



Pest Control

Bed Bugs: Good Night, Sleep Tight

(NAPSA)—“Good night. Sleep tight. Don’t let the bed bugs bite.” While parents have long left their children with these seemingly benign words as they drift off to sleep, few consider the reality of bed bugs when reciting the rhyme. Yet the bugs have made a comeback across the country.

According to the National Pest Management Association (NPMA), pest control companies are reporting a significant increase in the number of calls regarding bed bug infestations. Although there is no way to determine the actual cause of the resurgence, experts are attributing the increase to several things, including global travel and the resilience of this mobile pest.

Adult bed bugs are approximately one-quarter inch in length and have a reddish-brown, flat, oval body. They feed solely on blood and can survive for more than 10 months without a meal. Moreover, female bed bugs can produce up to five eggs per day and 500 during a lifetime.

Despite their name, bed bugs can be found in any area of your home including carpets, peeling wallpaper and small cracks where insects can hide. When bed bugs bite, they inject a liquid that numbs the skin and allows the pest to feed undisturbed, leaving humans to find mysterious red, itchy welts in the morning. The good news, though, is that bed bugs do not transmit diseases.

Infestations can be difficult to detect, but the first sign, other than itchy welts, is the appearance of small, brownish-red fecal spots on bed linens. Unlike other insects that feed on filth, good



Bed bugs are flat, reddish brown and feed on human blood. A bed bug can live up to one year without feeding on a host.

housekeeping has little to do with bed bug infestations. Infestations should never be thought of as a sign of dirtiness; some of the most pristine places have reported bed bug infestations.

The NPMA offers these tips for preventing bed bug infestations in your home:

- When staying in hotels, inspect sheets, mattresses and headboards for signs of bed bugs.
- After traveling, vacuum out your suitcases before bringing them inside the house.
- Avoid acquiring used furniture.

Washing linens and other do-it-yourself measures are not effective in the treatment of bed bug infestations. They should be addressed by a licensed pest professional who knows where to look for these insects, can offer the most up-to-date methods of control and can provide peace of mind that the problem has been resolved.

For more information on bed bugs and other pest issues, visit www.pestworld.org.