

## **BED BUGS**

The common bed bug (*Cimex lectularius*) has long been a pest – feeding on blood, causing itchy bites and generally irritating their human hosts. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) all consider bed bugs a public health pest. However, unlike most public health pests, bed bugs are not known to transmit or spread disease.

Experts believe the recent increase in bed bugs in the United States may be due to more travel, lack of knowledge about preventing infestations, increased resistance of bed bugs to pesticides, and ineffective pest control practices. Bed bugs can be hard to find and identify, given their small size and their habit of staying hidden.

### **If a Bed Bug is Found on School Premises or on a Person at School**

Inform the building principal. The building principal will notify the superintendent and begin the notification process as to the location of where the bed bug was found. Under no circumstances will the identity of a student, parent, or employee be released with regard to where the bed bug is suspected to have originated. Students and employees who are suspected of having bed bugs on their person will not be disciplined nor will they be removed from the premises for having bed bugs on their person or in their homes.

The parents or guardians of the child who was found with a bed bug on their person should also be informed as soon as possible. Those students and staff suspected of having brought bed bugs to school will be provided a safe and private location to change clothing. If possible, the clothing that may be contaminated will be run through the school district's dryer at the highest setting for approximately thirty minutes. Under no circumstances will the identity of students and staff required to change clothing be released to other employees or to any person.

The district will treat buildings with chemicals only if a true infestation is found with breeding bed bugs. A single bed bug is not an infestation. Any chemicals will be applied only by a pest professional that utilizes integrated pest management techniques. Exposure to students and employees will be minimized by applying pesticides at a time that building occupants are not present.

If a bedbug is sighted in a building, alert everyone who works in the building. Let staff know how the sighting will be handled. This allows them to take additional precautions to protect their homes as well as limiting rumors and speculation.