

RESPONSE ^{TO} BED BUGS IN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



DEVELOPED BY THE NATIONAL PEST MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION



Trains, subways, buses, and taxis are at risk of problems from bed bugs as their riders may transport them in clothing, luggage, carry-ons, or other personal possessions. Public transport is at highest risk in areas with significant incidence of residential bed bug infestations. Not only may vehicles themselves become infested, but also benches, lockers, and furniture in stations and airports. Bed bug infestations are unpredictable in public transportation, making prevention more difficult than in other areas where bed bugs are often found. These guidelines offer help for detecting and responding to bed bug incidents.

WHAT TO AVOID

- Do not ignore complaints of bed bugs.
 - Do not be dismissive if someone reports seeing a bed bug.
 - Be sympathetic and take immediate action.
- Do not hide information from employees about a bed bug issue.
- Do not have untrained employees apply insecticide sprays or fogs.

BE PROACTIVE

- Develop a written “bed bug action plan” in advance of problems being identified with specific procedures and responsibilities for responding to a bed bug incident.
- Have a relationship with a qualified pest management professional.
- Institute a regular inspection and monitoring program for bed bugs, at least for vehicles at the highest risk of bed bug infestation or those that have experienced bed bug problems in the past.
- Educate drivers, conductors, flight and train attendants, pilots, and cleaning and maintenance staff about:
 - How to recognize bed bugs, and their evidence.
 - Basic bed bug biology and habits.
 - How to respond to a bed bug complaint.

RESPONDING TO A BED BUG INCIDENT

- If someone reports bed bugs, respond immediately:
 - Collect specimens, if possible, for identification by a professional.
 - Report the complaint through the proper channels and follow the action plan’s direction for scheduling the vehicle/equipment for inspection.
- A pest management professional *experienced in bed bug control* should inspect the vehicle/rail car ASAP and if the presence of bed bugs is confirmed, the extent and distribution of the infestation should be determined.
- Remove an infested vehicle/rail car from service until it has been treated.
 - Return the vehicle/rail car to service after treatment.
 - Inspect the vehicle again 1-2 weeks after treatment to ensure that all bed bugs have been eliminated.
- Bed bug service may include one or more of the following:
 - Insecticide applications targeted to certain infested or suspect areas, with residual insecticide applied into cracks, crevices, and other harborage.
 - Steam or spot cold treatment to kill bed bugs in seats, carpet edges, and in cracks and crevices.
 - Vacuuming to eliminate clusters of bed bugs.
 - Heat treatment or fumigation of the vehicle.



- Keep careful records of bed bug incidents by vehicle and by route in order to determine high risk routes.

BED BUG PREVENTION

- Institute regular “deep” cleaning of public transport vehicles, including steam cleaning of carpets and seats.
- Workers who clean or service the interior of vehicles should:
 - Inspect for the signs of bed bugs: live bugs, shed skins, spotting, and eggs.
 - Aggressively vacuum typical bed bug hiding places such as deep in the seams, creases, and crevices in upholstered seats, around luggage storage areas, and inside seatbelt buckle assemblies.
- Consider a regular bed bug monitoring program for vehicles/rail cars, stations, benches, etc. A professional may recommend active or passive monitoring or periodic inspections, possibly including the use of a certified canine bed bug scent detection team.
- Luggage areas should be made unattractive to bed bugs by eliminating cracks, crevices, and clutter, and by avoiding carpeting in these areas.
- Consider using non-upholstered seats for buses and train cars experiencing repeated infestations.
- Consider monthly or quarterly pest management service for transport vehicles operating in areas with significant bed bug problems.



bed bug on skin



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For detailed information on bed bugs, control options, guidance on working with professionals or to find a local pest management professional, please visit www.pestworld.org.