

Bed Bugs in St. Joseph County

The colonists are believed to have brought bed bugs to America in the 18th century. By the 1950s they were a major pest. With the discovery of the high efficiency of DDT as a contact poison against several arthropods, including mosquitoes, spiders, cockroaches and various insects, bed bug populations were drastically reduced. However, most uses of DDT were banned in the United States in 1972. As a result, bed bugs have been making a comeback in recent years. They were reported in 8 states in 2003 and in 43 states in 2004. Bed bugs have not been found to transmit any infectious agent and therefore are not considered a serious disease threat. However, the bites are an annoyance and some individuals may experience allergic reactions.

Frequently Asked Questions:

How Do I Recognize a Bed Bug?



Bed bugs are small, rusty-red colored, flattened insects. Roughly the size of an apple seed, their flat shape enables them to hide in cracks and crevices in furniture, floors, and walls. Bed bugs do not fly, but can move quickly across walls and floors.

Do Bed Bugs Really Bite?



Yes. Bed bugs feed solely on the blood of mammals, including humans. They require blood in order to reproduce and complete their life cycle. Bed bugs typically feed at night and are seldom seen in the daylight. Though they will normally feed for several minutes, their bite is not painful enough to awaken you. Later, the bites may turn into large, itchy skin welts.

Where Do Bed Bugs Come From?



Bed bugs may be transported in luggage, clothing, bedding, furniture, and packing materials; this makes them particularly troublesome for hotels, motels, and apartments where turnover of occupants is constant. Because they feed only on blood, bed bugs do not require unsanitary conditions and may be found in the

cleanest dwellings.

I Have Bed Bugs. What Should I Do?

Because bed bugs are a difficult pest to control, the Health Department recommends that homeowners enlist the aid of a professional pest control service that is licensed by the Office of the Indiana State Chemist. Ask to see the license or check with the OISC at (765) 494-1492. You can also see who is licensed at the [OISC Web site](#).