

## Bed bugs

Bed bugs were extinguished in Sweden until some five or ten years ago. The last few years they have spread over all western countries for mainly two reasons:

1. Pesticides that were used before are now forbidden.
2. International travelling has increased. Bed bugs travel with peoples' luggage and you may not be aware of this, so never put your suitcase on the floor, especially not under the bed.

All of our rooms are inspected and cleaned before new tenants move in, but there is no guarantee that bed bugs are detected when the room is empty – they can hide and be without food for a year.

### Report

It is very important that all bed bug cases are reported immediately so that the problem is limited as much as possible. All our landlords/house owners have their own insurances for this. There will be no extra cost for you for fumigation, so please report immediately if you suspect that you have them. If you need medical treatment, please let us know.

### Signs to Look Out For

Bed bugs travel with luggage, find shelter under beds and are active at night. They are quite harmless and do not spread diseases. Look for small black stains under your bed, on the inside of the wooden framework. The bugs are active at night and they are activated by carbon dioxide from a sleeping person. They seek bare skin, suck blood for a few minutes and then hide again. Their bites are normally equivalent to mosquito bites and do not wake you up.

### What to Do

The house owner has an agreement with a Pest Control Operator (PCO) – check your housing guide for the correct PCO. Call them right away to make an appointment for fumigation in your room. It may take a few days before they can come to your room, but they will help you as quick as they can.

It is important that you meet the PCO to let him/her in and also get information from him/her about what you can do to get the best possible result. Please also report to the Housing Office so we can keep a record and give you further advice if needed.

### While Waiting for Fumigation

Bed bugs do not spread any diseases, but some people may suffer from allergic reactions and need medical treatment. Contact the Housing Office for advice about this.

Your room must be clean and tidy when the PCO comes, so that he/she can easily access all parts of the room. You should wash all textiles (clothes, bed linen etc.) in 60 degrees. Make sure you put all textiles in closed plastic bags when bringing them to the laundry room. Bed bugs die when exposed

to heat (> +50 degrees C) or cold (< -19 degrees C) for extended periods. Therefore you can also use saunas or freezers for bed linen, clothes, bags etc. Always put your clothes and linen in closed plastic bags if you use this method. At least 24h is required for heat exposure and a full week for freeze treatment.

### **1. Wash**

All bed linen, quilts, cushions/pillows, curtains and washable textiles must be washed in a washing machine at a minimum of 60°C. Please follow these steps:

- Put everything in sealed plastic bags and tie them securely before going down to the laundry.
- Do not open the plastic bags until you are about to put everything in the washing machine.
- Put the textiles in the washing machine and wash them at a minimum of 60 °C.

NOTE: If your quilt does not fit into the machine, you can tumble-dry it instead at 60°C for at least 30 minutes.

### **2. Move things out of the way**

Move your things so that the fumigation company can apply the right areas with the solution, you must follow these steps:

- Push all your furniture away from the walls so that they are at least 50 cm from the walls.
- Stand your bed on its end so that the PCO can apply underneath.

NOTE: Do not move any furniture out of the room! Everything must remain inside the room to avoid spreading bed bugs to your neighbours. It is not allowed to change room because of vermin.

### **3. Clean and tidy up**

You must clean your accommodation thoroughly before fumigation. Don't forget to do the following:

- Vacuum upholstered furniture and in your wardrobes, cupboards, drawers etc.
- Vacuum along skirting-boards, and in all nooks and crannies.
- Put the dust-bag from the vacuum-cleaner in a sealed plastic bag and immediately throw it in the container for household waste outside the building.
- Mop the floor.

During their visit, the fumigation company applies a special solution to the floor, ceiling, skirting boards, bed and upholstered furniture. This solution is eco-friendly and harmless to humans. Allergy and asthma sufferers, children under two years, pregnant women and pets must however stay out of the apartment/room for 24 hours after the fumigation.

## **What Not to Do**

Using insect sprays and similar is not advisable since the result may be that bed bugs are spread all over the room which makes them more difficult to find. Moving to a friend's room is also a very bad idea, since there is an obvious risk that you – not knowing – bring the bed bugs with you.