

Bed bugs and what you need to know!

Bed bugs are a growing, worldwide pest problem. In past decades, bed bug infestations have been isolated to areas mainly outside of the United States. However, over the past several years, these hearty little pests have emerged on the scene here in the U.S., spreading throughout hotels, apartments, college residence halls, health care facilities, day care centers, movie theaters, clothing stores and office buildings – virtually any place that has upholstered or carpeted surfaces.

Bed bugs feed on the blood of humans, although there is no evidence that they are capable of transmitting any diseases. They don't cause serious illness but can cause discomfort by leaving tiny bite marks and itchy rashes on the body.

How do bed bugs get into your room or apartment?

Bed bugs must be carried into an environment – they do not fly or jump. They are usually brought into your room or apartment after visiting a location that is already infested. They are often carried in on personal belongings such as luggage, backpacks, furniture, boxes, and electronics. They spread by crawling and traveling within walls by latching easily onto fabrics and upholstered items.

These tiny pests can live up to 12 months without feeding and can withstand extreme temperature changes. They are nocturnal insects and spend their days hiding in places like the crevices of mattresses and furniture, bed frames, box springs, behind electrical outlet covers, inside picture frames, inside drawers, in clothing, and other places where they are not easily detected. They thrive best in beds and linens where people sleep.

Bed bug sightings in RU Housing...

RU Housing accommodates over 1000 students each year both. In addition, guests attending conferences and summer school live on campus during the summer months. Despite proactive and preventative measures, bed bug sightings have been and, based on both national and local trends, will continue to be reported in RU's housing facilities.

How can you tell if you have a bed bug problem?

If you notice any of the following things, you may have a bed bug problem:

- Blood spots about the size of a pencil tip on mattress or linens
- Small black dirt specks (bed bug feces) in seams, cracks or crevices of beds and furniture
- Small white-ish casing (eggs/exoskeletons) in seams, cracks or crevices of beds and furniture
- Actual bugs present (bed bugs are small and flat, about the size of a common wood tick)
- Unexplained rash on your body. Bed bug bites resemble mosquito and flea bites and tend to appear in a straight line

What should you do if you think you have bed bugs in your room or apartment?

If you suspect bed bugs in your room or apartment, report the problem immediately to your front desk or apartment coordinator. Once a report of suspected bed bugs is made, a pest control expert

is called in and responds within 24 hours to confirm that there is an infestation. An infestation is defined by pest control experts as finding one live or dead bed bug.

How does RU Housing respond to reports of bed bugs?

Both the Wabash Building and the University Center take bed bug reports seriously and have implemented a comprehensive pest management program. If the presence of bed bugs is confirmed, residents are immediately relocated. Residents are relocated temporarily to a vacant room or a room with a vacant bed space until a pest management company can eradicate the pests from the infested room. The entire process usually takes 7-10 days before the residents are able to return to their original room. In cases when an open apartment is not available, the residents will be relocated temporarily to alternative accommodations until permanent accommodations can be made. **Residents are responsible for the laundering of any clothes in the room and for the completion of the checklist items to prepare for treatment. Roosevelt is not responsible for the cost of laundering or for damage caused by treatment.**

What is RU Housing doing to keep bed bugs at bay?

RU Housing is taking proactive measures to prevent and contain bed bug infestations. In addition to the on-site chemical and heat treatments used once an infestation is reported, materials are being distributed to students, staff, and guests to inform and educate them about potential bed bug problems. Partnerships and information-sharing with Roosevelt Facilities staff have also been established to make sure RU Housing is informed about the very latest information and treatments regarding bed bug prevention and eradication.

How can you reduce the risk of bringing bed bugs back to your on-campus room?

Residents of both the WB and UC can help keep bed bugs out of residences by following the precautionary measures listed below.

- When traveling, take precautions to avoid bringing bed bugs back to campus or your apartment by inspecting the bedding and furniture where you are staying. Use hangers or hooks to keep all clothing off of the floor and bed. Do not put your luggage or backpack directly on the bed or floor – keep them elevated using a luggage stand, tabletop, or other hard surface. Keep your luggage closed and zipped at all times.
- Before returning to campus or your apartment, inspect clothing and other items before packing. Check crevices in luggage and backpacks for signs of bed bugs.
- After returning to campus or your apartment, re-check all traveling gear and items. Unpack your luggage directly into a plastic bag and immediately take the clothing to a clothes dryer and dry for 20 minutes at a high heat cycle of at least 120 degrees. Do not store your luggage or backpack on your bed or any carpeted surface. If possible, store luggage in a large plastic bag and seal tightly, keeping it isolated from all other belongings.
- Don't bring second-hand or discarded furniture such as bed frames, mattresses, box springs and upholstered furniture into the space where you are living. These are common breeding grounds for bed bugs.
- Clean and reduce the clutter in your room to eliminate places for bed bugs to hide during the day.

- Wash clothing and linen frequently in high temperatures to kill bed bugs. Both the water temperature and drying temperature should be 120 degrees or higher.

For more information about bed bugs, please visit information posted on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website:

EPA Bed bugs

<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/bedbugs/>

Top Ten Bed Bugs Tips

<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/bed-bugs-faq-fs.html>

Bed Bugs Questions and Answers

http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/bedbugs/bedbugs_qa.html