attracted to unsanitary or unclean environments, so even the cleanest of areas are susceptible to these pests. Their bites aren't known to transmit disease, but they are known to transmit psychological anxiety through stress and lack of sleep.

Bed bugs are reddish-brown, typically $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch long, oval shaped with six legs. Their small shape allows them to fit into the tiniest of places and camp out for extended periods of time. They travel

in seams and folds of luggage, gym bags, clothes, bedding, furniture, and anywhere they can hide and journey to their next home.

If you want your guests' and tenants' panic contained (and blood staying where it belongs), then avoiding bed bugs at all costs is a must for your property and reputation. The best way to prevent this problematic pest and potential public relations nightmare is regular bed bug inspection by professionals. Don't worry, Western® is here to provide the information you need to prepare for this nighttime critter nightmare.

Where Did the Prevalence of Bed Bugs Come From?

Increased international travel over the past few decades has spawned a major resurgence of bed bugs. Additionally, changes in pest elimination practices, lack of societal awareness, and increases in purchases of second hand merchandise have all encouraged the proliferation of bed bugs across the nation.

Bed Bugs Can Suck the Life Out of Your Brand's Reputation



The Power of Ratings

84% 

of People Trust Online Reviews As Much As Friends¹

Customers race off to offer online reviews, and like the pest itself, once word spreads that your property has bed bugs, it can be difficult to contain.

GOODBYE 

to 30 New Customers⁴

One negative review can cost an organization up to 30 new customers based on the tainted perception of the company.



80%

of Consumers Will Go Elsewhere²
(i.e. a competitor) if they read bad reviews about your business online, including those mentioning bed bugs.

2-3X MORE LIKELY

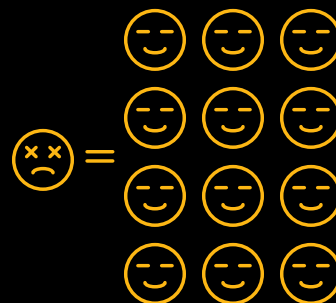
to Post Negative Experiences³

Customers who have a bad experience are 2-3 times more likely to post a negative review than those customers who had a positive experience.



12X THE EFFORT⁵

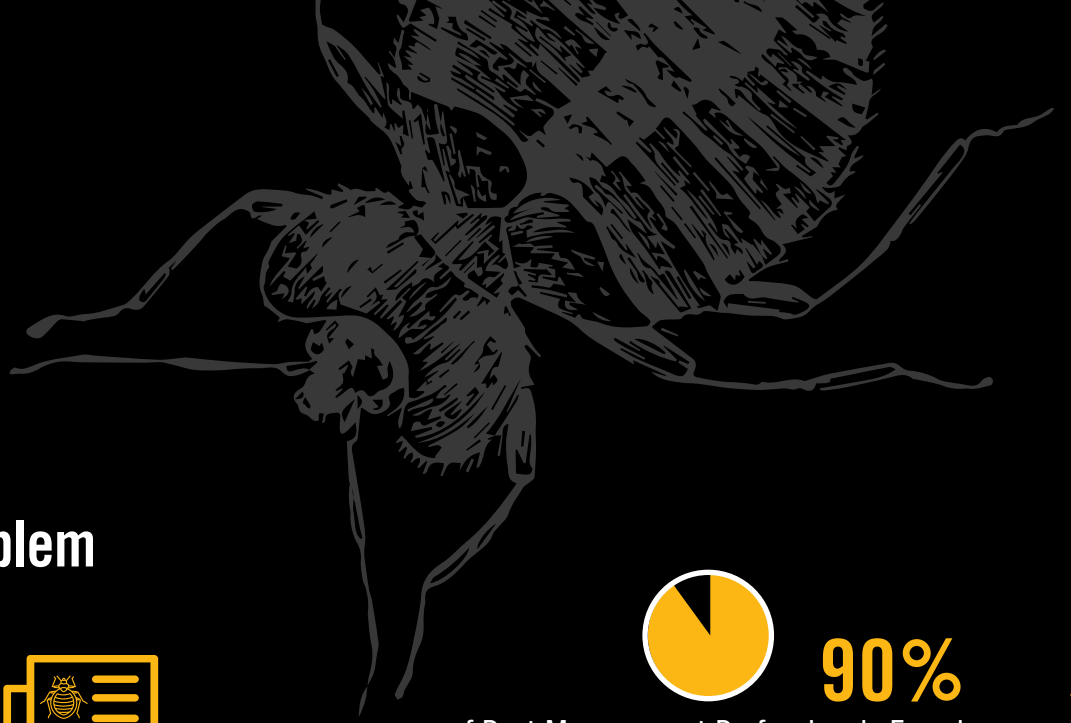
For an organization to counteract one negative review, it takes 12 positive reviews.



FACT



If you miss just one pregnant female bed bug, your property can be reinfested with more than 300 adults in just three months.⁶



A Growing Problem

2,000%

Increase in Overall

Bed Bug Complaints in NYC⁷



Whoever said “all press is good press” was wrong—no property wants their name plastered in the headlines for bed bugs.



90%

of Pest Management Professionals Found
Bed Bugs in Residential Properties⁸

In 2015, more than 90% of professionals battled bed bugs in apartments, condominiums and single-family homes.

74%



of Pest Management Professionals Found
Bed Bugs in Hospitality Properties⁹

That's right, three-fourths encountered infestations in hotels and motels.

45%



of Pest Management Professionals Found
Bed Bugs in Office Buildings¹⁰

The number of bed bug occurrences in offices grew more than 10% in just two years, yikes!

500 EGGS IN A LIFETIME

Bed bugs can be difficult to control. They reproduce quickly—one female can lay five eggs a day and up to 500 eggs in a lifetime, so an infestation can grow out of control fast.



The Bottom Line

When left undetected or untreated, a bed bug infestation can lead to costly remediation work, customer/tenant complaints and negative publicity.

\$38 IN PER NIGHT LOSSES

A single report of bed bugs in recent reviews lowers the value of a hotel room by \$38 per night for business travelers.¹¹

TROUBLED TRAVELERS

Travelers find signs of bed bugs in their room more troubling than smoke odor, an unclean bathroom or even dirty sheets, and are more likely to switch hotels.¹²

\$800K IN A SINGLE SETTLEMENT

They can be the source of costly litigation. In 2013, a bed bug victim was awarded \$800,000 in a bed bug lawsuit and the number of cases is increasing.¹³



Who's Responsible?

FOR HOTELS, most state laws simply state that the hotel manager must use reasonable care and cleanliness measures to prevent pests and promote guest safety.

FOR PROPERTY OWNERS who rent to tenants, the laws are a little more complex, and you should consult with a lawyer as to specific state law requirements. Generally, nearly all states require landlords to maintain the tenant's premises in a habitable condition, and this is understood to include the eradication of bed bugs. In some instances the owner may have additional requirements, such as providing a bed bug infestation history for the previous year.

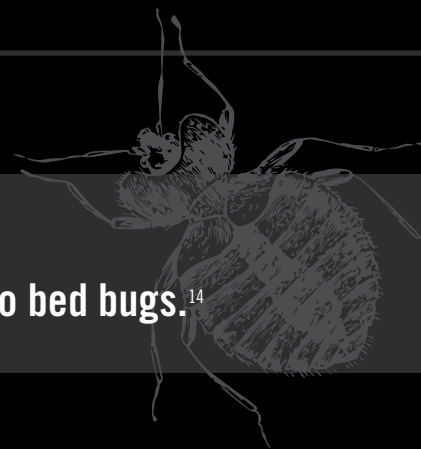
Of course, tenants also have responsibilities to notify their landlord of possible infestations and comply with treatment specifications.



FACT



21 states have some level of law or regulation that applies to bed bugs.¹⁴



The **Uninvited** Guest

INFILTRATORS:



Bed bugs move from an infested site to a new home by “hitchhiking” in luggage, bags, boxes, clothing, bedding and furniture. Due to the close nature of hospitality, multifamily and office facilities, bed bugs are able to infest multiple rooms by traveling through pipes.

BLOOD SUCKERS:



They are hematophagous, which means human blood is their only food source. The CO2 humans emit when sleeping, lets them know it's time to feed. Believe it or not, they can go an entire year without a blood meal. Long live the blood-sucker.

REPRODUCERS:

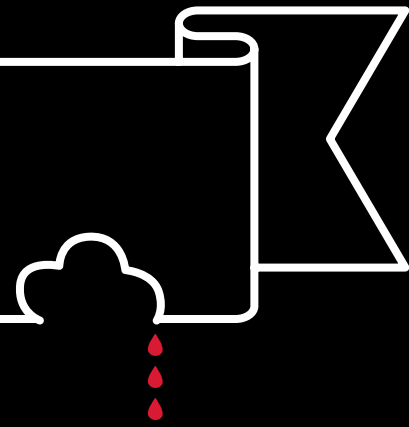


Adult females produce one to three eggs per day. Eggs hatch within two weeks, and take about five to six weeks to reach adulthood. The average bed bug lives four to six months.¹⁵



One in five Americans has either had a bed bug incident or knows someone who has.¹⁶

Taking a Bite Out of Bed Bug Myths



- 01 The presence of bed bugs means I have sanitation issues.**
Not necessarily, the presence of bed bugs has little to do with cleanliness or an establishment's sanitation practices. Bed bugs can be found anywhere there is a food source (wherever people are).
- 02 Only establishments with beds need to worry about bed bugs.**
We get it. The name is misleading. Those little blood suckers can literally be found anywhere--from living rooms to kitchens, outside of hotels and homes, and even trains and planes.
- 03 Bed bugs transmit disease.**
Nope. Those little guys do carry more than 30 different human pathogens, but there's no evidence they can transmit disease to humans. Skin irritations from the bites, or even respiratory issues in areas of high infestation are possible, though.¹⁷
- 04 I saw a bed bug jump.**
Lies. Bed bugs can't jump. They are skilled hitchhikers, however. They travel via personal belongings like luggage, purses, gym bags, and items kept close to sleep areas.
- 05 Bed bug infestations are 100% preventable.**
We wish. They cannot be completely prevented because people can bring them into any establishment at any time.
- 06 Bed bugs bit my fur baby!**
Not likely. Bed bugs prefer human blood over pets and furry animals. However, we have seen evidence in large bed bug populations.
- 07 A couple bed bugs never hurt anyone!**
Ha! Bed bugs multiply quickly, and in just six months, a few can turn into a full-on infestation of 13,000 or more creepy crawlies. Detection is critical to break the bed bug life cycle before they become a bigger problem.¹⁸



Identifiable DNA can be retrieved from a bed bug up to 90 days after feeding on its human prey.¹⁹



ATTENTION:

Vacation Rental Owners & Managers

Rental homes along the Jersey Shore fill up with vacationers each summer. The good news is that this is a profitable time for the hospitality industry. The bad news is that high occupancy and more frequent guest turnover increases the likelihood of experiencing every business's worst nightmare: bed bugs.

01

Get Ahead

As you prepare for the upcoming rental season, develop a plan in case bed bug issues arise. Think through your response in advance and make sure your entire team is on board and understands protocol. Develop a relationship with a pest management provider so you know who to call in the event of a pest problem.

02

Ask Customers to Speak Up

Bed bugs are nocturnal, so by the time one is spotted during the day, your property may have a serious problem. Encourage guests to report any pest sightings immediately and provide clear instructions for who they should contact. Addressing an issue upfront allows you the opportunity to salvage the guest's experience and can help prevent costly remediation down the road.

03

Diligence is Key

Require cleaning or maintenance crews to inspect the home for bed bugs between each guest stay and implement more thorough inspections monthly and at the beginning and end of the rental season.

04

Make it Shine

Stick to a thorough cleaning program to help eliminate hiding places. Staff should clean thoroughly and wash all linens after each guest stay and put them in the dryer on the hottest setting for a full cycle.

05

Avoid Used Furnishings

There are a lot of benefits to thrift store shopping and yard sales, but one of the downfalls is the high risk of bed bugs throughout second-hand furniture. Used furniture can introduce bed bugs into a property. If older furniture is bought, it should be inspected and treated before bringing it into the residence.

06

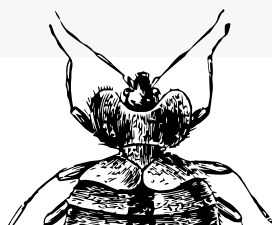
Use Proactive Programs

Properly trained bed bug scent detection dogs are effective in finding new introductions before they become noticeable infestations.

07

Don't DIY

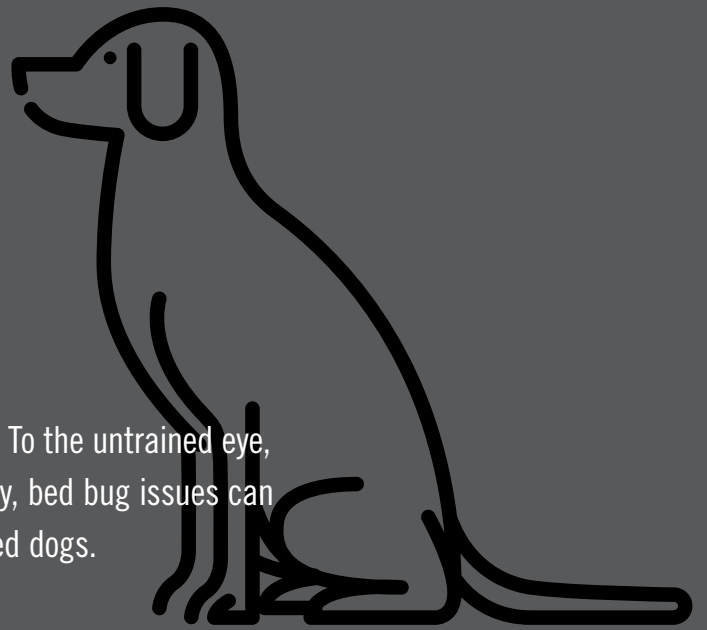
Botched DIY pest control attempts can prolong the window to resolving the problem and cost your business more money once a licensed provider is called. Leave it to the professionals, as they have the experience and tools to properly treat a bed bug problem.



It's a Bird. It's a Plane. It's Canine Detection!

Man's best friend...

just saved the day. Bed bugs are notoriously hard to find. To the untrained eye, rooting out an infestation can prove to be difficult. Luckily, bed bug issues can be detected accurately and quickly with the help of trained dogs.



The Canine Advantage

Our dogs and
handlers



DELIVER
90-95%
EFFECTIVENESS

detecting bed bugs.

DETECT

even the smallest number of bed bugs

Our dogs are able to locate bed bugs behind electrical sockets, behind walls, fixed headboards, in electrical appliances, and buried deep in accessible closets and furniture.

INSPECT

up to 125 rooms per day

Bed bug dogs offer faster, more accurate detection, leading to lower treatment costs.

PROTECT

your hard-earned reputation and brand name

The use of proactive inspection and detection of bed bugs can help minimize your liability, reduce your treatment costs, and greatly reduce the chance of a spreading infestation.

Why Western®?

TRAINING:

Western's bed bug dogs receive 600 hours of training before being entered into the field, and our handlers have extensive field experience working with and managing canine behavior under real-life working conditions and in many different environments.

STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE:

We evaluate our canine teams in a variety of ways throughout the year to maintain a standard of excellence in detecting bed bugs unlike any other in canine scent detection for bed bugs:

- × **Quarterly field evaluations:** Our Master Trainer evaluates canine-handler teams in action to review operational principles and team effectiveness.
- × **Semi-annual internal certification:** Canine-handler teams are tested by our Master Trainer to ensure they adhere to certification standards.
- × **Annual third-party audit/certification:** Canine-handler teams are tested by a third-party certification organization to ensure industry-level standards are met.

RIGHT PROGRAM FOR THE RIGHT PROTECTION:

We develop an inspection frequency schedule based on your property's specific needs. By taking into account what is conducive for bed bug population growth, we offer a variety of programs that can range from monthly service to twice annual service.



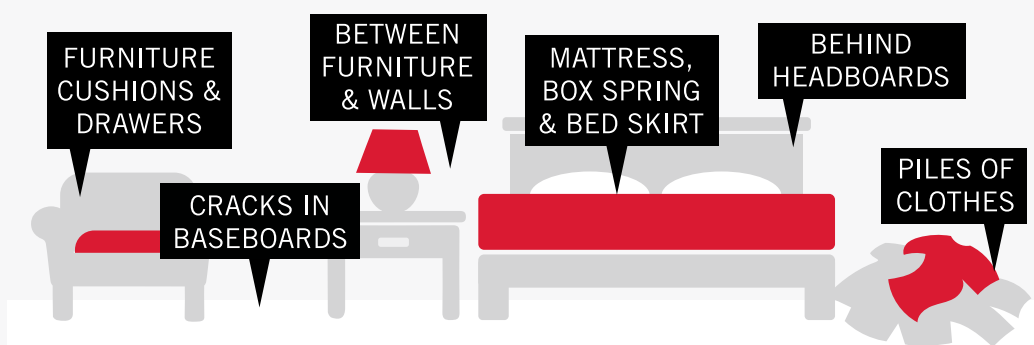
PROACTIVE BED BUG CONTROL:

Cheat Sheet

INFESTATION SIGNS:

- × Small bugs
- × Cast skins or eggs
- × Small dark stains on sheets, mattresses, bed frames or headboards
- × Itchy bite marks on legs and arms
- × Musty, sweet smell, mostly associated with heavy infestations

HIGH-RISK AREAS:



PREVENTION TIPS:

- × Ask your tenants, maintenance or housekeeping staff to keep an eye out for potential hiding places, such as buckling wallpaper or carpet that may house bed bugs.
- × Encourage staff and tenants to immediately report any bed bug issues to maintenance/management.
- × Train housekeeping staff to look for signs during room cleanings.
- × Immediately quarantine any bed bug-infested units, room(s) and any adjoining rooms for inspection and treatment if needed.
- × Utilize proactive programs, like canine bed bug detection.
- × Communicate with tenants on how to identify bed bugs and prevent them from entering.



Bed bugs are three times more likely to be found in urban areas than rural areas.²⁰

Cheat Sheet



EVERYDAY, CHECK:

- × Sheets
- × Pillows
- × Between mattresses, under mattress cover and mattress tags
- × Box springs, especially corners
- × Bed skirts
- × Bed frames and headboards
- × Picture frames on walls near bed
- × Any other cracks and crevices around the bed and other furniture

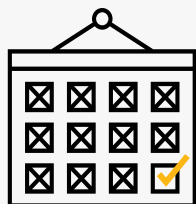


AFTER EVERY GUEST/OCCUPANT, CHECK:

- × Upholstered furniture
- × Dresser drawers
- × Chair cushions
- × Behind hanging frames and wall fixtures
- × Baseboards and corners
- × Luggage racks
- × Drapes and shades
- × Electrical outlets and plates

PRO TIP:

Use a flashlight while inspecting - the one on your phone will work!



YEARLY:

- × Remove headboards and check behind them
- × Inspect under carpet
- × Check behind wallpaper





PROACTIVE BED BUG CONTROL:

Total Bed Bug Solution

Early detection and preventative maintenance is critical when it comes to successfully controlling these pests. Western® is here to help and provides a full-service bed bug program with discreet solutions.

1 PROACTIVE DETECTION:

We employ the region's largest team of trained canines who can help find bed bugs faster, covering up to 125 rooms a day.

2 TARGETED TREATMENT:

Experienced technicians apply proven treatments to isolate the issue and help prevent the spread of bed bugs.

We'll conduct a follow-up service 3-5 business days after the initial service. If live bed bug activity is found, we will continue treatment until the problem is resolved.

3 LARGE SCALE REMEDIATION:

For larger jobs, we are fully equipped with the tools and knowledge not widely available in the marketplace.



We know how damaging bed bugs and other unwanted pests can be to your business. That's why we offer thorough inspections, a service warranty, unparalleled support, and the highest level of customer satisfaction.

Call Western to Start Protecting Your Reputation with The Total Bed Bug Solution.

1.800.544.BUGS | westernpest.com



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*Unless otherwise noted, all other facts were taken from westernpest.com.
