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BED BUG PREVENTION CHECKLIST FOR APARTMENT OPERATORS

WHY DO I NEED TO WORRY ABOUT BED BUGS?

Often by the time property managers realize there is a bed bug problem on-site, the infestation has become widespread. Then, bed bugs are the most difficult and expensive pest to control. It is essential to have an action plan in place to identify and control bed bugs at the first sign of an infestation. This checklist is intended as a guideline rather than a comprehensive list of all actions that should be taken.

BE PROACTIVE

- Develop a bed bug action plan in advance to deal with infestations, including strategies for dealing with:
 - Responding to pest complaints,
 - Eliminating known infestations,
 - Educating residents,
 - Managing the spread of bugs to other areas, and
 - Responding to the media.
- Implement a community-wide education program within the complex to inform residents and staff about bedbugs. Visiting caregivers should also be educated.
- Conduct ongoing inspections of common areas, such as laundries, lounges, etc.
- Use mattress and box springs that are bed bug proof and aid in early detection of bugs.

EDUCATION OF RESIDENTS AND STAFF SHOULD INCLUDE WRITTEN INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING:

- How bed bugs have become a nationwide problem and their role as a public health pest.
- Where bed bugs come from and how they are introduced and spread in apartments.
- How to prevent bed bugs, including clutter removal, avoidance of used mattresses, etc.
- How to identify the signs of bed bugs and what steps to take immediately if present.
- Maintenance workers should also be trained in assisting the pest control contractor, maintaining complaint and action records, and helping to ensure resident cooperation.

ACTIONS BY RESIDENTS THAT CAN HELP PREVENT BED BUGS AND ASSIST EARLY DETECTION

- Don't scavenge mattresses, beds, or other furniture that has been discarded.
- Inspect carefully to make sure there are no bed bugs in any used beds/furniture you purchase.
- Use mattress and box springs that are bed bug proof and inspect regularly.
- Pull your bed 2 inches from the wall so that it is not touching the wall or curtains.
- Reduce clutter. Don't store piles of clothes, boxes, toys, etc. on the floor or under the bed.
- When traveling:
 - Do not unpack until you check the bed area for bed bugs.
 - Inspect your luggage before you leave the lodging.
 - Wash and dry your clothes immediately upon return.

RESPONDING TO A BED BUG INCIDENT

- Have resident collect and save specimens for identification and arrange for a professional inspection AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, even if the complaint is not confirmed.
- Respond sympathetically to people reporting bed bugs. Tell residents how to prepare for pest control service (based on recommendations from pest control).
- Take actions to prevent the further spread of bed bugs, including inspecting all apartments adjacent to, above, and below any infested apartment.
- Every serviced apartment should be re-inspected and serviced again if necessary.
- If there are infestations in different parts of a building or in multiple buildings, the infestation is likely widespread and all apartments may need to be inspected and serviced if needed.

ACTIONS THAT CAN HELP REDUCE THE FURTHER SPREAD OF BED BUGS

- Seal cracks near beds, such as those along baseboards and around heating units, pipes, etc.
- Repair holes and other damage in walls; glue peeling wallpaper, repair peeling paint, etc.
- Immediately bag, seal, and discard belongings (including furniture) left by departing residents.

For more information, go to the California Department of Public Health website listed below and search "Bed Bugs":
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/>