

The Medicine Hat Community Housing Society Needs Your Assistance...

Most people have heard that the instances of **bed bugs** in homes has risen significantly across the country.

We all need to work together to keep bed bugs out of our homes. Proactive steps are being taken, and we have attached further reference information to assist you in having a better understanding regarding bed bugs, and the treatment and prevention should you encounter them.

The sooner we know, the better - so we can stop/reduce the spread to other units and/or parts of the buildings.

Remember that it is almost impossible to know exactly where the bed bugs originate, so blame will not be laid, and **no person or family will be judged or evicted for reporting bed bugs.**

Bed bugs can be difficult to detect in the early stages, so in order to ensure early detection, the MHCHS will be conducting random thorough inspections of units, especially when there are known cases within close proximity (we will provide you notice). In order to ensure a proper inspection of properties it is necessary for the individual conducting the inspection to closely examine not only the building, but also such personal items as bed mattress, box spring, furniture & other items as required.

Not everyone understands that bed bugs can happen to anyone, regardless of how much money they make or how clean they keep their home.

If bed bugs are detected, treatment of the affected units will occur promptly at no cost to you. We ask for your cooperation in allowing pest control professionals into your unit (we will provide you notice) and following their instructions carefully to ensure effective elimination of the pest.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

****IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, OR YOU SUSPECT BED BUGS MAY
BE PRESENT IN YOUR UNIT, PLEASE PROMPTLY CALL THE MHCHS OFFICE at 403.527.4507.
For more information please visit www.mhchs.ca**

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How to Protect You and Your Family from Bed Bugs

Adapted from Guidelines for Prevention and Management of Bed Bugs in Shelters and Group Living Facilities by J. Gangloff-Kauffman, J. and C. Pilcher. 2008.

Bed bugs have become a serious pest in North America. Bed bugs, like mosquitoes, are insects that feed on blood. Bed bugs live in the home, especially in and around the bed, and usually bite at night when people are sleeping, but will feed at any time of day if necessary. Bed bugs have three main stages of life, the egg, the young and the adult: Their size can vary from that of a poppy seed to an apple seed-size adult. All are tan or brownish-red in color. The first sign of bed bugs is usually a group of bites. If you experience bites, look for bed bugs in your bed or where you have slept recently.

FAST FACTS ABOUT BED BUGS

- Do not transmit diseases to people; may trigger asthma.
- Cannot fly or jump, but can run fast
- Can be transported in personal belongings such as luggage, clothing, blankets & pillows; can travel through a building
- Are often found on used or discarded furniture
- Can be difficult to control; can be eliminated and prevented



Photo by Jeff Hahn

WHERE TO LOOK FOR BED BUGS (See Page 10 of Information Pkg. for detailed instructions on Inspecting for bedbugs)

- Check the sheets, pillows and blankets for bugs and stains; look under the mattress and pillows; check the seams and puckers of the mattress & the bed frame for bugs and stains.
- Check the floor, carpet edges and moldings; look inside and underneath drawers.
- Radios, phones, clocks near the bed or on a nightstand may also be hiding places for bed bugs. The more bugs present the farther from the bed they will spread out.



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HOW TO HELP YOURSELF

- Don't panic: bed bugs are not life threatening.
- Thoroughly inspect bed, bedding, furniture, clothing and rooms; Call the MHCHS administration office immediately if you think there may be bed bugs present.
- Wash and dry your clothing, bedding, curtains, rugs and towels on hot: 30 minutes of heat kills bugs and their eggs. STORE CLEAN ITEMS IN PLASTIC CONTAINERS OR PLASTIC BAGS.
- Scrub mattress seams with a stiff brush to dislodge bedbugs and eggs; vacuum daily, discard used vacuum bag in a sealed plastic bag immediately after clean up; Place mattress and box spring in zippered plastic covers.
- Wash and use the clothes drier on any donated clothing before wearing.
- Carefully inspect used furniture. Do not take furniture or items from the street: they may have bed bugs.
- Do not try to use pesticides to kill bed bugs on your own, "Bug bombs" are not effective for bed bugs.
- Follow Pest Control pre-treatment instructions very carefully to ensure successful elimination of the bugs.
- Talk to others about it; bed bugs are common today in all types of housing, everyone should be aware of them

HOW CAN I KEEP THE BUILDING'S FURNITURE FROM SPREADING INFESTATION?

- Never resell or donate infested furniture.
- DO NOT remove furniture from your unit until treatment has been completed and you have been advised it is safe to do so, removal of furniture will not eliminate bed bugs and may contribute to the spread of the bugs. When throwing away infested furniture, follow recommendations from Landlord or Pest Control Company carefully.
- When furniture is removed from a unit, render the piece unusable (e.g. cut holes in it, etc.), ensure that it is encased in plastic to prevent spread of bed bugs or eggs, and indicate on it that it is "Infested with Bedbugs". MHCHS Tenants should notify the MHCHS office so that arrangements can be made for furniture to be removed as quickly as possible from the garbage pickup area.



Actual size: approx. 3mm X 5mm

****The MHCHS may be able to assist with elements of the pest control protocols – please ask if you need help. Ensuring that your home is pest free is ultimately our common goal.**