

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES
BED BUGS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedural guideline is to provide a standard practice for all schools, St. Kateri Outdoor Education Centre, child care centres, and administrative sites when addressing the presence or suspicion of bed bugs.

According to Algoma Public Health (APH), bed bugs are not considered a public health hazard because they are not known to transmit infectious or communicable diseases.

DEFINITIONS

Bed Bugs

Bed bugs are small, oval shaped, wingless insects that are about 10 mm long. The bugs are brown and about the size of apple seeds. The eggs are white and are found in clusters. The eggs are about the size of a pin head, about 1 mm long.

Bed bugs typically feed on a diet consisting solely of blood once a week, but they can live for months without feeding. Overall, they can live from several weeks up to 18 months (average 10 months), during which time females can lay up to 200-400 eggs at a rate of about 2-4 per day. The eggs hatch about 6-17 days later. The bugs usually come out at night to feed on the blood of people and animals, biting their victims as they sleep.

Bed Bug Bites

Signs of bed bugs are bites or rashes on humans especially around the face, neck, upper torso, arms and hands; physical signs such as blood spots on furniture, bedding, carpeting or walls; and the bugs themselves. Bed bug bites can mimic other insect bites. It is important to determine if bed bugs are the source of the bites observed, as per the procedures listed below.

Evidence of Bed Bugs

Signs that may indicate a potential or active infestation are:

- blood or fecal spotting on furniture, bedding, carpeting or walls,
- the presence of bugs and/or clusters of insect casings; or,
- bite marks on the body.

PROCEDURES

Bed bugs are present across Ontario. It is important to ensure effort is made to prevent stigmatizing or socially isolating any individual, family, or school community when responding to a concern for bed bugs.

When a suspected bed bug issue has been detected, it is important that HSCDSB verify with a licensed pest control professional and/or consult with APH before taking further action. There is no reporting requirement for bed bugs to APH. The level of sanitation and cleanliness of a property does not make a home or property more susceptible to bed bugs.

Bed bugs can show up almost anywhere and can be transported into a building through personal belongings. The likelihood of bed bugs on school property is low, as bed bugs prefer buildings where people sleep.

Action shall be taken to investigate reports of potential bed bugs, following the procedures outlined below:

EVIDENCE OF BED BUGS – ALL SCHOOLS AND ADMINISTRATIVE SITES

Employees

Any employee who notices signs that may indicate a potential or active infestation of bed bugs on school property shall promptly notify the principal as soon as possible (or the Supervisor of Carestaff during school holidays or summer vacation).

Principals / Designates

If signs of bed bugs are reported, the principal/designate shall promptly notify the Superintendent of Education, the Plant Maintenance Coordinator, Health and Safety Officer, and any organizations leasing space in the school.

It is recommended that the principal/designate consult with the Health and Safety Officer for additional information on how to manage a bed bug concern and/or request educational material to raise awareness to help de-stigmatize the issue.

If the presence of bed bugs is confirmed and treatment is required, the principal / designate shall promptly send a letter of notification (See Appendix A - Parent Notification Letter for Confirmed Case of Bed Bugs) to parents whose children attend the school, school staff, the child care centres, and other organizations that lease space at the school. Communications shall occur in consultation with the Communications Department.

If the presence of bed bugs is confirmed in areas used by community use of schools, the principal/designate shall promptly notify the community use of schools coordinator.

Plant Maintenance Coordinator

The Plant Maintenance Coordinator will consult with a licensed pest control contractor and arrange for a site visit, and treatment (if required).

If a treatment is required, the Plant Maintenance Coordinator shall follow the steps outlined below "*Bed Bug Treatments - All Schools, Childcare Facilities and Administrative Sites*".

EVIDENCE OF BED BUGS – CHILD CARE CENTRES

Employees

Any employee who notices signs that may indicate a potential or active infestation of bed bugs on school property in any area of the child care centre, shall promptly notify the supervisor of the child care centre.

Child Care Supervisor

If signs of bed bugs are reported at the child care centre, the supervisor of the child care centre shall promptly notify the principal of the school (or the Supervisor of Carestaff during school holidays or summer vacation).

Principal / Designate

The principal / designate shall promptly notify the Superintendent of Education responsible for the school.

It is recommended that the principal / designate consult with the Health and Safety Officer for additional information on how to manage a bed bug concern and/or request educational material to raise awareness to help de-stigmatize the issue. The principal / designate will relay this information to the child care supervisor.

If the presence of bed bugs is confirmed and treatment is required, the principal / designate shall promptly send a letter of notification (See Appendix A – Parent Notification Letter for Confirmed Case of Bed Bugs) to parents whose children attend the school, and school staff. Communications shall occur in consultation with the Communications Department.

The principal / designate will also send a sample letter that can be used by the child care staff to inform their families (See Appendix B – Child Care Notification Letter for Confirmed Case of Bed Bugs).

If the presence of bed bugs is confirmed in areas used by community use of schools, the principal / designate shall promptly notify the Community Use of Schools Coordinator.

Plant Maintenance Coordinator

The Plant Maintenance Coordinator will consult with a licensed pest control contractor and arrange for a site visit, and treatment (if required).

