Taking a Bite Out of Bed Bugs

FACT SHEET

Don’t Let the Bedbugs Bite!

Bed bugs are making a comeback nation-wide.

Our residence halls are thoroughly cleaned after May move-out and again before August move-in. Should there be a case of bed bugs in the residence halls the primary method of infestation is usually by transmission of bugs to campus though the use of none University used furniture and other sources mentioned below.

Due to significant health and safety reasons, students are “encouraged” not to bring the following items to campus:

- Any personal desk chairs
- Any pillows, cushions or bean bags, that are too large to fit in a dryer

Students are encouraged to bring: Pillows, cushions, bean bags that can fit into a dryer

Before bringing the above items students are encouraged to:

- Pre-treat any cushions, pillows, bean bags, duffel bags, book bags, and soft-sidedsuitcases prior to bringing them into the residence hall. Pretreatment consists of placing the item in a large capacity dryer, on the highest setting, for a minimum of 30 minutes.

- Store these items inside a house, rather than in a garage, during breaks from classes.

- Visually inspect all items for bed bugs prior to moving them into a residence hall.

Bedbugs or Imposter?

Don’t assume your bites are bedbugs. Bites can be hard to identify, even for doctors. Rule out mosquitoes, fleas, mites, and biting gnats by conducting a visual inspection. Call a professional—it’s best to collect and identify bedbugs to confirm bites. Look for the bugs themselves especially along the seams of mattresses. Further, look for dark spots where bedbugs might crawl into hiding places on furniture, walls, and floors.

- Bedbugs are small, flat, wingless insects with six legs that, like mosquitoes, feed on blood from animals or people. They range in color from almost white to brown, but they turn rusty red after feeding. The common bedbug doesn’t grow much longer than 0.2 inches (0.5 centimeters) and can be seen by the naked eye to the astute observer. Bedbugs get their name because they like to hide in bedding and mattresses.

How are bedbugs brought onto campus?

While bedbugs are generally not carried on your person, they can be transported in personal possessions such as bedding, suitcases, backpacks, boxes, and furniture.

If you experience allergic reactions or severe skin reactions to your bedbug bites, see your doctor for professional treatment.
What Can You Do To Help?

1. **Learn to identify bed-bugs.** Review the section of this fact sheet that describes bed-bugs and consult other resources listed below so that you can identify bedbugs.

2. **Inspect your belongings.** Before arriving to Sac State, inspect your suitcase and other belongings to ensure that bedbugs do not exist on items you plan to bring to campus. If in doubt, items such as suitcases may be wrapped and sealed in a large trash bag and allowed to bake in the summer sun for 2-3 days before use; the heat will kill bedbugs and their eggs to ensure that they are not transmitted during travel.

3. **Inspect your bed periodically.** Check for blood spots on your sheets. Lift bedding and mattress.

4. **Inspect your backpack periodically.** Bedbugs can hide in backpacks. Check seams and pouches throughout your backpack for bugs or eggs. Do not place your backpack on or under your bed.

What Can You Do To Help? - continued-

5. **Clean and reduce the clutter in your room to eliminate places for bedbugs to hide during the day.**

6. **Wash clothes and linens frequently in hot water, and use a dryer to kill any possible bugs.**

7. **Don't bring second-hand furniture items onto campus,** as these items can be common breeding grounds for bedbugs.

8. **If you discover or suspect bedbugs, immediately contact your hall staff.**

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**Our Commitment to You** includes providing a clean and comfortable living environment. Help us do our part by following the suggestions in this newsletter. Working together we can make sure our community stays comfortable and inviting.

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**Tak an Active Role**

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**A worldwide problem:** Bedbugs are a growing, worldwide problem brought about by increased travel and decreased use of pesticides. Bedbugs have been found in five-star hotels, college residence halls, hospitals, and virtually all other types of housing throughout the United States.

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**References:**

WebMD Feature: "Don't Lose Sleep Over Bed Bugs."

WebMD Medical Reference from Healthwise: "Bedbugs: BedMD Health News: "Bedbugs are Pesky but Not Harmful."

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**Acknowledgement**