



Pest Control and Bedbug Eradication

Pest Control

Tenants have rights to privacy and confidentiality under the rental agreement and the law. The rental agreement should define services to be periodically provided by the owner. However, building management should notify tenants in writing at least 24 hours prior to unit entry to provide regularly scheduled service like pest control. Wherever possible, pest control should be scheduled at the same time every month, so tenants are prepared.

As is the case with any vendor, the exterminator should not be left unattended in a tenant's unit. The Building or Property Manager or designated personnel should be required to accompany the exterminator during building rounds.

- Building managers should check that smoke detectors are functioning as they accompany the exterminator during building rounds.
- The pest control rounds are extremely important. They are an opportunity for building management to view the condition of tenants' units and to identify units that require follow-up maintenance and housekeeping. Follow-up may be necessary to abate unsafe and/or unsanitary conditions, and to help tenants pass scheduled and required unit inspections to retain housing.
- When conducting pest control rounds, building managers should look for items that need repair, including torn carpets, dripping faucets, frayed electrical wires, damaged walls, broken smoke detectors and fire control equipment, broken doors, extra locks on the unit door that management has not approved.
- If the condition of the unit is unsanitary and may represent a health hazard, building management should send a notice to the tenant and bring the issue to the next weekly coordination meeting for follow-up and outreach by support services.
- Always conduct the pest control rounds with a clipboard and pen. Note any areas that require maintenance, management, or support services follow-up.

Occasionally, a tenant will wish to refuse pest control services. Some tenants are sensitive to sprays, and many supportive housing providers have switched to gel products, which do not produce any air-borne irritants, for this reason. Only a medically verifiable reasonable accommodation request should remove a unit from the rounds, and even in those cases, the tenant will be required to ensure a level of hygiene and pest control that will keep pests away from the exempted unit.

Note: This document is included within the *Housing Operations* section of CSH's *Toolkit for Developing and Operating Supportive Housing*, which is available at www.csh.org/toolkit2. This document has been adapted from CSH's *Supportive Housing Property Management Operations Manual*, which is available at www.csh.org/publications.

Note: The following Staff Bedbug Policy and Unit Preparation Procedure are from information generously provided by the Tenderloin Housing Clinic in San Francisco, California.

STAFF BEDBUG POLICY

1. Managers must inspect all units for bedbugs with each monthly pest control treatment.
2. Managers must investigate all complaints and monitor infestation cases proactively.
3. The *Bedbug Infestation Notice* in conjunction with the *Bedbugs-General Information* must be given to the tenant and the case manager immediately following detection of infestation and scheduled treatment.
4. The *Nearby Unit Notice(s)* must be given out immediately following detection of infestation of the original unit.
5. Managers are responsible for all Notice distribution.
6. Managers are to keep records of all complaints and confirmed cases.
7. Hotel staff should be sure that hotel vacuum cleaners do not infest other units or common areas of the hotels. Janitors should put flea powder on the floor in infested areas then vacuum to make sure the vacuum does not spread bedbugs.
8. Hotel staff should never remove items from infested units, including backpacks and purses. Tenants should be encouraged to refrain from spending much time in common areas of the hotel and visiting other units.
9. Support Services and Property Management should keep in close communication regarding any tenant foreseen to have an inability to meet this deadline. All efforts will, made to support these tenants in meeting the deadline and other arrangements and/or rescheduled treatments made be made in extreme cases.

Follow up:

1. Tenants may re-enter their units within 2-4 hours following treatments at the PM's discretion.
2. The manager will schedule follow-up treatment in 7-14 days.
3. After the final treatment, the bagged mattress will be discarded. The vinyl covering will be thoroughly cleaned using alcohol, especially around the seams.
4. THC will make efforts to accommodate tenants with special needs through laundry service, provision of quarters for laundry and other relevant referrals.

Working Cooperatively:

1. We must remember as an agency to always react to and approach tenants very non-judgmentally when discussing bedbug infestation. This is the best method for ensuring cooperation by the tenants and early disclosure of infestation.

