

PACKING FOR PREVENTION

In recent years, bed bugs have made a resurgence in North America. They are often found in hotels, multi-unit dwellings, and other structures that house people for short periods of time, such as camps. While bed bugs may be a nuisance, the Center for Disease Control states they do not transmit disease to people.

The good news is that there are simple steps that can be taken to help ensure that children do not bring bed bugs to camp or back home from camp. We are taking proactive steps in our camp facilities to combat this national problem by performing weekly inspections utilizing canines making sure that we are bedbug free prior to your camper's arrival. If bedbugs are detected during inspection we remove that cabin from our inventory. The cabin is not utilized again until it is cleared by the inspection. Cabins, bunk beds, and mattresses are treated utilizing high pressure/high temperature steam and chemicals.

Please help us by following the packing advice listed below. Campers will NOT be excluded from any programs if there is a suspicion of bed bug presence in their cabin or bunk.

PREVENTION BEFORE CAMP

Bring light colored sheets or sleeping bags to Camp. Light colors make it easier to identify the presence of bed bugs.

Do not send items to camp that may be damaged in the laundering (heating) process.

Visually inspect items for bugs. Take sleeping bags, blankets, pillows, and luggage out of storage, place them outdoors, and carefully inspect for any sign of bed bugs or eggs.

Tumble linens and luggage in the clothes dryer. Place linens or luggage in the dryer and tumble them on high heat (>120 degrees fahrenheit) for 30 minutes. The heat from the dryer kills bed bugs and their eggs. For items that cannot be placed in a dryer, bed bugs and their eggs can be killed with an application of alcohol, the higher the concentration the better.

Pack in a bed bug free area. Choose a place to pack that is away from bed bug friendly zones such as beds or couches. Ideally, take the clothes and linen directly from the dryer and place them in the camper's luggage. The kitchen table or countertop is a great place to place your luggage while packing.

Choose luggage wisely. Duffle bags, Rubbermaid totes, or plastic trunks are recommended for campers as they can be placed in a dryer or sanitized with alcohol. Keep in mind that the clearance under the beds is only _____ inches. Consider packing individual outfits in separate Ziploc bags.

Pack extra garbage bags. Be sure to pack extra garbage bags for your camper, one bag for dirty clothes and one for dirty linens.

PREVENTION AFTER CAMP

Learn more about bed bugs. Educate yourself about prevention of bed bugs.

Place all of your camper's luggage and belongings from camp in plastic garbage bags for the ride home.

Do Not bring your luggage in your home immediately. Leave it on the porch or in the garage until you have time to visually inspect and wash and dry the items.

Clean all camp items. For items that can be laundered, use a hot water setting and tumble on high heat for 30 minutes. Dispose of the garbage bags holding the items. For items that can't be laundered, vacuum, spray with alcohol, or place in large, sealed plastic bags in the hot sun for 2-3 days. Pay close attention to the zippers, seams, buttons, cracks, and crevices.

Please contact us if you find evidence of bed bugs. Evidence includes live bed bugs, dead bugs, exoskeletons, blood stained linens, and suspicious bites. This allows us to further investigate and treat the cabins. Please keep in mind that other insect bites may leave blood stains on linens.

Campers will NOT be excluded from any programs if there is a suspicion of bed bug presence in their cabin or bunk.

Bed Bug Facts:

Bed bugs are flat and wingless. They have six legs and are a shiny reddish brown. They go through 7 stages of development from egg to adult and look different at each stage as well as after eating. This web site has great pictures of bed bugs at every stage.

<http://npic.orst.edu/pest/bedbug/biology.html>

Their main food source is human blood, however they are not known to transmit any diseases. They tend to feed every 3-7 days so the blood they ingest is typically digested before they feed again so there is no cross contamination.

They typically feed at night and hide during the day. They are exceptional hidiers. Favorite locations are: in the seams of mattresses, sofa seams, cracks in the bed frame and/or head board, under chairs, couches, beds and dust covers, under rugs, edges of carpets, drawers, baseboards and window casings, behind light switches, electrical outlet plates, cracks in plaster, televisions, radio clocks and phones, backpacks, sleeping bags, clothes, behind wallpaper, picture frames, and other dark areas.

Most people do not feel bed bugs biting them because components in bed bug saliva act as an anesthetic and promote increased blood flow at the bite site, making the feeding process quick and nearly painless.

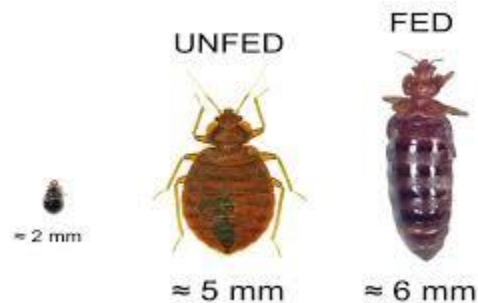
Bed bug bites are often red bumps or welts arranged in a rough line or cluster

Bites can be extremely itchy. Some people have a severe reaction to the bites, while others (an estimated 30% of population) do not react at all and may not notice bites are present.

Bed bug bites are difficult to distinguish from other insect bites. They tend to bite exposed areas of the human body that they can easily reach. For example, if most of your body is covered with pajamas they would be inclined to feed on your exposed face, neck, hands and feet. Keep in mind that chiggers and ticks tend to bite in areas where there is soft skin and constriction. Ticks like armpits, the backs of knees, waist bands, and underwear lines. Chiggers like inside socks, waist bands, and underwear lines.

Bed bugs can survive months without eating. Some have been known to survive being frozen for months. They cannot tolerate heat over about 126 degrees though. Thirty minutes in a clothes dryer on high heat is enough to kill bed bugs and their eggs.

Please help us keep Camp Classen (and your home) bed bug free by following the prevention steps outlined above. A bit of hassle now can prevent a lot of hassle and expense later.





Resource Web Sites:

Environmental Protection Agency: <https://www.epa.gov/bedbugs>

Pest World: Tips for Bed Bugs at Camp: <http://www.pestworld.org/all-things-bed-bugs/bed-bug-prevention/tips-for-summer-camp/>

National Pesticide Information Center: <http://npic.orst.edu/pest/bedbug/biology.html>