

# BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR BED BUGS

A SUMMARY FOR CONSUMERS

The comprehensive authority on **bed bug detection** and **control**

**Finally.** Complete information on what to look for in **bed bug service** agreements.

**Clarity** on what to do with furniture exposed to bed bugs.

**Guidance** on the effective use of canines for **bed bug inspection**.

**Complete information** on bed bug control methods.



N P M A  
**BMP** BED BUGS  
best management practices

[www.pestworld.org](http://www.pestworld.org)

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The **RESURGENCE** of **BED BUGS** has created **SIGNIFICANT CONCERN** in the pest management industry and in **SOCIETY** overall.

Controlling, let alone eradicating, this pest is extremely difficult. To ensure industry professionals have the best possible guidance on controlling bed bugs effectively, responsibly and safely, the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) has created Best Management Practices for Bed Bugs (BMPs), guidelines developed by industry professionals, regulators, academics, and entomologists. In addition to helping industry professionals, the guidelines are useful to consumers so that they can understand what they should expect in working with trained pest management professionals for problems associated with bed bugs. Rest assured, bed bugs can be treated but proper management will involve an effective partnership between a pest professional and customer.

The National Pest Management Association is pleased to offer this summary overview for consumers on what they will find in the Best Management Practices for Bed Bugs. If you believe you may have bed bugs or would just like to understand more about how inspections and treatment are performed, please visit [www.npmapestworld.org](http://www.npmapestworld.org).

### Business Practices

Offering general guidelines to pest management professionals, the BMPs stipulate the necessity of fairness and honesty in advertising and all transactions with the public, stress the importance of ongoing employee education, and offer an overview of basic information essential in servicing consumers. Potential customers should consider this a Business 101 checklist.

### Service Agreements

Because bed bugs are a unique pest, the NPMA's BMPs offer guidance to professionals on what items should be included in service agreements. The clearly outlined inclusions and exclusions will also be helpful to any customer considering engaging a pest management professional.

## Client Cooperation & Treatment Preparations

A well informed client, working with a trained pest management professional, provides an effective team in combating bed bugs. The BMPs offer guidance on client education and what steps clients may be responsible for in supporting the elimination of bed bugs in both residential and commercial locations.

## Bed Bug Detection

The BMPs offer helpful guidance on what constitutes evidence of bed bugs and what doesn't. The various methods of inspection are addressed, including descriptions of how each is performed. The detection advice helps professionals and consumers alike understand when immediate treatment is warranted and when monitoring should be employed. Methods for such monitoring, including advantages and disadvantages for each type, are addressed.

## Bed Bug Scent Detection Canine Teams

Bed bug infestations can be detected by specially trained bed bug scent detection canine teams. The BMPs provide solid guidance on when such teams are most effective, how they should work, and describe the importance of third party certification of such teams.

## IPM & Control Methods

There are many things customers can do to minimize the likelihood of large-

scale bed bug infestations. The BMPs offer guidance to pest management professionals in properly educating home owners and commercial property managers about steps toward self-protection.

Fortunately, if bed bugs do find their way in, there are multiple methods of control that are available to pest management professionals, including vacuuming, steaming, freezing, heat treatments, use of mattress and box spring encasements, fumigation, and the use of insecticides. Written in detailed language, the BMPs offer comment on the advantages of each and address certain limitations. They address specific tactical steps on how each control method is properly performed. The information on the types of treatment available offers significant insight for consumers.

## Post-Treatment Evaluation

Because of the complex nature of bed bugs, multiple service visits may be required to ensure they are properly eliminated. The BMPs offer an explanation of the importance of inspections and possible treatments beyond the first visit.

## Health and Safety of Customers

Bed bug service often involves the use of insecticides, which have been demonstrated to be effective and safe treatment options when used correctly by trained personnel. The BMPs offer valuable reminders on essential health and safety considerations.

checking mattress for bed bugs



## Technician & Sales Staff Training

Any employee of a pest management firm who may encounter bed bugs or be asked about bed bugs needs training on the pest. The BMPs offer guidance on the type of training that should be undertaken by all professionals.

## Disposal of Beds, Furniture & Possessions

To many people's surprise, the BMPs discourage the disposal of items infested with bed bugs. Instead, they offer guidance on why throwing out infested items is often unnecessary and recommend procedures for properly removing furniture when it does become necessary.

bed bug "dirt"



bed bug on skin



bed bug sniffing dog



**For more information on bed bugs or NPMA's Best Management Practices for Bed Bugs, please contact your local pest management professional or [www.pestworld.org](http://www.pestworld.org).**

# TIPS FOR SELECTING A PEST PROFESSIONAL



**1.** Always deal with a **qualified and licensed pest management company**. Consider asking to see the license or other credentials of the pest management professional that comes to solve your pest problem.

**2. Evaluate** pest control companies that are members of national, state or local **pest management associations** as they have access to up-to-date information and education.

**3.** For **bed bug** service work, work with companies who have **experience** in dealing with this challenging pest.

**4.** Consider an **NPMA QualityPro company**. Visit [www.npmaqualitypro.com](http://www.npmaqualitypro.com) for more information.

**5. Ask friends and neighbors** to recommend pest control companies they have used successfully and how satisfied they were with the service.

**6.** If a sizable amount of money is involved, **get bids from several** pest management companies.

**7. Don't rush a decision.** Since you are paying for professional knowledge as well as skillful application of pesticides, look for someone whose judgment you can trust.

**8. Before signing a contract,** be sure to fully understand the nature of the work to be performed, the extent of the infestation, and what is covered by the service agreement.

**9.** Find out if the pest control company has **liability insurance** to cover any damages to your house or furnishings during treatment.

**10.** If a **guarantee** is given, know what it covers, how long it lasts, what you must do to keep it in force, and what kind of continuing control, prevention and management are necessary.

**11. Buy value, not price.** Beware of professionals that offer bargains that sound too good to be true.

**12.** Homeowners can **call state pest control regulatory agencies** for information regarding the status of pest management companies. In most states the regulatory agency is the State Department of Agriculture.

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