If a treatment is required, the Plant Maintenance Coordinator shall follow the steps outlined below “*Bed Bug Treatments - All Schools, Child Care Facilities and Administrative Sites*”.

EVIDENCE OF BED BUGS – ST. KATERI OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE**Employees**

Any employee who notices signs of bed bugs shall promptly notify the Outdoor Education Facilitator.

Outdoor Education Facilitator

If signs of bed bugs are confirmed, the Outdoor Education Facilitator shall contain the situation, inform the principal of the visiting school, and make arrangements for the students to be transported home if appropriate.

They will also promptly notify the Superintendent of Education responsible for Outdoor Education, the Plant Maintenance Coordinator, Health and Safety Officer, and Vice Principal – Outdoor Education Program.

The Outdoor Education Facilitator shall inform site-based staff, and Transportation Services, as appropriate.

Plant Maintenance Coordinator

The Plant Maintenance Coordinator will consult with a licensed pest control contractor and arrange for a site visit and treatment (if required).

If a treatment is required, the Plant Maintenance Coordinator shall follow the steps outlined below “*Bed Bug Treatments – St. Kateri Outdoor Education Centre*”.

Principal - Visiting School

The principal of the visiting school shall notify parents by letter. Communication shall occur in consultation with the Communications department. (Appendix A - Parent Notification Letter for Confirmed Case of Bed Bugs)

EVIDENCE OF BED BUGS – STUDENTS

If a student in a school or child care centre appears to have bed bug bites, principals are encouraged to contact the family and determine if there is a concern with bed bugs. During the discussion, principals can enquire about the nature of the bites to help determine if they may be from bed bugs or another source (e.g. mosquitos). If bed bugs are identified as the source of the bites, information about bed bugs, including educational material from the APH (Appendix C), may be provided. Students and families who have bed bug bites or signs of potential or active infestation must be treated with sensitivity and confidentiality. Students are not to be excluded from school due to the presence of bed bugs.

Principals / designates may refer families to the APH for additional education, resources and/or consultation on preventative measures and treatment related to bed bugs and bed bug infestations. Notification letters are not to be sent home with students unless bed bugs have been visibly identified and confirmed to be present on school property.

BED BUG TREATMENTS

All Schools, Child Care Facilities and Administrative Sites

The contractor will evaluate the situation and provide an assessment, including recommendations for any potential control and treatment measures. The Plant Maintenance Coordinator will relay this information to the principal / designate, Superintendent of Education responsible for the school, Health and Safety Officer, and Director of Education.

If treatment is required, it must not take place during school hours. If treatment requires the facility to be closed for any period of time, the Plant Maintenance Coordinator will consult with the Plant Services Manager, Superintendent of Education responsible for the school / administrative site, Health and Safety Officer and Director of Education. The Manager of Plant Services and/or Director of Education will relay a treatment plan and/or closure plan to all affected.

When treatment has been completed, the Plant Maintenance Coordinator shall obtain written recommendations from the pest control company as to the appropriateness of using the facility and forward these to the Superintendent of Education responsible for the school or administrative site, the Manager of Plant Services, Health and Safety Officer and Director of Education.

The Superintendent of Education responsible for the school / administrative site shall determine next steps which may include continued operation of the site, partial closure of the site, or complete closure of the site in consultation with the Plant Maintenance Coordinator, Manager of Plant Services, Health and Safety Officer and the Director of Education.

St. Kateri Outdoor Education Centre

The contractor will evaluate the situation and provide an assessment, including recommendations for any potential control and treatment measures. The Plant Maintenance Coordinator will relay this information to the Principal / Designate, Superintendent of Education responsible for outdoor education, Health and Safety officer, and Director of Education.

If treatment is required, it must not take place during school hours. If treatment requires the facility to be

closed for any period of time, the Plant Maintenance Coordinator will consult with the Plant Services Manager, Superintendent of Education responsible for outdoor education, Health and Safety Officer and Director of Education. The Manager of Plant Services and/or Director of Education will relay a treatment plan and/or closure plan to all affected.

When treatment has been completed, the Plant Maintenance Coordinator shall obtain written recommendations from the pest control company as to the appropriateness of using the facility and forward these to the Superintendent of Education responsible for outdoor education, the Manager of Plant Services, Health and Safety Officer and Director of Education.

The Superintendent of Education responsible for outdoor education shall determine next steps which may include continued operation of the site, partial closure of the site, or complete closure of the site and re-scheduling of visiting schools in consultation with the Plant Maintenance Coordinator, Manager of Plant Services, Health and Safety Officer and the Director of Education.

If it is deemed appropriate for a school to use the site during treatment, or if a school is the first to use a site following treatment, the outdoor education facilitator shall disclose the details of the treatment and recommendations to the administration of the visiting school so appropriate precautions can be taken.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS / PRECAUTIONS

Laundry

If laundry services are available at the school and needed to support the student(s), staff may launder the person's clothing (if available at the school and is needed to support the student)

Staff supporting the student will:

- Don PPE (disposable booties, gown, nitrile gloves)
- Place clothing in the dryer, filling only half-full, on high temperature for 40 minutes.
- Clean the lint trap of the dead insect(s).
- Place the waste in a garbage bag, and tie the garbage bag (e.g. this is performed by the person responsible to support the student).
- Remove PPE and dispose of in a tied up garbage bag.

