



# Bed Bug Preparation Instructions

**Please read all the information on the following pages and complete the items prior to the treatment date and time.**

Freedom Pest understands you may be too busy or unable to complete the following items. Freedom can complete the preparation for you. Call for additional information.

## **Bed Bug Preparation**

Proper preparation is a **mandatory** requirement for control to be effective. Freedom Pest Control will outline this in detail and provide detailed instructions on what to do. This is generally done by the resident. Preparation involves providing access for pest control treatment as well as taking measures to ensure that bed bugs are destroyed or contained. If a home is not properly prepared, successful elimination is practically impossible. Although preparation may be difficult for some people (for example, seniors or handicapped individuals), it is essential for effective treatment, and thus in such cases family members, friends or social or charitable agencies may need to provide assistance.



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## **Furniture**

All furniture and appliances in the dwelling need to be pulled away from the baseboards, and in the effected rooms with bedbugs all furniture containing potential hiding crevices, such as bookshelves and desks, be emptied and left open for the exterminator to spray. Items in tightly sealed containers are usually safe from bed bug infestation and need not be emptied. We may declare an item untreatable upon inspection--especially items of wood or paper.

## **Laundry**

Everything that can be laundered *should* be laundered, and laundered in advance of the treatment, then placed in plastic bags. This would include stuffed animals, drapes and so on.

The items should be securely tied into plastic bags, and then emptied directly into the machines. The bags should then be immediately disposed of. It is heat, not water that kills any bed bugs residing within the laundered items; therefore items should be washed in hot water, regardless of normal washing directions, and should be dried on high heat for 40 minutes or more. For those who have the ability to measure the temperature of the water in their washing machine, or of the hot air in their dryer, the target heat range is 140°F.

**NOTE: \*YOU NEED TO PUT ITEMS IN THE DRYER FOR 40 MINUTES ON HIGH HEAT\* (if you desire you can wash first in hot water).**

If a laundering session such as described is financially prohibitive, the items need only be run through the dryer, not the washing machine. However, the extensive water and spinning action associated with washing machines may assist in dislodging bed bugs from where they are residing within clothes and laundered. This remains only "optional," as the heat of the cycle of drying will effectively kill *all* stages—eggs, immature stage (nymphs) and adults.



For items that require dry cleaning, the dry cleaners should be informed that the items in question are potentially infested, and the items should be bagged. Cleaners may still refuse to accept them.

### **Clutter**

It is extremely important to eliminate clutter and reduce hiding places for bed bugs. Reduce clutter to the bare necessities to make treatments more effective.

### **Managing Bedding**

There are differing opinions as to whether it is necessary to dispose of mattress, box springs, futons, pillows, and other bedding. There is of course often a heavy cost involved in the complete replacement of such bedding. It is clear, also, that getting rid of infested bedding alone does not solve the problem. The decision to replace bedding or not depends on the condition of and often related level of infestation within the items, the comfort level of the owner, whether the owner can afford replacement, and aesthetics. A reasonable rule of thumb is that new bedding does not need to be replaced but if bedding is older and replacement may have been done soon in any case, then of course, replacing it AFTER control is a welcome clean start. Infestation must be handled first and then if new bedding is desired, the old bedding can be disposed of. Spread of infestation in apartment buildings is *increased* by tenants deciding to throw away old bedding. An infested mattress or box spring dragged in a hallway to an elevator will cause bedbugs to fall off or even run off the item, and these may then find their way into other units. As noted here, the use of protective encasements to protect bedding after treatment or to enclose bedbugs when the items are being thrown away are invaluable in preventing spread of infestation. It is also suggested to slash or mark up infested items so that others do not take them back into the building.



**All mattresses and box springs MUST be placed in a certified bed bug free encasement.** Freedom offers this service, call for pricing. Bed bugs like to hide near the host and are commonly found on seams of mattresses, or within the structure of box springs. The mattress and box spring encasement serves to reduce this likelihood and in the case of box springs, it seals any remaining bed bugs inside the encasement. An encasement is a good idea either until the infestation has been totally eliminated or in the case of good quality encasements, useful as a permanent protection for the mattress—and also to enable easier control if infestation recurs.

**Bed bug infestations** are not successfully handled by one treatment alone. Freedom Pest will schedule 3 treatments.