



For Immediate Release

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Media Contact: Laura Deaton Morarity
513.271.7222 ext. 15
Ideaton@wordsworthweb.com

Protect-A-Bed® offers bed bug prevention tips for holiday travelers
Company expert advises on how to prevent bringing bed bugs home

CHICAGO (Dec. 1, 2009) – As families head to festive gatherings this holiday season, they had better take note of the scope of the bed bug problem in hotels and motels along the way and best practices to prevent bringing [bed bugs](#) home.

After all, the growing problem of bed bugs in the hospitality industry is undeniable. The National Pest Management Association says the overall bed bug problem in the United States has grown by 71 percent since 2001. And according to recent news, the Franklin County Board of Health, which serves Columbus, Ohio, recently predicted as many as 70 percent of hotels and motels in that jurisdiction have had a bed bug problem. It's unlikely that Columbus is unique among major cities.

While the inconvenience and itchy bites associated with staying in a bed bug infested hotel are troublesome, what's more of a problem is what happens when an infestation is brought home. Costs for home bed bug extermination services can run in the thousands of dollars and create a serious inconvenience. Bed bug extermination requires a detailed and time intensive process for the residents of an infested property over a number of weeks.

Petra Minoff-Michael, Vice President of the Hospitality Division at [Protect-A-Bed](#), who works with hotel owners and operators across the country to develop and implement an aggressive approach to addressing bed bugs, is all too familiar with the problem. She's also an expert at offering advice and solutions.

"Vigilance pays off when you travel," