



## **Bed Bug Prevention and Containment Policy**

**Authority:** Library Board

**Date Created:** March 23, 2015

**Date Reviewed:** December, 2020

### **Purpose**

East Gwillimbury Public Library works to prevent, contain, and eliminate any known cases of bed bugs and bed bug eggs in the Library and its materials. This policy outlines the Library's Prevention Protocol and Procedures for situations when Library staff or customers find or suspect bed bugs in the Library environment.

### **Procedures**

#### **1. Inspection**

All branches will be tested for bed bugs at least once annually. The Library will hire only officially recognized pest control services. The frequency of inspections may increase if an infestation is discovered.

#### **2. Prevention**

Staff will receive training to identify bed bugs and to practice the following preventative procedures:

- visually inspect containers from outside libraries before unloading
- visually inspect containers once empty
- visually inspect containers before packing
- keep work spaces clean and items properly stored
- visually inspect containers from outside facilities, such as community homes, and to inspect these containers once empty
- refuse to bring any materials back to the library from a facility with a known bed bug outbreak
- Furniture will be procured with fabric that is resistant to bed bug infestations

Library Staff are responsible for reporting to their manager any bed bug sightings or staff refusals to return materials from a facility due to a known bed bug outbreak.

### **3. Containment and Elimination**

If a bed bug is found in Library material, Library staff and customers are asked to do the following:

- place the material with the bug in a re-sealable bag. Re-sealable bags are available at the circulation desk of both branches.
- return the bag directly to Library staff or a manager. Do not place the bag in the drop box.

### **4. If bed bugs are found on library premises:**

- professional exterminators will be called in to treat for bed bugs
- all carpet and upholstery will be steam cleaned
- the branch may be closed until it is re-checked and found to be free of bed bugs

The Library will review and revise its bed bug statement and procedures as needed in response to revised public health best practices and bed bug sightings or positive bed bug tests.

Please see Appendix A for more information from York Region on Bed Bugs.

The library is committed to meeting the needs of customers with disabilities and will provide, upon request, alternate formats and communication supports, in compliance with the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, Ontario Regulation 191/11* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*

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## **Appendix A**

For more information, please read the excerpt below from York Region's Environmental Health summary on Bed Bugs:

### **Bed Bugs**

Bed bugs are parasitic insects that only feed on blood. Before feeding, they are about one quarter of an inch long and flat as paper. After feeding, they turn dark red and become bloated. Bed bug eggs are whitish, pear-shaped and about the size of a pinhead. Clusters of 10 to 50 eggs can be found in cracks and crevices around your house. Bed bugs have a one-year life span during which a female can lay 200 to 400 eggs that hatch in about 10 days.

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### **What do Bed Bugs Feed On?**

Bed bugs prefer to feed on human blood but will also bite mammals and birds. Bed bugs mostly bite at night but can also bite throughout the day. Bed bugs bite around the face, neck, upper torso, arms and hands and can survive up to six months without feeding.

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### **Can I get Sick From Bed Bugs?**

So far there are no known cases of infectious disease transmitted through bed bug bites. Most people do not become aware that they have been bitten, but some people are more sensitive to the bite and may develop a reaction. Scratching the bitten areas can lead to infection.

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### **How do Bed Bugs get Into my Home?**

Bed bugs can be carried into a home on objects like furniture and clothing. If you think you have a bed bug problem, check for live bed bugs in the following areas:

- Seams, creases, tufts and folds of mattresses and box springs
- Cracks in the bed frame and head board

- Under chairs, couches, beds, dust covers
- Between the cushions of couches and chairs
- Under area rugs and the edges of carpets
- Between folds of curtains
- In drawers
- Behind baseboards and around window and door casings
- Behind electrical plates
- Under loose wallpaper, paintings and posters
- In cracks in plaster
- In telephones, radios and clocks

Bed bugs can travel from apartment to apartment along pipes, electrical wiring and other openings. If there are a lot of bed bugs in your home, a sweet smell may start to be noticed in the room.

