

SAULT STE MARIE HOUSING COMMISSION

BEDBUG POLICY

The Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission recognizes the potential problems that can arise out of bedbug infestations in public housing. Accordingly, the Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission adopted this policy in an effort to minimize bedbug infestations in its public housing and Housing Choice Voucher Program.

HOUSING COMMISSION'S RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Management

1. The Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission shall provide training to appropriate staff members regarding the identification, prevention, and eradication of bedbugs.
2. The Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission shall make efforts to educate new and existing residents on methods that may be utilized in order to prevent and detect bedbug policy.
3. The Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission may keep a qualified pest control company under contract so they can be called on an "as needed" basis if internal staffs are inadequate to deal with a bedbug infestation.
4. The Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission shall keep written records of reports and incidents of bedbug infestation. Said records shall identify the dates, times and places of such reports or incidents.

B. Inspections

1. If a resident reports the existence of bedbugs in his or her unit, the Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission shall within 24 hours make contact with the resident, provide the resident with information about control and prevention of bedbugs and discuss measures the resident may be able to take in the unit before an inspection is performed.
2. Following a report of bedbugs, the Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission or a qualified third party trained in bedbug detection shall inspect the dwelling unit to determine if bedbugs are present. It is critical that inspections be conducted by trained staff or third-party professionals. Low level infestations may escape visual detection. For this reason, multiple detection tools, such as monitors containing attractants and canine detection may be utilized. The inspections shall occur within three business days of the resident report when possible.
3. The inspection shall cover the unit reporting the infestation and no less than the adjoining apartment in a duplex or surrounding apartments consisting of the units above, below, left and right in a multifamily building if these units exist.
4. If the initial inspection confirms the presence of bedbugs, the Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission will contact a licensed pest control company to treat the infestation. The length, method and extent of the treatment will depend on the severity and complexity of the infestation, and the level of cooperation of the residents. The resident may expect treatment to begin within five days of the inspection, though depending on the form of treatment and/or the availability of the contractor, this may not be possible. Residents

should be advised that treatment may take several weeks and possibly several applications.

5. If an infestation is suspected but cannot be verified, the Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission will re-inspect the unit(s) periodically over the next several months.
6. If licensed pest control companies are unattainable within three calendar days, the Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission shall retain documentation of the efforts to obtain qualified services.

C. Additional Considerations

The Sault Ste. Marie Housing Commission will not charge a resident to cover the cost of bedbug treatment; such costs shall be covered by the Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission. The only exception to this rule is if material supplied by the Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission to the resident to combat bedbugs or the possibility of bedbugs is lost or damaged due to an action by a resident or his or her guest. If the resident does not adhere to the procedures as required by the policy and the pest control company the Sault Ste. Marie Housing Commission can terminate the lease and charge the resident for any additional treatment.

RESIDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Under the terms of the Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission's standard lease agreement, residents are required to "report any problem with infestation." Accordingly, residents are strongly encouraged to report any suspected problems with bedbug infestation immediately. Residents are the first line of defense against bedbugs. Further, any willful failure on the part of a resident to report a bedbug infestation may result in adverse action taken against the resident, up to and including eviction. A resident reporting bedbugs may expect expeditious response and attention by the Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission, but should be advised that inspection and, if necessary, treatment of bedbugs may take time to schedule.
2. Since clutter is a friend of bedbugs, residents will keep clutter in their homes to an absolute minimum.
3. Residents are required to cooperate with the treatment efforts by allowing for heat treatment of clothing and furniture and refraining from placing infested furniture or other items in common areas such as hallways. Residents will not be reimbursed the cost of any additional expenses to the household, such as the purchase of new furniture, clothing or cleaning services.
4. Residents can easily unintentionally bring bedbugs onto the property when returning from a trip or bringing property into their homes. Therefore, residents will check their luggage and clothes whenever they return home from taking a trip and examine any secondhand items before bringing them home.

Tenant

Date

Tenant

Date

Prevention and Safe Removal of Bedbugs

Bedbug infestations have become a serious problem in housing throughout the country. Public Housing properties are not immune to infestations, anyone or any home can get bedbugs. Bedbugs live on human and animal blood and typically hide and live in cracks and crevices in dark and undisturbed locations close to their hosts. They can live for long periods of time and although visible to the naked eye, they may be difficult to detect.

