

Bed Bug Treatment Preparation Checklist

CHECK LIST:

- ___ Strip the bed(s) and launder all sheets, pillowcases, mattress pads, and blankets.
- ___ Remove everything from bedroom closet(s) and place in sealed plastic bags.
- ___ Remove everything from dresser drawers, nightstands, and dressing tables and place in sealed plastic bags.
- ___ Have all clothing and fabrics laundered (hot wash / hot dryer cycle) or dry-cleaned.
- ___ Remove drapes and have them laundered, dry cleaned, or replaced.
- ___ Discard cardboard boxes, shoeboxes, paper and plastic bags, old newspapers, stacks of magazines, and similar items in all potentially infested rooms.
- ___ Vacuum all infested rooms, including the floor, mattresses, bedsprings, couches, chairs, closets and closet shelves, shoes, inside dresser drawers and bedside drawers. Vacuum bags are to be placed in a sealed plastic bag and discarded.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Discarding of any compromised (ripped / torn) materials or heavily infested items may be required.
- Dismantling of bed frames and other items will be performed as part of the service program.
- Should the box spring remain, removal of the cheesecloth underside is required for proper inspection and/or application.
- Zippered mattress / box spring encasements will be used. Mattresses can be used (back on bed frame) but must remain in these encasements for at least thirty days. Linens are to go over the encasements.
- If laundering, a hot water & detergent cycle + hot dryer must be used.
- A clutter-free environment must be provided in order to allow access for the service technician to treat all of the needed areas.
- Before removing all bagged items the client should inspect for pest activity.
- The client should not touch or move any monitoring device placed by the technician.
- "Booster" insecticide treatments MUST NOT be performed by the client.

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Proper preparation is a mandatory requirement for control to be effective. A service technician will outline this in detail and provide detailed instructions on what to do. This is generally done by the resident, although in some cases we offer preparation for an additional charge. 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 be available to provide assistance.

Packing

All furniture and appliances in the dwelling usually need to be pulled away from the baseboards, and it is commonly asked that all furniture containing potential hiding crevices, such as bookshelves and desks, be emptied and left open for the exterminator to treat. Items in tightly sealed containers are usually safe from bedbug 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 to ensure they remain free of bed bugs. This would include clothing, bedding, stuffed animals, drapes and so on.

The items should be securely tied within plastic bags, and then emptied directly into the machines. The bags should then immediately be 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 with medium heat (preferably 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 120°F (49°C).)

If a laundering session such as described is financially prohibitive, some have posited that 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 bedbugs from where they are residing within clothing during laundering. 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.

Vacuuming

The mechanical removal of bedbugs by vacuuming is a most important part of preparing for control. Vacuuming alone will not solve the problem, but it will substantially reduce bedbug numbers and thus help reduce the population as part of preparing for treatment. A crevice attachment should be used on the seams of mattresses, on box springs, on bed legs, within furniture interiors, behind pictures, on curtains, and anywhere there is a possibility of the insects hiding (e.g. inside dresser drawers, dresser cases, under chairs, etc.). Carpets should also be vacuumed throughout the home, preferably with a power-head. Baseboards should also be vacuumed using the crevice tool—not swept—prior to the exterminator's arrival. Vacuum bags should then immediately be removed and placed in doubled plastic bags and placed into strong plastic bag for disposal.