

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL NURSES, TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS ON BED BUGS



**Bed bugs are not known to vector pathogens or spread disease. If bed bugs are found, follow the established policy for your school. If pest management is necessary, it will normally be targeted to certain areas of the school and there is no need to close schools.**

Students should not be excluded from school due to bed bugs. If a suspected bed bug is found on a student or their belongings, the school nurse, school principal or designee should privately and with dignity, follow these guidelines.

1. Discreetly remove the child from the classroom so the school nurse or a qualified individual can perform an inspection of the child's clothing and other belongings (including but not limited to shoes, jackets, hats, books, backpacks, school supplies, etc.). Place any of the child's unneeded items, such as book bags, into a large plastic bag and tightly seal the bag. If the school has a washer or dryer available, the school may wish to wash and dry the clothing on the high heat setting.

2. Check areas where the student sits or affected belongings may be placed for extended periods of time. Although bed bugs only feed on humans, they can be found in many locations.

3. Collect the specimen(s) carefully, trying not to crush the bugs. Proper identification requires that body parts remain intact and it is often useful to send multiple samples if available. Please take measures so you do not

call undue attention to any child. You may destroy other bugs found after submission by placing them in a sealed bag and disposing the bag in the trash.

If bed bugs are found and identification confirmed, follow these steps:

- ◆ If bed bug is in clothes or belongings, notify parents.
- ◆ Provide educational materials and guidance if assistance is necessary.
- ◆ If bed bug is in classroom/ environment, have trained staff or pest management professional inspect room(s).

4. Specimens should be sent to an experienced entomologist for identification. One source is the Plant/Insect ID and Diagnostic Clinic, E-215 Plant Sciences Building, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523-1177 (phone 970-491-6950). Please do not send live specimens via any postal or shipping service as insects can escape during shipment. (Killed bed bugs can be sent under clear tape on a card and placed in a regular envelope.) Once received, an entomologist will examine the specimen and then notify the school designee of the bug's identification. Please provide a name, email and phone number for contact information.

5. It is recommended that the school contact the parents or guardian to inform them of the bed bug presence on their child. Suggest clean, freshly laundered (on high heat setting) and sealed change of clothing be sent to school (as long as needed). Recommend sending only essential items to school with the student and inspect items upon arrival at school. If possible, the school could offer to keep non-essential items overnight to help ensure the items are bed bug free. Suggest keeping school items sealed in a plastic bag or tote at home and limit items going back and forth from home to school until infestation is treated.

6. If pesticides are going to be applied at the school for the control or prevention of bed bugs, only licensed pest control applicators should be used.

7. Maintenance workers and custodians should follow these vacuuming procedures where bed bugs are found:

- ◆ Vacuum affected areas where bed bugs are found during normal after-school cleaning schedule, including floor and baseboards.
- ◆ Sprinkle about  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of talcum powder on the last section of floor to be vacuumed.
- ◆ Remove the bag and place in a tightly sealed plastic garbage bag for disposal.
- ◆ Do not use the same vacuum bag if moving to an uninfested area.



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This fact sheet was compiled from information provided by The Ohio State University and Michigan State University. For more information, see <http://coloradoipmcenter.agsci.colostate.edu/>