Containment of Soft Surface Clothing

- Place soft item(s) that cannot be laundered into a plastic zipper style bag, or sealable container to prevent further spread, if possible (e.g. backpacks).
- Leave in a safe space for the person to take with them when they leave the building.
- Determine alternative measures for comfort items (e.g. soft items that may need additional cleaning or disposal) for the student in consultation with the appropriate department (e.g. Special Education with a student using a weighted blanket), soft surface items may need to be sent home or disposed of, and replacement item(s) provided, as needed.

Containment of Soft Surface Furniture

- All precautions should be taken to remove or isolate any soft surface items (i.e. bean bag chairs, etc.) that are not easily inspectable or wipeable.
- Furniture such as chairs and couches that are not commercial in nature present a challenge as bed bugs will tend to hide in the seams of the fabric. Only commercial furniture, that can be easily inspected, and wiped clean, should remain in the school.

In areas where there is a confirmed source of bed bugs, the commercial soft surface furniture should also be isolated, if possible.

Students with Special Needs

In learning environments where there are students who have special needs, these students may have specialized equipment (i.e. wheelchairs, beds, transfer lifts, etc.) that contain soft surfaces.

Staff who are supporting a student with special needs may inspect the soft surfaces of the specialized equipment.

Staff supporting the student will:

- Don PPE (disposable booties, gown, nitrile gloves)
- Use a bright flashlight to inspect the seams of the soft surfaces
- If mattress pad is used, preferably it would be outfitted with a bed bug cover, and/or have no seams and be wipeable.
- Report any found bed bugs (keep them in a small screw top container for identification)
- Place the waste in a garbage bag, and tie the garbage bag (e.g. this is performed by the person responsible to support the student).
- Remove PPE and dispose of in a tied up garbage bag.

Appendix A - Parent Notification Letter for Confirmed Case of Bed Bugs

(Board Letterhead)
(insert date)

Dear Parent(s) / Guardian:

Bed bugs have recently been identified in an area of our school. According to Algoma Public Health, bed bugs are a nuisance, but do not pose a public health hazard as they are not known to transmit infectious or communicable diseases.

Action is being taken to treat the facility, in accordance with the Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board's Bed Bug Procedural Guidelines, in cooperation with the School Board Plant Services staff and licensed pest control providers. If the application of pesticides is required, it will be conducted outside of normal school hours, on weekends, or holidays. The safety of our students and staff is of paramount importance to Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board, and we assure you that every measure is being taken to ensure student and staff well-being.

Parents are encouraged to check student belongings as bed bugs can be transferred through personal belongings. Bed bugs are small, brown wingless insects that feed on blood. Bed bug bites may look like red bumps or rashes on the skin and can be very itchy. These bites are usually found on the face, neck, upper body, arms and hands.

It's important to understand that having bed bugs does not mean the home, school or a public place is unclean or poorly kept. These bugs can travel on items like clothing, backpacks and lunchboxes, or can be picked up on buses or taxis – anything that travels to and from the school.

For more information on bed bugs, visit the Algoma Public Health website at <https://www.algomapublichealth.com/environment-inspections/environmental-health/bed-bugs/> or phone (705) 942-4646.

A copy of the Bed Bug Fact Sheet is attached.

If you have questions about bed bugs in the school, please contact (name, contact info).

Sincerely,

(name of principal), (school)

Appendix B – Child Care Notification Letter for Confirmed Case of Bed Bugs

(Child Care Provider Letterhead)
(insert date)

Dear Parent(s) / Guardian:

Bed bugs have recently been identified in the child care facility / school. According to Algoma Public Health, bed bugs are a nuisance, but do not pose a public health hazard as they are not known to transmit infectious or communicable diseases.

Action is being taken to treat the facility, in accordance with the Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board's Bed Bug Procedural Guidelines, in cooperation with the School Board Plant Services staff and licensed pest control providers. If the application of pesticides is required, it will be conducted outside of normal school hours, on weekends, or holidays. The safety of our students and staff is of paramount importance to Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board, and we assure you that every measure is being taken to ensure child and staff well-being.

Parents are encouraged to check student belongings as bed bugs can be transferred through personal belongings. Bed bugs are small, brown wingless insects that feed on blood. Bed bug bites may look like red bumps or rashes on the skin and can be very itchy. These bites are usually found on the face, neck, upper body, arms and hands.

It's important to understand that having bed bugs does not mean the home, child care facility, or school is unclean or poorly kept. These bugs can travel on items like clothing, backpacks or can be picked up on buses or taxis – anything that travels to and from the child care facility / school.

For more information on bed bugs, visit the Algoma Public Health website at <https://www.algomapublichealth.com/environment-inspections/environmental-health/bed-bugs/> or phone (705) 942-4646.

A copy of the Bed Bug Fact Sheet is attached.

If you have questions about bed bugs in the school, please contact (name, contact info).

Sincerely,

(name of principal), (school)