

# B.I.T.E. Back!

INFORMATION YOU CAN USE TO STOP BED BUGS IN THEIR TRACKS

Volume 13 • Spring 2014

## The Bed Bug Ordinance is in effect

In our last issue, we celebrated the adoption of the bed bug ordinance. Effective in December of 2013, the ordinance is now the law of the land. It outlines multiple responsibilities for landlords, renters, and condominium associations. Some portions of the ordinance are straightforward, some are not. Midwest Pesticide Action Center is working to make sure you are properly informed on complying with the ordinance and proper bed bug control.

We developed a factsheet that quickly explains responsibilities of landlords, renters, condominium associations, and cooperatives.

**Chicago's Bed Bug Ordinance**  
A Factsheet From  
Midwest Pesticide Action Center

The City of Chicago has declared bed bugs a public nuisance in the bed bug ordinance that went into effect December 23, 2013. The ordinance amends the municipal code to better define who is responsible for bed bug control in multi-unit buildings. This factsheet summarizes the key elements addressed in the ordinance.

Midwest Pesticide Action Center is your guide to understanding the comprehensive order, as well as the division of responsibilities between landlords and tenants.

The ordinance clearly places the primary responsibility for controlling bed bugs on landlords. Landlords must provide inspection and treatment services when necessary to rental units and building common areas. Inspection and treatment must be in line with the National Pest Management Association's best practices for bed bug control, and treatment must be provided by a professional pest control operator until there is no longer evidence of an infestation.

Tenants must provide prompt notice of suspected bed bug infestation and cooperate during inspection and treatment activities.

Other provisions within the ordinance detail education, furniture disposal, the resale of items, and the responsibilities of condominium/cooperative buildings to have a comprehensive bed bug plan.

**Specific Landlord Responsibilities**  
EDUCATE/INFORM/INSPECT/TREAT

- Attach a bed bug informational brochure to all new and renewing leases. The Chicago Department of Public Health has one available at <http://bit.ly/1LW066>.
- Respond to any known or suspected bed bug infestation within **10 days**.
- Provide inspection and treatment services by a pest management professional.
- Inspection and, if necessary, treatment must be done in units adjacent to, above, and below the unit suspected of infestation. This pattern is continued in the building until no evidence of bed bugs is found.

• Provide written notice to the tenant(s) before inspection or treatment. This notice should advise the tenant of their responsibilities, and specific preparations that must be completed.

- Maintain written record of all inspection and pest control measures performed by the pest management professional. Records must be kept for **3 years** and are open to inspection by authorized city personnel.
- May not knowingly retaliate against tenants for reporting, lodging complaints, and/or seeking assistance for a bed bug problem.

**Specific Tenant Responsibilities**  
NOTIFY/COOPERATE/PREPARE

- Notify the landlord or representative, in writing, within **5 days** of any suspected or known bed bug infestations in the apartment, clothing, furniture or personal property.
- Cooperate with the landlord for inspection, control, treatment and eradication of bed bugs.

a. Grant access at reasonable times to your apartment for purposes of bed bug infestation inspection or treatment.

b. Prepare unit for inspection or treatment; cleaning, dusting or vacuuming, prior to treatment.

c. Properly dispose of any personal property that a pest management professional has determined cannot be treated before the pest control services begin.

\*Does not apply to tenants in assisted living, shared housing, or similar living arrangements. See Assisted Living and Shared Housing Act, 210 ILCS 9/10. (Continued on back)

If you know someone who is new to the bed bug issue, send them to our next free bed bug basics workshop. It will be held on May 14th at Sulzer Branch Library. Find more information on our [Events page](#).

We are hosting more workshops throughout the year to get you up to speed on bed bug preparedness and the ordinance. They cover everything from bed bug basics, to setting up a comprehensive plan for condominium association or shelters, to protecting yourself as a client service provider. There are a lot of great opportunities in the works. Check out the event listings for more information.

*Are you already up to speed on the ordinance? Have you referred to it during a recent bed bug sighting? Has your condominium association or building already implemented a building-wide inspection, monitoring and education plan for bed bugs? We want you hear about your successes. Please email [general@pesticideaction.org](mailto:general@pesticideaction.org) with your success stories.*

## Increased Illness Linked to Insecticides Used to Control Bed Bugs

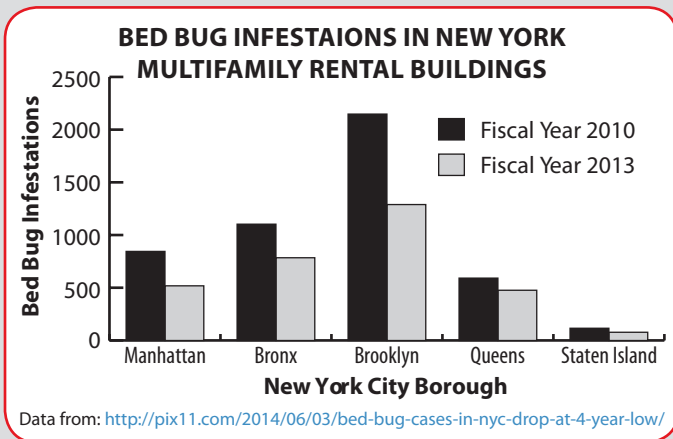
A troubling study reveals that “acute illnesses” related to bed bug control are on the rise. The first [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#) (MMWR) released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention links 111 cases of acute illness to insecticides used to control bed bugs over an eight year period. The unsettling news is that these large numbers are from a very small sample anecdotally collected in only 7 of the 50 states in the U.S.

