

BED BUGS Q&A
COURTESY OF BUG BUSTERS & THE PPMA

What do bedbugs look like?

They are brown, about a quarter of an inch in diameter, and look like an apple seed or a lentil.

Has there really been a resurgence in bedbugs in the U.S. and how do you know?

There HAS been an increase in bedbug infestations. Pest control companies who received 1 or 2 bedbug calls a year are now reporting 1 to 2 each week. According to 2010 research conducted by the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) and the University of Kentucky, 95% of pest control companies report encountering a bed bug infestation in the past year. Prior to 2000, only 25% of pest control companies surveyed had encountered a bed bug infestation.

In addition, another survey by NPMA found that one in five Americans has had a bed bug infestation in their home or knows someone who has encountered bed bugs at home or in a hotel.

Where can bed bugs be found?

These pests are not limited to any one specific type of environment. Pest control companies have been reporting infestations in both single and multi-family housing, apartments, hotels, hospitals, college dormitories, public transportation, laundry facilities and even movie theaters.

What states have been affected?

Pest control companies have reported bed bug activity on a national scale. Bedbugs are being found from the East to the West Coast; and everywhere in between. Every state has reported bedbug infestations.

Why are bedbugs so hard to treat?

Bedbugs should NOT be equated with filth or sanitation problems -- in hotels or in homes, for that matter. Bedbugs are VERY elusive, transient and nocturnal pests. They are often found in other areas besides the bed, and they are hardy. They can live for a year or more without eating and can withstand a wide range of temperatures from nearly freezing to 122 degrees Fahrenheit.

Bedbugs CAN be controlled with vigilance, constant inspection and treatment by professional pest control companies.

What can a consumer do to protect themselves from bedbug infestations?

To prevent bedbug infestations, consumers need to be vigilant in assessing their surroundings. When returning from a trip, check your luggage and clothing. If you think

you may have a bedbug infestation, contact a pest control professional. This is not a pest that can be controlled with do-it-yourself measures. To find a pest control professional in your area you can visit pestworld.org.

Why are bedbugs an issue for hotels, visitors, and homeowners?

Bedbugs leave itchy, bloody welts on human skin. Adult bedbugs can live for a year without eating, making them especially hard to control. Once inside a hotel or home, bedbugs spread rapidly from room to room - through pipes, in vacuum cleaners, on clothing and luggage. In a hotel, bedbugs can even spread to neighboring rooms, since guests are may end up moving to another room.

Are bedbugs just in beds?

Bedbugs are not just in beds. They can be in chair cushions, sofas, behind electrical outlets, cracks and crevices around baseboards, or even behind picture frames. In other words, they can live pretty much anywhere.

How does one control bedbugs?

Any effective bedbug control strategy should start with a careful, thorough inspection by a pest control professional of all known and suspected spots where the bugs may be harboring. This is not a pest that can be controlled effectively with do-it-yourself measures. As they are discovered, the pest control professional will develop a treatment and control strategy with the customer depending on the extent of the infestation.