

*Bed Bugs can go camping too!*

# A resource tool FOR CAMPS

## BED BUGS INFORMATION

- Bed bugs are small, brown insects about the size of an apple seed at adult stage, that feed on human blood.
- After a feeding, they swell in size and can become bright or dark red.
- Bed bugs are wingless and cannot fly or jump.
- They are usually found near areas where people sleep and lounge for long periods of time.
- Adult bed bugs can live for more than 12 months, depending on the location or environmental conditions because they can become inactive when there is no host to feed on.
- Having bed bugs does not mean your camp isn't clean and well kept.
- Bed bugs can travel on things such as luggage, furniture and/or household goods that are moved from one place to another.
- The most common are mattresses, box springs, upholstered furniture, household goods, electronics, books or pictures.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO KEEP YOUR CAMP FREE OF BED BUGS

Bed bugs usually enter camps on the clothes or belongings of campers, staff, volunteers or visitors. While the bugs may come from these individuals' homes, it is also possible they picked them up from other campers, transportation vehicles or some other source on their way to camp.

Watch for any signs of bed bugs on backpacks, clothing, blankets and other personal items people bring to camp. Discourage families from sending blankets or stuffed animals with their children.

Carefully inspect all second-hand or donated items for signs of bed bugs before they are brought into camp (ex: books, stuffed animals, costumes, furniture). Lost-and-found items should also be routinely inspected.

If you suspect bed bugs in clothing or cloth items, run them through the dryer for 20 minutes on high heat. This should kill all stages of bed bugs.

When possible, keep each camper's belongings separate by storing their coats, clothing and personal items in individual lockers, or cubby holes or bins. Sealed plastic bags, or containers, can be used for extra clothing or cloth items.

Vacuum daily, paying close attention to places bed bugs like to hide (ex: along baseboards, around carpet edges). Dispose of vacuum bags/waste in an outside garbage container immediately after vacuuming.

## PLAN AHEAD ON WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND BED BUGS

Your response plan should also follow these procedures:

### *If a camper is suspected of having bed bug bites:*

- Immediately phone the camper's parents/guardians and tell them you suspect their child has bed bug bites.
- Provide the family with educational materials or direct them to the bed bug website for information ([www.manitoba.ca/bedbugs](http://www.manitoba.ca/bedbugs)).
- Search the cabins for any other signs of bed bugs.

### *If a suspected bed bug is found on a camper, staff member, volunteer or transportation vehicle follow these steps.*

- 1) Meet with the person/owner/driver privately, away from others, so you can examine the person's items for bed bugs.
- 2) Put any bugs you find in a sealed container for inspection and identification.
- 3) Contact a licensed professional exterminator or public health inspector, to identify the bugs.

### *If you've confirmed bed bugs are in your camp then follow these steps.*

- You must seek treatment for a possible bed bug infestation when you find more than one type of evidence that your camp has bed bugs (ex: seeing the actual bugs, the cast-off bed bug skins, droppings or dried blood spot(s)).
- Discreetly examine the area where the bed bugs were found (search clothing, belongings, etc.) to help you determine which camper might have brought the bed bugs to camp.
- Thoroughly examine your camp for any additional evidence of bed bugs and report your findings to the public health inspector to determine if treatment is required. (Note: you can call the provincial Bed Bug Hotline at **1-855-3MB-BUGS** (1-855-362-2847) to be connected to a public health inspector.
- Contact a licensed professional exterminator for treatment. A licensed exterminator will know about the different products and techniques available to get the best results. Many exterminators now use heat treatment to kill bed bugs instead of, or combined with, chemical treatment.
- Follow the licensed exterminators advice and recommendations exactly and completely.
- Inform parents/guardians of campers and all camp staff and volunteers, that bed bugs have been confirmed. (See appendix for sample letter). **PLEASE NOTE: YOU MUST MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY. YOU CANNOT SHARE THE NAMES OF ANY CAMPERS, FAMILIES, STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS WHO MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BROUGHT BED BUGS INTO YOUR CAMP FACILITIES.**

- Notify your public health inspector to let them know bed bugs have been confirmed and treatment is being carried out.
- Provide educational materials to all families, staff and volunteers (please visit [www.manitoba.ca/bedbugs](http://www.manitoba.ca/bedbugs)).
- Consider sealing the mattresses with bed bug proof mattress covers.
- After your camp has been treated for bed bugs, you must continue to monitor the facility for any signs of bed bugs. This is to make sure the treatment worked and to prevent the bed bugs from coming back.

## RESOURCES FOR CAMPS

A Non-Profit Community Bed Bug Grant of up to \$2,000 per year is available to any qualifying camp/organization that is eligible to recover costs for bed bug treatment and/or prevention materials.

This grant covers any costs paid for:

- Treatment/inspections done by a licensed, professional exterminator company
- Detections done by 'canine bed bug sniffers'
- Prevention materials (mattress covers, traps, containers, bags)
- Vacuum cleaners/steamers
- Washers and dryers

If you are interested in applying for this grant, please visit [www.manitoba.ca/bedbugs](http://www.manitoba.ca/bedbugs) to download and application, or contact **1-855-362-2847** for more information on this grant.

## EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND TRAINING FOR STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

Free educational bed bug resources/packages are available by calling **1-855-362-2847** or by e-mailing us at [bedbugs@gov.mb.ca](mailto:bedbugs@gov.mb.ca). Free educational bed bug workshops are also available and are given by a trained professional. If you are interested in setting up a workshop for camp staff/volunteers please contact us.



For more information call **1.855.3MB.BUGS** (1.855.362.2847),  
Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
email: [bedbugs@gov.mb.ca](mailto:bedbugs@gov.mb.ca) or visit: [Manitoba.ca/bedbugs](http://Manitoba.ca/bedbugs)



## PARENT NOTIFICATION LETTER FOR CONFIRMED CASE OF BED BUGS

(Camp Name/Logo)

(Insert Date)

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian:

A bed bug was recently found in your child's cabin.

Bed bugs are small, brown wingless insects that feed on blood. Bed bug bites may look like red bumps or a rash and can be very itchy. These bites are usually found on the face, neck, upper body, arms and hands. Bed bugs are NOT a health risk – there is no evidence they spread disease – however, repeated scratching can cause secondary infections, and some people can experience an allergic reaction.

As a precaution, we are asking you to thoroughly inspect all belongings for bed bugs, such as backpacks, clothing and sleeping bags when your child returns home from camp. It is recommended to inspect these items before bringing them into your home.

It's important to understand that having bed bugs does not mean the home, camp, school or public place is unclean or poorly kept. These bugs can travel on items like clothing, backpacks, towels, sleeping bags, or can be picked up on buses or taxis.

### PLEASE NOTE:

Campers affected by bed bugs will NOT be excluded from programs or sent home.

The camp is currently working with public health to manage the situation and prevent any further occurrences in the camp. The camp will not close, unless short-term closure is required for a bed bug treatment by a licensed professional.

For more information on bed bugs, go to the Manitoba government website at **[www.manitoba.ca/bedbugs](http://www.manitoba.ca/bedbugs)**, call the Bed Bug Hotline at **1-855-362-2847** (8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M., Mondays-Fridays), or e-mail [bedbugs@gov.mb.ca](mailto:bedbugs@gov.mb.ca).

If you have questions about bed bugs at the camp, please contact (name, contact info).

Sincerely,

(Name of Camp Director)