

Guidelines for Reducing the Risk of Transporting Bed Bugs

All employees who visit consumers **in their homes or apartment units** are strongly encouraged to abide by the following guidelines. While these guidelines specifically mention bed bugs or a specific type of infestation, they also apply to other types of insects or pests.

1.) Required for all employees who conduct home visits.

- a) All employees must attend bed bug training

2.) Recommended guidelines for in-home visits. Employees should:

- a) On intake or prior to first home visit with client ask if he or she has had any known infestation or treatment for any pests including bed bugs.
- b) Wear protective booties when a client states there is a known infestation or when conducting a home visit in a client's unit that is located in a building with a known infestation. A protective suit should be worn if the employee is going to be moving items or touching things in the residence known to be infested. Employee training will provide you with talking points to help you discuss this protective measure with clients.
- c) Do not sit on cloth-covered furniture or bedding.
- d) Keep the following items in your car:
 - i. Protective booties and suit
 - ii. Sealable plastic bags in the event clothing or equipment becomes contaminated
 - iii. A change of clothes and shoes
 - iv. Plastic stool
- e) Bring only items necessary for the visit into the home. Store personal items securely in your vehicle prior to arriving at the location.
- f) Avoid placing any items on upholstered furniture or bedding or on carpeted floors.
- g) Take the following steps if bed bugs are found during the home visit:
 - i. Return to your vehicle
 - ii. Perform a self inspection
 - iii. Remove protective booties immediately following the visit. Place them in a sealed plastic bag and dispose of the bag.
 - iv. If a protective suit was worn, suit should be removed so that it is turned inside out as it is taken off so as to trap any bugs inside the gear. Immediately place all protective gear in a plastic bag and seal it; then dispose of the bag in an outdoor receptacle.
- h) Perform a self-inspection for pests immediately after leaving and before entering another facility or a vehicle.
 - i. Pay attention to inside and outside of shoes, lace holes, socks, leg area and around hands and arms.

- ii. The employee who may have contracted bed bugs should notify a supervisor and return to their home. The employee should remove all clothing before entering their home (or near the entry door) and immediately place these items in a trash bag, which then should be tightly closed via a knot or twist tie. Wash contaminated clothing in hot, soapy water and dry in a dryer using the highest heat setting. The employee should take a shower or bath. Any clothing or items taken into the home that cannot be washed or dry cleaned should be placed in a hot dryer for at least 15 minutes. (If items are taken to a dry cleaner inform the dry cleaner of the possible bed bugs.)

3.) Protective Gear

- a) Protective booties
- b) Sealable plastic bags
- c) Plastic stool
- d) Protective suit

4.) Suggestions

The guidelines and the following suggestions were gathered from employees, other agencies that have successfully served clients with infestations over the years, as well as input from an entomologist. These practices may help avoid transporting bugs from one consumer to another or into your own home.

- a) When in doubt, wear protective booties to the visit. Employee training will provide you with talking points to help you discuss this protective measure with clients.
- b) Remove protective gear inside out, trapping any bugs inside the gear, then place the items in a plastic bag and seal it.
- c) Keep car clean of clutter, vacuum weekly, and monitor for infestation.
- d) Keep a separate pair of shoes and a jacket (if desired) for use in client homes in a sealed bag.
- e) Discourage the sharing of vacuum cleaners by consumers, as this can be a means of transmission of hidden bed bugs. If using a vacuum or vacuum attachment in an infested residence, it is a good idea to finish up by vacuuming up a small amount (~1/4 cup) of cornstarch or talcum powder (the vacuum action will cause the powder to be aerosolized and drawn into the bed bugs' breathing holes causing these insects to die). Then immediately place the vacuum cleaner bag in a plastic bag, seal tightly, and discard it in a container outdoors—this prevents captured bed bugs from escaping into the home.
- f) Do not redistribute items (DME, furniture, etc.) from one consumer to another as this may be a means of contamination. Bed bugs are excellent hitchhikers that can hide in furniture, clothing, or other items brought from infested areas.