

# 1 in 10 Americans Touched by Bed Bug Problem

*Survey Finds 40 Percent of People Altering Actions to Avoid Infestation*

In late October 2010, Enforcer® Brand Pest Control Products commissioned an independent, nationwide survey\* of 1,000 adults to find out how people are coping with bed bugs and what they're doing to avoid an infestation.

**The survey findings follow.**

---

**Question:** Have you or anyone you know ever had a bed bug problem?

Yes 10% (19% among respondents from the Northeast)  
No 87%

**Question:** Which of the following best describes your concerns about bed bugs?

Concerned about them only when staying at a hotel	25%
Afraid of getting them in your home	16%
Afraid of picking them up whenever you leave the home	6%
Not really concerned about bed bugs	50%

**Question:** Have news reports about bed bug infestations changed your behavior? Have you...

Started checking your beds, furniture, clothes and rugs for evidence of bed bugs	22%
Started washing clothes and bed linens in super-hot water and drying them on super-high heat	21%
Avoided establishments because you're afraid of picking up bed bugs and bringing them home	16%
Stopped traveling to hotels or cities known for bed bugs	13%
Avoided people you know who have had a bed bug problem	12%
Started putting plastic bags or sheets on upholstered surfaces outside your home	3%
None of these	58%

**Question:** If you found bed bugs in your home, would you know what to do to get rid of them?

Yes, absolutely	30%
Don't know/not sure	21%
Aren't they almost impossible to get rid of?	11%

**Question:** If you had a bed bug problem in your home, would you tell friends or acquaintances about it?

Yes, absolutely	40%
Maybe	30%
No, you would be too embarrassed	26%

**Question: Which of the following steps MUST be taken to eliminate bed bugs from your home?**

Wash clothes and bed linens in hot water	74%
Dispose of the infested mattress	62%
Vacuum rugs and carpets daily	60%
Multiple insecticide treatments in the affected area	59%
Use hot steam	51%
Multiple insecticide treatments in rooms in the home other than the affected area	51%
Bag all clothes and linens in plastic	44%
Rip up and dispose of carpeting	29%
Don't know	8%
None of these	4%

**Question: Treating a bed bug infestation can be very time-consuming and costly. What would you be most likely to do if you found out you had bed bugs in your home?**

Learn all you can about the problem and do it yourself to save money	40%
Hire a professional to take care of it – no matter what the cost	35%
Try to get someone else (landlord, home insurance) to pay for the cost of removal	9%
Dispose of contaminated items	8%
Move instead of paying to get rid of them	2%
None of these	3%

**Question: Which of the following statements do you believe are true?**

Bed bugs can "hitch a ride" on clothing or other belongings and be transferred from one place to the next	83%
Bed bugs spread disease	37%
Bed bugs are resistant to pesticides	34%
Bed bugs are caused by a general lack of cleanliness and hygiene	29%
Fogging a room with insecticide spray will eliminate bed bugs	26%
Bed bugs are only a real problem in big cities like New York City	9%

**Question: To what extreme lengths would you be likely to go to avoid getting bed bugs?**

Buying mattress wraps that protect against bed bugs	52%
Blasting your home with super-high heat to kill any bugs that might be lurking	27%
Covering all of your upholstered furniture with plastic slipcovers	18%
Getting a bed bug sniffing dog to warn you at the first sign of infestation	13%
None of these	28%

**Question: I'd rather have \_\_\_\_\_ than bed bugs.**

A root canal	30%
Head lice	15%
Termites	8%
Toxic mold	2%
None of these	37%

\*The survey of 1,005 adults nationwide was conducted by telephone from October 21-24, 2010 by Infogroup/ORC on behalf of the Enforcer® Brand. The margin of error is plus or minus three percentage points.

## **Treating Bed Bug Infestations**

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), in combination with available pest control methods like pesticides, is used to manage pest damage by the most economical means and with the least possible hazard to people, property and the environment.

### **IPM methods for bed bugs include:**

- Inspecting infested areas, plus surrounding living spaces
- Checking for bed bugs on luggage and clothes when returning home from a trip
- Looking for bed bugs or signs of infestation on secondhand items before bringing the items home
- Correctly identifying the pest
- Keeping records – including dates when and locations where pests are found
- Cleaning all items within a bed bug infested living area
- Reducing clutter where bed bugs can hide
- Eliminating bed bug habitats
- Physically removing bed bugs through cleaning
- Using pesticides carefully according to the label directions
- Following up inspections and possible treatments
- Raising awareness through education on prevention of bed bugs

### **Non-chemical treatments include:**

- Washing and drying bedding and clothing at high temperatures to kill bed bugs.
- Heating infested articles and/or areas through to at least 113°F (45°C) for 1 hour. The higher the temperature, the shorter the time needed to kill bed bugs at all life stages.
- Cold treatments (below 0°F (-19°C) for at least 4 days) can eliminate some infestations. Again, the cooler the temperature, the less time needed to kill bed bugs.
- Using mattress, box spring and pillow encasements to trap bed bugs and help detect infestations.

### **Chemical treatments:**

Pesticides are one component of a comprehensive strategy for controlling bed bugs. Currently, there are over 300 products registered by EPA for use against bed bugs – the vast majority of which can be used by consumers. For more information on Enforcer® Brand pesticides, visit [www.enforcer.com](http://www.enforcer.com).