

# Tips for Bed Bug Prevention and Control

## **Correctly Identify the Insect:**

- See *photos on reverse*
- Contact Ohio State University's Pest Diagnostic Clinic ([ppdc.osu.edu](http://ppdc.osu.edu))

## **Bed Bug Habits:**

- Prefer to feed at night on human blood
- Hide during the day
- Hide in cracks, crevices and dark places
- Cannot fly, but walk very fast
- Can survive several months without feeding if a host is absent

## **Inspecting for Bed Bugs:**

- Use a bright flashlight
- Look for the bugs and their dark spotting and shed skins (*see photos on reverse*)
- Carefully inspect bedrooms and main living areas where people rest or sleep, focusing on:
  - \* Mattress seams, box springs, and bed frame
  - \* Behind hanging pictures, baseboards, moldings, and loosened wallpaper
  - \* Inside electronics (e.g., smoke detectors, thermostats, electrical outlets, etc.)
  - \* Top, sides, underside, and interior of furniture
  - \* Carpet tack strip (underneath carpet edges)

## **Travelers' Tips:**

- **When preparing to leave:**
  - \* Travel very light
  - \* Put all items into tightly sealed plastic bags inside suitcase
  - \* Be sure to take extra plastic bags so you can isolate clean, dirty, and newly purchased clothing
- **During your trip:**
  - \* Carefully inspect your room for signs of bed bugs
  - \* Change rooms if you find any signs of bed bugs
  - \* Never store luggage on the floor or bed
  - \* Keep your clothes in your suitcases, not in provided chest-of-drawers
- **When arriving home:**
  - \* Do NOT take luggage inside bedrooms or living rooms
  - \* If possible, launder all clothing in your luggage
  - \* Store empty luggage inside sealed plastic bags

## **Control:**

- Act immediately
- Eliminate clutter
- Caulk or seal cracks and crevices
- Launder bedding, clothes, etc.
  - \* Wash in hot water (120°F [49°C] minimum)
  - \* Drier set on medium to hot setting (30 minutes minimum)
  - \* Confine clean items inside sealed plastic bags
- Do not use "bug bombs"
- Do-it-yourself bed bug control is very difficult
- Consider hiring an exterminator
  - \* Make sure the exterminator is licensed
  - \* Get at least 3 estimates before choosing an exterminator
  - \* Bed bug control takes considerable time and effort