

Proactive information regarding bed bugs

As you are aware and have seen reports on the news, the east coast has been experiencing bed bug problems in our colleges and universities as well as in hotels, theatres, and in our homes. The Abbey has had a few isolated cases that we have been able to bring under control quickly. There is not an easy answer and the best offensive is for each individual person to do all they can to assist in the prevention of spreading bed bugs as well as doing what needs to be done when an infestation is found.

Some basic facts about bed bugs are that they can lay dormant for up to a year and a half. They can easily be spread from one person to the next on clothing, linens, backpacks, luggage, and pets. Anyone can get bed bugs; the level of cleanliness does not matter. The bed bugs burrow into older wooden furniture when laying their eggs or going dormant. They feed late at night and are attracted to humans because of our warmth during those late night hours. As a result, mattresses can easily be a haven for the bed bugs. The only effective way to kill bed bugs is with heat treatment over 120° for an extended period of time.

Being proactive is very important and it is everyone's responsibility to be diligent in order to prevent bring bed bugs back to our campus. We travel a great deal during the holidays and it is important to take this into account when dealing with an issue such as bed bugs. It is especially important when staying in hotels and traveling for the holidays. Should you suspect exposure to bed bugs; clothes must be treated by placing them in the dryer first, then washing and drying them. When traveling, set luggage, bags, and other items on hard surfaces not on beds or carpets. Inspect mattresses before sleeping on them. Look along the seams for rust colored specs that would be dried blood from feeding.

This type of universal problem takes all of us working together. The Abbey appreciates your support in helping us prevent this problem from spreading through our campus. For more information on bed bugs please utilize the following sites:

<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/bedbugs/>

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/Urban/biting.htm>