



Environmental Health Division

Policy Statement

On Amendment to Regulations Governing the Sanitation and Safety of Used Mattresses, Bedding and Upholstered Furniture

INTRODUCTION

Bed bugs are small, wingless, parasitic insects approximately one-fourth of an inch long, that feed on blood, preferentially that of humans. Most bed bugs congregate in cracks and crevices near where humans and pets sleep or rest. Once thought to be under control in developed countries, the common bed bug (*Cimex lectularius*) has recently made an unwelcome comeback in cities throughout the United States. Many factors, including insecticide over-use, are believed to contribute to this resurgence. Regardless the cause, modern insecticides seem to be less effective control methods.

PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT

With the resurgence of bed bugs comes the re-emergence of associated public health issues. Although bed bugs are not known to transmit disease, they are of significant importance in public health. Bed bug bites will cause red, raised, itchy reactions on the skin. The effects range from no reaction at all to a severe allergic reaction. In rare cases, bed bug bites can cause anaphylaxis and anemia. Scratching bed bug bites can lead to secondary skin infections. Finally, when dealing with a bed bug infestation, some individuals report significant psychological distress, disruption of sleep, nervousness, and agitation.

ADVISORY

As Southern Nevada's public health authority, we have a responsibility to protect and promote health and to prevent disease and injury. Environmental Health is the division of public health concerned with environmental factors that contribute to the health of the human population. Proper sanitation, safe food, and the proper disposal of waste all affect the health and well-being of our community. Prevention and protection strategies are integral to the overall improvement of a community's health status. Such strategies include protecting people's health from environmental dangers through risk reduction. It is to this end that the Environmental Health Division promulgates the amendments to Regulations Governing the Sanitation and Safety of Used Mattresses, Bedding and Upholstered Furniture.

WHO NEEDS TO KNOW THIS INFORMATION?

Businesses involved in the rental, reuse, and/or refurbishing of mattresses, bedding, and upholstered furniture in Clark County, Nevada.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

When a community starts to experience bed bug infestations, control can be as challenging as it is critical. Essential components of bed bug control and prevention are: i) identification of bed bug infestations; ii) utilization of the best available bed bug treatment and prevention strategies; and iii) cooperation among all stakeholders. The Environmental Health Division is committed to working with each stakeholder in furtherance of these guiding principles.