

St. Clair Housing Commission
400 S. Third Street
St. Clair MI 48079

BED BUG POLICY

Adopted and approved by Board of Director's meeting held on August 16, 2011

POLICY:

The common bed bug is fast becoming one of the most worrisome problems faced by housing agencies throughout Michigan and the rest of the country. Infestations are arising in almost every habitable location from homes to hospitals to movie theaters. Infestation in apartments can be problematic and require the cooperation of all residents to control and/or prevent full-out infestation.

While bed bugs can and will infest single family homes, apartment buildings afford a near perfect living accommodation for them due to the large number of occupants residing in a close proximity to one another giving them the ability to migrate to other units.

Bed Bugs are usually brought into your home in suitcases; handbags; on clothing or furniture, especially previously used mattresses and other items. They can also travel between apartments in a building. There's no need to be embarrassed if these bugs end up moving in with you. Bed Bugs are not necessarily associated with dirty environments, but they flourish in clutter.

The St. Clair Housing Commission is committed to eradicating the bed bug problem but requires the full cooperation of all residents to do so because bed bugs are difficult to control. Resident's full cooperation is extremely important in preventing the spread of bed bugs throughout the property and to eliminate the problem in individual apartments. Without Resident assistance and cooperation the problem cannot be resolved and may spread to neighboring units. This policy will show our commitment as well as establish guidelines for Residents and employees to follow.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON BEDBUGS:

- They are difficult to see, especially in early molting stages.
- You may need a flashlight to locate them as they hide in bedding, bed frames, couches, chairs, blankets, clothing, purses, ect.
- They live in clutter
- They feed off of human blood
- They are active, usually at night
- Females can lay numerous eggs per day (200-300)
- These eggs are usually translucent
- Bed Bugs can last up to 140 without blood

POLICY

The SCHC will not deny tenancy to a potential resident on the basis of tenant having experienced a prior bed bug infestation or give residential preference to any tenant based on a response to a question regarding prior exposure to bed bugs.

The SCHC will not charge tenants to cover the cost of bed bug treatment(in accordance with HUD notice 2012-17), however, tenants will be notified of their rights and responsibilities and are expected to cooperate with the treatment efforts, as tenant cooperation is crucial in prevention and control of infestation. (Updated on 08/12/2014-Board Resolution #194).

1. Prevention

A. For Residents:

- 1)Vacuum your home regularly. If you do have bed bugs, make sure you close the vacuum bag tightly and dispose of it outside your home.
- 2)Tenants are prohibited from transporting personal belongings that contain fabric through common areas of buildings unless they are contained in plastic bags, plastic wrap, etc.
- 3).Residents are required to bag laundry prior to taking it to the laundry facility. Wash and or dry on high heat setting.
- 4). Tenants are prohibited from bringing in items that contain fabric found on the curb side or in the dumpster.

- 5). Avoid picking up used mattresses or second hand upholstered furniture because it is hard to see whether they harbor bed bugs.
- 6). We recommend that you seal your mattresses and box springs with plastic or hypo-allergenic zippered covers.
- 7). Scrub furniture with soapy water or a household cleaning product to remove any possible bed bugs or their eggs.
- 8). Second hand clothing should be placed in a sealed, plastic bag and emptied directly into the washing machine. Wash in hot water and dry on hot setting to kill bed bugs and their eggs.
- 9). Keep your home clean and clutter-free.

B. For Employees:

- 1). Do not perform non-emergency work or inspections in units that have been confirmed to have bed bugs. Work not completed will be traced by the Maintenance Department to ensure completion after the unit has been rid of the problem.
- 2). All common areas, offices, etc, will be inspected regularly for bed bugs.

Discovery and Reporting

Bed bugs are small brownish flattened insects. They are about 1/8th of an inch in size and visible to the naked eye. They are active at night and can usually be seen along the seams of the mattress. They feed on human blood.

Itchy skin and insect bites are clues that you may have bed bugs in your home, although not everyone will have a reaction to their bites. You can usually see 3 or more bits in a straight line, or grouped together. Exposed areas of your arms, legs and back are more susceptible to bites. Look for small black stains “blood spots” on your sheets, pillows or mattress seams. Bed bugs may also be hiding in cracks/crevices in your furniture.

Bed bugs will try to live as close as possible to their food source (you), which is why they can often be found directly on the mattress in the tufts and folds, along the seam, and even inside the mattress.

Residents: You are required to report the discovery or suspicion of bed bugs IMMEDIATELY to the Maintenance office or to the Main office at 810.329.9141. The faster you act, the better the results will be.

Treatment

A staff member of the SCHC will contact the resident to immediately schedule an inspection as soon as possible to prevent the possibility of migration. Upon arrival, the staff member will inspect all cloth furniture with the residents unit. We will be looking at their mattress, box springs, headboard, couch, ect. for evidence of bed bugs.

If bed bugs are present: The Housing Staff member will contact our Pest Control Company and the resident will be issued a notice "How to Prepare for Treatment". The resident agrees to permit the Housing Commission into the apartment, with proper notice, to treat for or monitor bed bugs during the term of tenancy. The resident also understands that he/she may arrange for family members or friends to help prepare for bed bug inspection and or treatment.

The SCHC will complete their portion of the necessary preparations. If the resident is ready, treatment will be completed on the specified date/time. If resident is not ready, an alternative appointment could be scheduled or the Housing Commission Staff may perform the preparation on behalf of the tenant at the tenant's expense depending on the severity and urgency of the situation.

If bed bugs are NOT present: The unit will not be treated. The unit will be inspected for signs of other insect infestation. If the resident made the report due to skin irritation(bites), the resident will be asked to consider other biting insect exposure. If bugs were present, however not bed bugs, the Housing Commission along with the Pest Control Company will identify the type of insect and treat accordingly.

Follow up

Units treated will be re-inspected and cleared or scheduled for further treatment. If cleared, obtain verbal confirmation form from Pest Control Company for clearance. Any repairs required following treatment, such as wall repairs, will be performed by the Maintenance staff, once sufficient time has passed to ensure the problem has been resolved.