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## **Ohio Bed Bug Workgroup Issues Final Report**

COLUMBUS –The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) today released the Ohio Bed Bug Workgroup report. Workgroup members from a diverse group of professional backgrounds and perspectives, including pest management, housing, government, and public health worked together to develop 10 recommendations which outline strategies that will assist future bed bug prevention and control efforts.

“There is no simple fix to Ohio’s bed bug resurgence,” said ODH Director and Ohio Bed Bug Workgroup Chair Alvin D. Jackson M.D. “The workgroup has found that not only must the federal government work tirelessly with pesticide manufacturers on a chemical solution that is safe, effective, and affordable, but that state and local governments must work just as hard in educating Ohioans on awareness and prevention measures.”

Bed bugs feed on human blood and are often found near sleeping areas in the seams of mattresses, box springs and crevices of bed frames. The bugs also hitchhike into homes on used furniture, clothing or other items brought from infested areas. While they are not known to transmit diseases to humans, bed bugs are a pest of significant public health importance because of the negative physical and mental health implications of their blood feeding behavior.

“During the past decade, bed bug complaints in Ohio have increased dramatically,” Jackson said. “The workgroup has determined the best possible approaches to assist Ohio communities in dealing with these pests.”

The workgroup convened five meetings and two subgroup meetings to research and develop the report. The recommendations from the report include:

- Collaboration with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to find pesticides which are effective and safe alternatives to those that are currently available.
- Improved coordination between state and local authorities.
- Increased education and awareness efforts.

The report can be found online at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/features/odhfeatures/budbugsfeature.aspx>