

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Battling Bed Bugs in Baltimore, MD

Multiple Approaches Promoting
Awareness and Action

Second National Bed Bug Summit
Washington, DC
February 1-2, 2011

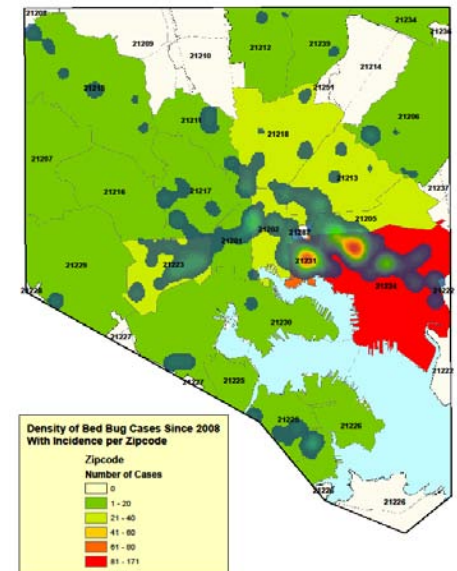


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Baltimore Snapshot

- Peak period we receive 90 reports/month
- 405 cases July 1 – Dec 31, 2010; 93% increase from same period in 2009
- Nearly 50% of reported cases are in 21231 and 21224 ZIP codes (Southeast)
- Media coverage adding to public awareness and concern:
 - NPR, CNN Español, local tv networks and newspapers



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Healthy Homes Bureau addresses bed bugs through:

- ▣ Household-level inspections and education
- ▣ Subsidized extermination
- ▣ Community-focused initiatives and outreach
- ▣ Latino community health worker trainings
- ▣ Educational tools and extermination equipment

Our objectives:

- ▣ Reduce spread
- ▣ Reduce stigma
- ▣ Increase early awareness and prompt, safe treatment

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■ Common Messages:

- We'll be fine. We've had them before. We can live our lives.
- They do not transmit disease.
- There are simple, effective ways to detect and combat them and reduce their spread.
- Routine inspections → early detection and prompt response → avoids a larger problem.
- Bed bugs are no one's fault - they don't discriminate.
- We must work together to eliminate them.
- Bombs and foggers do not work! – don't eliminate, often spread them.



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■ Household-level Inspections and Education

□ Baltimore City 311 Call Service:

- Residents call to report suspected bed bug presence
- Healthy Homes Bureau Environmental Sanitarians:
 - Inspect
 - Confirm or deny bed bug presence
 - Provide bed bug manual and advice
 - Refer to additional support services, e.g. community training sessions
 - Visit neighboring residences
 - Issue code violations

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■ Subsidized Extermination

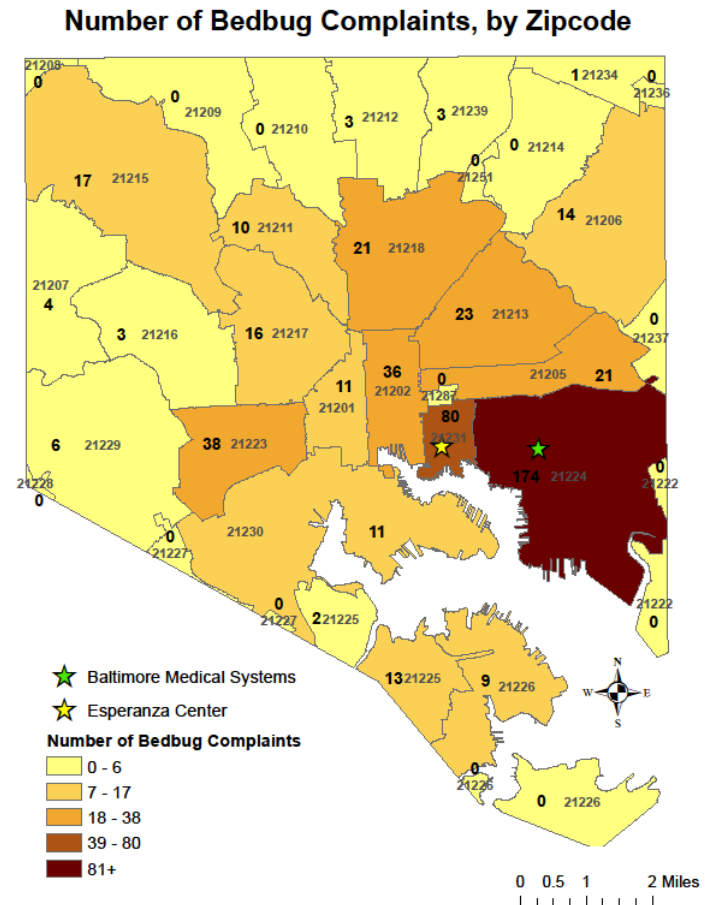
- Objective: provide effective, safe extermination services at low cost to needy residents
 - Initial phase: treated 68 homes
 - Residents applied; those with low incomes, disabilities, and children or elderly with asthma/respiratory conditions given preference
 - If accepted agreed to terms of service, including adequate preparation for treatment
 - Resident paid \$200 for up to 4 extermination visits and received up to 8 mattress and box spring covers
 - Pest control operator was selected through bidding process that mandated IPM practices and Spanish ability
 - Pest control operator obligated to provide education and answer questions
 - Findings: residents pleased with service but in many cases, bed bugs returned
- Continuing service for neediest cases
- Applicants now include homes that have been Weatherized