A second MMWR report gives us a better understanding of why insecticides are commonly misused by looking a specific insecticide Dichlorvos-impregnated strips (2,2-dichlorovinyl dimethyl phosphate, or DDVP pest strips. A total of 31 acute DDVP pest strip-related illness cases were identified in just seven U.S. states and Canada from 2000 to 2013. DDVP pest strips are meant to be used in very tightly sealed containers, and must be handled with protective gear. Most of these illnesses were caused by incorrectly placing these pesticides in common living areas like kitchens and bedrooms, in violation of the label directions. This is a problem that is all too common with bed bug control.

Both reports give a very clear warning about insecticides. The recommended uses found on insecticide labels are easily misunderstood and can cause serious illness or injury. Read and follow label directions carefully if you must use insecticides.

*Notes from the Field: Acute Illness Associated with Use of Pest Strips — Seven U.S. States and Canada, 2000–2013. CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), January 17, 2014 / 63(02):42–43*

## New York sees a 53% drop in bed bugs after passing stricter rules



In 2010 and 2011, New York City introduced a number of rules and resources designed to tackle the city's serious bed bug problem. At the height of the problem in fiscal year 2010, 4,808 infestations were confirmed in multifamily residential rental buildings.

The rules require landlords to hire qualified pest management professionals to treat infestations using the clover-leaf method. Additionally, the Department of Health launched a website with information on how to prevent and identify infestations. All of this, in addition to two new bed bug-sniffing dogs, shows that New York City was ready to deal with their problem in a comprehensive way.

Infestations have dropped every year in each of the city's five boroughs since then, as reported by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development. In fiscal year 2013, only 2,268 infestations were confirmed. A department spokesman attributes the decrease in confirmed infestations to "better information available to the general public regarding how to prevent and deal with infestations."

Chicago's own bed bug ordinance also required landlords to hire a pest management professional to inspect units that are suspected to have infestations, and to carry out a clover-leaf inspection in the building. The City of Chicago's Department of Public Health's website houses Midwest Pesticide Action Center's information on bed bugs, and all new and renewed leases in Chicago are now accompanied with additional bed bug information. New York's huge success is good news for Chicago, as the city enters its first year of enforcing the bed bug ordinance.

## Scientists Examine Bed Bug's Tolerance to Freezing Temperatures

A recent study published in the *Journal of Economic Entomology* entitled "[Cold Tolerance of Bed Bugs and Practical Recommendations for Control](#)," examined whether these pests can be controlled using freezing methods. Bed bugs, in multiple life stages, were exposed to various freezing temperatures and exposure times to determine this species cold tolerance, or lack thereof.

The conclusion stated that in order to achieve 100% mortality, a minimum exposure time of 80 hours at minus 16 degrees Celsius is required for all life stages. Temperatures at minus 15 degrees Celsius were sufficient to control all life stages of bed bugs after 3.5 days, while temperatures below minus 20 degrees Celsius required only 48 hours. (Olson, Eaton, Kells, Morin, and Wang 2438)

Many popular bed bug control resources reviewing this study have suggested a do-it-yourself approach using your household freezer. Bed bug experts and pest management professionals agree that this is not the best option for bed bug remediation. It is very difficult to measure and maintain the required temperatures for bed bug mortality using an average household freezer.

Bed bugs possess the ability to delay the formation of ice within their bodily fluid to tolerate lower temperatures. This makes the freezing method unreliable. The research laboratory in this study is a controlled environment that creates favorable results for freezing. On the other hand, the field – your household freezer – does not. Reviewing this study is the final piece of evidence needed for B.I.T.E. Back! to announce that using your freezer is not the silver bullet for eliminating bed bugs.

Joelle F. Olson, Marc Eaton, Stephen A. Kells, Victor Morin, and Changlu Wang  
*Journal of Economic Entomology*, Volume 106, Number 6, Pages 2267-2684, pp. 2433-2441(9)

### Schedule of recent and upcoming events

**JUNE 27: Essential Bed Bug Information for Client Service Providers.** Preventing your office from becoming a bed bug hub, how to communicate effectively with clients and staff.

**JULY 10: Essential Bed Bug Information for Shelters.** Train staff, intake and exit strategies, complaint reporting, routine maintenance, inspection, and monitoring

**AUGUST 1: Bed Bug Basics.** This free, community-wide workshop discussing the basics of bed bugs for beginners. We will cover what they are, where they came from and why they are so difficult to control.

Learn about these and all upcoming events by visiting our [Events page](#) and [signing up for our e-newsletter](#).