BEDBUG UNIT PREPARATION PROCEDURE

This is a sample set of steps developed by a housing provider to train maintenance staff to respond to a bedbug infestation. Steps should be reviewed by a trained exterminator, and assessed for effectiveness on a regular basis, as pests such as bedbugs can adapt to treatments and become resistant.

- When working in severely infested units, Tyvex suits and latex gloves should be worn. These garments should be removed, bagged and discarded *before* exiting the unit.
- All personal items are to be removed from closets, drawers, etc.
- Washable and non-washable items should be bagged and sealed separately. Care must be taken to assure that there are no tears in the bags and that the bags are well sealed.
- All washable items must be washed by a laundry service. Non-washable items may be discarded, left in the hot sun (while still bagged) for 2 hours or frozen for minimum of 24 hours.
- Heavily infested mattresses should be bagged, sealed and discarded; other mattresses should be encased in vinyl covers and reused by tenant after initial treatment of room. If desirable, mattress may be replaced with a new one *after* final treatment.
- If unit is carpeted, all furniture must be moved from near the walls so carpet can be pulled back for treatment of tack strip. Heavily infested carpet should be discarded as outlined above.
- All baseboard edges should be sprayed with a mixture of 50% water/alcohol and then well caulked.
- Seriously infested units must be treated by professional pest control contractors.
- A minor infestation may be treated as follows:
 1. Thoroughly vacuum the unit. Using hand held vacs to vacuum along walls, corners, mattress and box spring. Coverings should be removed from the bottom of the box spring for inspection.
 2. Any areas of possible infestation should be sprayed with alcohol mixture.
 3. Flea powder should be vacuumed into vacuum cleaner *after use* to kill any live bugs inside vacuum.

NOTE: All staff must inspect their clothing for bugs before exiting unit, whether Tyvex suits are worn or not.

Note: This sample Bedbugs - Tenant Information Sheet has been generously provided by the Tenderloin Housing Clinic and the San Francisco Department of Public Health.

Bedbugs - Tenant Information Sheet



Q- What are bedbugs?

A- They are insects that feed on the blood of humans and animals. They are very difficult to get rid of and have been seen more and more in U.S. cities over the last 2 years.

Q- How do I know I have bedbugs?

A- You will probably have itchy bumps at the bite location. You will see live or dead bed bugs or dark red spots on your mattress (especially in the seams), sheets, or pillowcase.

Q- How do bedbugs get into my room?

A- Bedbugs are often brought into your room in the items (especially furniture) that were found left on the street or with items of unknown origins. They can also be transferred from place to place when people unknowingly expose themselves or their belongings to bedbug-infested areas.

Q- Can bedbugs make me sick?

A- When bedbugs bite, they secrete their saliva into the wound. Most people are allergic to the saliva, which will then make them itch. Excessive scratching can cause infections.

Q- How can I get rid of bedbugs?

- 1.) Tell your manager immediately when you see signs of bedbugs and they will schedule a treatment for you. Don't worry about telling them as bedbugs are very common and the manager only wants to help you get rid of them. They will also check your unit every month.
- 2.) Prepare your room for the pest control company by double bagging your washables and non-washables in separate plastic bags (get bags from property manager).
- 3.) The janitorial staff will pick up your sealed non-washables (radio, picture frames, etc.) and take them for treatment. They will be returned to you within 24-48 hours.
- 4.) Contact your Case manager to get help in having all of your bedding, clothes, and other linens picked up to be washed.
- 5.) Don't remove backpacks or even purses from your unit until they are thoroughly checked or treated for bedbugs. That we can be sure of treating them completely so that they don't come back.
- 6.) Until you get rid of bedbugs, you are encouraged to spend as little time as possible in the common areas or other units in to minimize their spread.
- 7.) Be sure to allow the pest control company to come in and work on your room when they need to.
- 8.) The property manager will notify you when it is safe to return to your unit after treatment. It will be approximately 2-4 hours.

FEEL FREE TO ASK YOUR CASE MANAGER FOR HELP AT ANY POINT