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■ Community Focused Initiatives and Outreach:

□ Bite Bed Bugs Back (B4) Initiative

- Objectives: In two zip codes with highest numbers of 311 calls:
 - build neighborhood awareness and capacity to detect and treat
 - realize block-level treatments
- Challenge: significant language and cultural barriers, mistrust



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■ Community Focused Initiatives and Outreach:

□ Bite Bed Bugs Back (B4) Initiative (continued)

- Healthy Homes Bureau trains and provides educational materials on avoidance, detection and treatment:
 - Two community-based partnering organizations (one Latino-focused)
 - Neighborhood associations
- Partner organizations train community members and refer bed bug cases to neighborhood associations to initiate neighborhood/block level response
- Partner organizations equipped with steam cleaners and HEPA vacuum cleaners for participating neighborhood associations to use
- Residents with bed bugs who have been trained receive interceptors and diatomaceous earth

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■ Community Focused Initiatives and Outreach:

□ Community Forums and Training Sessions

- Healthy Homes Bureau provides training and educational materials to:

- Professional and service organizations: home-visiting staff, health care providers, maintenance workers, school administrators and staff
- Neighborhood associations and community groups

(approximately 150 people/month)

- Public housing units

□ Door-to-door Canvassing

- In zip codes with highest numbers of reported cases provide literature and face-to-face counseling

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■ Latino Community Health Workers

Through partnerships with community organizations:

- Provide one-hour trainings on safe, effective pest management, including bed bugs
 - Additional emphasis on:
 - What to look for in professional service
 - How to avoid getting and spreading (used mattresses)
 - What doesn't work
 - Trained approximately 520 Latinos in 2010



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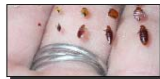
■ Educational Tools

- Bed bug manual
- Fact sheets
- Web resources

<http://www.baltimorehealth.org/bedbugs.html>



Bed Bugs



What are bed bugs? Bed bugs are small insects that feed on human blood. Adults are about the size and shape of an apple seed.

How do bed bugs get in my home? People often carry bed bugs into homes without knowing it – in mattresses, box springs, furniture, clothing, luggage, etc. Bed bugs also travel between homes through cracks in walls and floors.

How do I know if I have bed bugs? Look where people sleep or rest for bugs, their shed skins, or dark spots that may be their droppings. Look in seams and stitching of mattresses, box springs, bed frames, night tables, sofas, recliners, etc.

What To Do If You Think You Have Bed Bugs

- Do not change where you sleep. Bed bugs may travel with you to a new address or find you in a different room in your home, causing the infestation to spread.
- **Call 311 to report bed bugs and request a bed bug inspection**
- Notify your landlord
- Never use bombs or foggers on bed bugs – they do not work!

Non-chemical Methods to Get Rid of Bed Bugs

Clutter: discard all clutter from infested room in tightly sealed plastic bags outside your home.

Heat: all clothing, blankets, bedding, curtains, towels, pillows, sheets, and anything that can be safely dried in a clothes dryer should be dried on very high heat for 30 minutes. Then seal all items in tightly sealed plastic bags to prevent bed bugs from getting to them. **Vacuum:** move all furniture at least one foot away from wall. Take mirrors and pictures off the wall. Vacuum thoroughly those areas and objects, including floor, baseboards, furniture, furniture seams, and cracks and crevices. **Steam clean:** furniture, mattress, and box spring seams and fabric.

Mattress covers: use only "bed bug proof" covers on mattresses AND box springs. Leave on for a minimum of one year. **Seal cracks and crevices** a credit card width or wider. Use **bed bug interceptors** on bed legs to trap bed bugs.

Pesticides and Chemicals

- Only on rare occasions do pesticides alone solve a bed bug problem. Most pesticides are only marginally effective used by themselves.
- Hire only pest control operators licensed with the Maryland Department of Agriculture and experienced in exterminating bed bugs.
- **Always** use pesticides in strict compliance with directions on the label.

For more information, go to: www.BaltimoreHealth.org
Baltimore City Health Department Healthy Homes and Communities Division
1800 North Charles Street, 5th floor, Baltimore, MD 21201
443-984-2460

Battling Bed Bugs Safely:

A Guide to Preventing and Eliminating Bed Bugs



Baltimore City Health Department
Healthy Homes Bureau

COMBATIENDO LAS CHINCHES de MODO SEGURO

Una Guía Preventiva Para La Eliminación de Chinchés



Departamento de Salud de la Ciudad de Baltimore
Oficina de Hogares Saludables

■ and Extermination Equipment

- HEPA vacuum cleaners
- Steam cleaners
- Interceptors
- Diatomaceous earth