Bed Bugs are in Alaska! Keep them out of your bed and your community!

How do you prevent bed bugs from invading your home?

Bed bugs are extremely difficult to get rid of once you have them. Prevention is key! In order for bed bugs to get inside your home, they must hitchhike their way in, usually on used furniture, used clothing or travelers.

- Used clothing and plush toys:  
  - Make sure the clothing and/or toys are sealed in a strong plastic bag.
  - Do not put your bags on the spare bed. Inspect the luggage stand for signs of bedbugs, scrub and toss the plastic bag away! Dry the items on high heat for 30 minutes — and the luggage if you can!

- Used furniture: The best advice is do not take it!

- Used clothing and plush toys:
  - Make sure the clothing and/or toys are sealed in a strong plastic bag.

- In hotels:
  - Inspect the mattress seams, pillow seams, bed frame and the headboard. If you see evidence of bed bugs, report it to the manager and request another room.
  - Do not put your bags on the spare bed. Inspect the luggage stand for bed bugs, then keep your bags on the luggage stand, away from the bed or walls. If you must unpack your bags, use the closet instead of the drawers. Do not put your shoes under the bed or in the closet.

- If you are nervous about bed bugs after traveling:
  - As soon as you get home, take the clothing straight from your luggage and put it into a dryer. Immediately dry all clothing on high heat for 30 minutes — and the luggage if you can!
  - Inspect your luggage carefully with a bright flashlight. If you see signs of bedbugs, scrubbing with soapy water may help dislodge them. Thoroughly vacuum afterwards and remember to throw out the vacuum contents immediately.

How do you SAFELY get rid of them?

Bed bugs are extremely difficult to get rid of once you have them. It is possible, but it takes thorough and consistent effort!

1. First, make sure what you have really are bed bugs! Find them and put them in a sealed plastic bag or a jar. Contact an experienced and qualified pest management company, your local Office of Environmental Health or the UAF Cooperative Extension Service for positive identification.

2. If it really is a bed bug and you have access to pesticides:
   - Use pesticide-free bed bug monitors/interceptors.
   - Use bed bug encasements for your mattress, pillows, box springs, couch and sofa chairs. Leave these encasements in place for at least one year.

For guidance on safe and practical pesticide use, contact your local Office of Environmental Health, the UAF Cooperative Extension Service or the State of Alaska’s Pesticide Control Program for further assistance.

Pesticides:

Most over-the-counter pesticides simply do not work well for bed bugs and they are dangerous if used incorrectly. Bed bugs are resistant to many different pesticides, so using a spray can of pesticide to smother them may be more effective than using the spray itself!