

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

# Reaching Key Populations in Bed Bug Control

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# We know

- Education and outreach raise awareness.
- Awareness about bed bugs leads to early detection and prevention.
- Awareness is increasing and so are bed bugs.
- How do we reach those who have not been made aware?
- Who are they?

# Key populations

- People who cannot afford treatment
- Those around them
  - Landlords, property management
  - social and health care workers
  - Agencies (DOH, DSS, APS)
  - housing inspectors
  - supportive housing providers
- People who have no access to agencies





Bed bug reservoirs



# The Nassau County Bed Bug Task Force



- District Attorney initiative to curb crime
- Volunteer
- Multi-agency
- Community members involved
- Open invitation for anyone to join

# Task Force – a vehicle for outreach

- Involvement of community members in the Task Force creates outreach opportunity.
- Members bring information back to their groups, neighbors, community.
- Agency reps learn directly from community.
- The exchange of information is critical.
- The Task Force also conducts outreach events for the public.

# Outreach events

- Targeting landlords, social workers, housing providers and inspectors, school staff, public, news media, business owners....





# Demonstration



# Success story

- Fulton Ave. – a 109 unit privately owned low-income building. Close to 50% infested in 2009.
- Building management
- Bi-lingual social worker
- Tenant advocate, Mr. Reed
- Meetings, cooperation, engaging tenants
- Infestation rates plummeted.

# Tenant ingenuity

- Mr. Reed understands bed bug biology as a result of the Task Force involvement.
- Known to his community as the bed bug man.
- He noticed that bed bugs were able to get into his unit through the building's inactive HVAC.
- He sealed over all the vents to keep BB out and told his neighbors to do the same.
- It worked.

# NY State FEES Case Management

- Community Service Division nurse involved with TF
- Joined to increase her own and agency access to bed bug information
- She serves as the liaison to her agency
- As a result, trainings for CDS staff are scheduled
- Workplace and client bed bug issues



# Freeport Housing Department

- Inspectors joined the TF to develop personal knowledge about bed bugs, personal safety and management.
- Handling infestations when providing code enforcement;
- As a result – the inspectors are a conduit of outreach to those landlords and tenants they serve.

# CSEA – Civil Servant Employee Assn

- Joined the Task Force because of worker concerns of personal safety
- Outreach to union members about self-protection, realities of bed bug infestation
- Successfully avoid issues with service cut-offs where employees refuse to help clients with bed bugs.
- New organization-wide bed bug trainings.

# We do not have

- An effective way to reach the elderly except through case mgmt, APS, or EMS;
- A vehicle to address undocumented residents;
- Enough resources to address non-English speaking residents;
- These populations have the potential to become the community reservoirs.

# Summary

- The Nassau Co Bed Bug Task Force is an effective vehicle for outreach and awareness-building in the community.
- Involvement of community members in Task Force meetings and planning has direct impact on the populations represented by those members.
- Community members have access to county officials and have a voice.