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### **What can I do if I Have Bed Bugs in my Home?**

The best way to deal with bed bugs is through Integrated Pest Management (IPM) which is a combination of different techniques and products with the least risk to human health and the environment.

1. Talk with a professional Pest Control operator to confirm you have bed bugs
2. Inspect your mattress and bed frame, especially in the folds, crevices and the underside
3. Use a nozzle attachment on your vacuum to capture bed bugs and their eggs
4. Vacuum all crevices on your mattress, bed frame, baseboards and any objects close to the bed
5. Vacuum daily and empty the vacuum afterwards
6. Wash all your sheets in hot water and place them in a hot dryer for 30 minutes
7. Consider using pillow and mattress bed bug covers
8. Remove all unnecessary clutter
9. Seal cracks and crevices between baseboards, on wood bed frames, floors and walls with caulking
10. Repair or remove peeling wallpaper, tighten loose light switch covers and seal any openings where pipes, wires or other utilities come into your home (shared walls between apartments)
11. Monitor daily by setting glue boards, sticky tape or carpet tape to catch the bed bugs
12. Closely examine any items that you bring into your home

If you choose to treat the infestation with an insecticide, it is recommended you use an insecticide specific to bed bugs. You should use the least toxic product available and follow all manufacturers' instructions.

If you choose Integrated Pest Management or insecticides, you may still continue to see some living bed bugs for up to ten days, which is normal. If you continue to see a large number of bed bugs after two weeks, contact a professional pest control service.

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### **What do Bed Bug Bites Look Like?**

When bed bugs bite people, they inject their saliva into the biting area, causing the skin to become irritated and inflamed. Individual responses to bed bug bites will vary. The skin lesion from bed bug bites may go unnoticed or mistaken for flea or mosquito bites or other skin conditions.

There are four types of skin rashes:

1. The most common rash is made up of localized red and itchy flat lesions presented in a linear fashion in a group of three called "breakfast, lunch and dinner"
2. Small raised red swelling lesions are also common
3. In rare cases, people may develop large raised, often itchy red welts
4. People with high sensitivity to bed bug saliva, may develop a lump filled with blood or fluid

Bed bug bites commonly occur on exposed areas of the body, including face, neck, hands, arms, lower legs or all over the body.

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### **How do I Treat Bed Bug Bites?**

Most bed bug bites go away by themselves and do not need treatment. Make sure you keep the skin clean and try not to scratch. If the bites are very itchy, your doctor may prescribe cream or antihistamines to relieve the itchiness. Oral antibiotics may be prescribed for any secondary skin infection from excessive scratching.

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**How do I Prevent Bed Bugs From Entering my Home?**

Even the cleanest homes and hotels can become infested with bed bugs.

- Regular house cleaning, including vacuuming your mattress can help prevent an infestation
- Clean up the clutter around your home to help reduce the number of places bed bugs can hide
- Inspect the used furniture or clothes you buy and ask the retailer if the items were checked for bed bugs
- Use caution when bringing home used furniture from the curb side since they may be infested with bed bugs
- When travelling try to take the following precautions:
  - Inspect the room and furniture when you arrive, including all cracks and crevices of the mattresses and box spring
  - Look for blood spots or live insects on the mattress, and request a different room if you find evidence of bed bugs
  - Protect your luggage by wrapping it in plastic and keeping all your belongings inside
  - Keep your luggage on a shelf away from the floor
  - Protect the bed by moving it away from the wall and tuck in all sheets and blankets to keep them from touching the floor
  - When you return home, keep your luggage in an isolated area of your home, like the garage, then wash all your clothes in the hottest water possible and put them in a hot dryer for 30 minutes

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**Will Dry Cleaning Kill Bed Bugs?**

Research suggests that dry cleaning will kill bed bugs, however it is not guaranteed. If another customer has brought clothes to be dry cleaned at the same place and has not tagged the clothes as “infested for dry cleaning” there is a risk that bed bugs could spread to cleaned garments.

York Region. *Bed Bugs*

<https://www.york.ca/wps/portal/yorkhome/environment/yr/environmentalhealth/bedbugs/>  
Accessed December 8, 2020.