



## BED BUGS

### To Inspect or Not To Inspect?

### That is the Question

#### Should I Inspect Surrounding Units?

This is a difficult question to answer, because, like many things, there are numerous pros and cons. By inspecting surrounding units, you risk tarnishing your reputation by alerting the public of your infestation, raising alarm and panic in your apartment complex/hotel or motel, which could negatively affect business, and unfortunately possibly putting yourself in danger in of facing potential liabilities.

Another problem is that the inspection for bed bugs is not a routine inspection that can be handled without the homeowner's/renters presence, cooperation, and consent; it is actually a very invasive inspection that can require taking apart the bed(s). This being said, it may be more challenging to attempt effective bed bug treatment without the cooperation of the tenants surrounding the infested unit.

On the other hand what are the costs associated with not addressing surrounding units. Failure to include surrounding units in your bed bug management program has the potential to help promote the infestation of multiple units and/or other areas of the property. Another reason to inspect surrounding units is simply because the unit that initially reported a problem may not be the cause of the infestation. Bed bugs lead very cryptic lifestyles and are able to go undetected in an environment for months. Because of this behavior, you may have a resident who has a large bed bug infestation and may not even know it. The bugs appearing in the initial unit may be migrating from the undetected unit, making the problem more difficult to eradicate by even the most knowledgeable pest management professional (PMP).

The reason to pro-actively address surrounding units seem to outweigh the reasons not to. Bed bug infestations are characteristically easier to treat and control when caught early on. Keep in mind that if you are going to inspect the surrounding units in response to a bed bug infestation, you should continually inspect them throughout the time that treatment is taking place because the chance of a surrounding unit becoming infested while treatment is taking place will not go away until the reported problem is eradicated. In fact, as the pressures on the bed bugs from the eradication effort mount, the likelihood that they will try to escape elimination by migrating to an adjacent unit increases.

Overall, thorough inspections and/or treatment of all units surrounding the infested unit could quite possibly help protect property owners and tenants alike.

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