Bedbug Prevention Action Plan

- Inspect in and around sleeping and resting areas at home once a month.
- Look for signs of bedbug activity, active infestations will have fecal spotting, live or dead bedbugs, shed skins and bedbug eggs.
- Avoid used furniture and mattresses, especially discarded furniture and mattresses.
- Used furniture and refurbished mattresses may have bedbugs and bedbug eggs that are difficult to see.
- Inspect for the signs of bedbugs when traveling away from home. Look for live or dead bedbugs, shed bedbug skins or bedbug eggs and fecal spots on mattresses, clothing or dark cracks and crevices. Wood, metal or plastic furniture, sofas, chairs, tables and many other items may be infested with bedbugs.
- If contact with an active bedbug infestation is suspected away from home, segregate and isolate in sealed plastic bags any exposed luggage, clothing and personal effects until inspection and decontamination can be completed.
- Bedbugs prefer to live in cracks and crevices in areas like baseboards, moldings, window/door frames, and cracks/seams in walls and furniture, especially headboards and bed frames and screw holes.
- Seal baseboards, cracks, crevices, heat, plumbing and electrical services shared between apartments with pest-proofing sealants.
- Encase mattresses and box springs. Seal box springs in an appropriate zippered encasement to prevent bedbugs hiding inside from escaping; this location is commonly affected in bedbug infestations and yet difficult to inspect.
- Thoroughly vacuum apartment, furniture and all belongings and use crevice tools and other attachments where feasible. Place the contents of the vacuum in a tightly sealed disposable bag and remove.

EARLY DETECTION IS CRITICAL: Early identification and reporting of infestations by residents to building management and neighbors limits the spread of bedbugs. As soon as possible contact Sault Ste Marie Housing Commission. Report the suspected activity as soon as possible. The longer you wait the more likely the problem is to spread and the more difficult and costly it will be to control. **DO NOT REMOVE ANY ITEMS ON YOUR OWN! MAINTENANCE WILL ENCASE AND DISPOSE.** Removal on your own will spread the infestation.

Bedbug Removal Action Plan

A licensed contractor will be contacted immediately upon confirmation of bed bugs. These procedures are the responsibility of the property owner or agent.

Your property will be treated on: Date: _____ 20____

PLEASE DO THE FOLLOWING TO PREPARE YOUR PROPERTY BEFORE TREATMENT:

- DO NOT remove infested materials from the affected area.
- DO NOT apply any over-the-counter pesticides in the affected area.
- DO NOT disassemble beds and frames. This will be done by the Guardian technician.
- DO NOT remove headboard. This will be done by the Guardian technician.
- DO NOT empty kitchen cabinets.

- Articles of clothing should be hung on hangers, so the heated air can pass through them.
- Remove hazardous, combustible and/or flammable materials such as aerosol cans, carbonated beverages, compressed gas cans, fire extinguishers, oxygen bottles, gasoline, oil, propane, butane lighters and firearms, etc.
- Fans will be used to circulate the heated air throughout the treated area, therefore, remove any loose items (i.e., papers) that may drift around by air movement.
- Remove all heat susceptible, easily melted materials such as soap, candles, lipsticks, plants, heirlooms/one-of-a-kind items and any valuable items that might be damaged by a temperature of 140° for approximately six hours.
- Open all luggage and duffle bags in the affected area.
- Roll up area rugs, loose floor coverings and place against wall.
- Unplug electrical devices like TV's, computers, stereos, etc. Keep the refrigerator plugged in.
- Affixed artwork should be carefully removed from walls and placed vertically on the floor.
- Remove pets and fish tanks.
- Remove all electric outlet and switch covers.
- _____
- _____

AFTER TREATMENT:

- Wash and hot dry bedding items and other items not hung on hangers.
- Place clothing and other materials worn or carried out of treatment area on day of treatment or not hanging in dryer and run on high heat for 30 minutes to one hour.
- DO NOT plug in electronic devices until they are cool to the touch.
- Return plants, pets and fish tanks to treated area when treated area has returned to normal room temperature.
- We recommend the use of fabric mattresses and box spring encasements (available through Guardian), especially if re-infestation is a concern.
- Thoroughly vacuum mattress and box spring (pay particular attention to voids, seams, and folded areas), then place vacuum contents in a plastic bag, seal and discard bag outside the building.
- Clean children's toys with warm, soapy water.

CONDITIONS CONDUCTIVE TO RE-INFESTATION:

- Re-introducing infested materials removed prior to heat treatment.
- Staying at or visiting locations that have infestations.
- The introduction of second-hand furniture or clothing to the premises.
- Guests that are experiencing bed bug infestations.

IMPORTANT: OCCUPANT MAY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENT OF FUTURE TREATMENTS IF THE ABOVE PREPARATION STEPS ARE NOT FOLLOWED AS DIRECTED.

- Re-inspection of infested structures and sites will be done about 10-14 days after any initial treatment, and (if needed) again about 10-14 days later, to detect, and to precisely target the treatment (if needed) of any continued infestation.

Carefully reintroduce clean items. Isolate and contain items that have been properly cleaned, laundered or heat treated. Heavy duty plastic bags or airtight containers may be used for this purpose. Clear bags and containers are preferable.

NEVER USE THE FOLLOWING PRODUCTS FOR BEDBUG TREATMENT:

Insecticide "bombs", total release foggers, camphor, kerosene, diesel, gasoline, alcohol or other similar products. These products can cause serious health problems. They are dangerous if misused and can cause fires and explosions. These products are not appropriate for bedbug management.