

Let's Beat the Bug!

Bed Bug Basics

- Bed bugs are small insects, about the size of an apple seed. Adult bed bugs are flat, oval and reddish-brown in color. Juvenile bed bugs can be very small and hard to see.
- Bed bugs feed on human blood and can live for over a year without a meal.
- Bed bugs usually hide during the day near where people rest or sleep and then come out at night to feed. Bed bugs do not live on our bodies.
- Some people do not react when bitten by a bed bug.
- Most bed bugs are found within 8 feet of a person's resting place. As the infestation grows, bed bugs will spread further. You can find bed bugs in any of the following places:
 - In mattresses, box springs, bed frames, and bedding
 - In the cracks and crevices of furniture
 - Behind peeling wall paper
 - Behind pictures and clocks
 - In curtains
 - In cracks in hardwood floors
 - Under carpeting
 - Behind electrical outlets or switch plates

For more information contact the Bed Bug InformationLine at 612-624-2200, 1-855-644-2200 bedbugs@umn.edu, or visit www.bedbugs.umn.edu

Natural Products for Bed Bug Control

Many people have shown an interest in using natural products for bed bug prevention and control, the purpose of this information sheets is to provide you with some things to think about when deciding how to control a bed bug infestation.

Products that are being sold as insecticides must be registered with the Environmental Protection agency (EPA) unless they are natural and generally regarded as safe. These products can be classified as a 25B Exempt Product. (Visit www.epa.gov/pesticides/biopesticides/regtools/25b_list.htm for more information) Because these products are not registered with the EPA the companies that make them are not required to test them the same way that other insecticides must be tested. This means that they may not work as well as registered products and that there may be other concerns. Each state has different requirements for these 25B exempt products.

This means that you cannot be sure how well these products work. Understanding and using these products may require additional work on your part. For any insecticide product to work correctly you must understand and follow the directions, keeping in mind that product packaging may not have complete directions.

Before buying these products you should:

- Check to see if the product kills on contact or the product has a residual kill.
 - If it controls on contact, it means that you have to spray the bed bugs directly to kill them.
 - If the product has residual kill, it means that bed bugs will die if the insect crawls across a treated surface during a specific time period.
- Check to see if there are independent laboratory or University efficacy studies that describe in detail how they tested the product and under what conditions the product worked.
- Look for independent information from other people who have used these products.

By Amelia Shindelar and Dr. Stephen Kells, 2014

Funding for "Let's Beat the Bug" Campaign provided by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and MDA. Additional assistance from the Minnesota Department of Health was greatly appreciated.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651/201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711 or 1-800-627-3529.

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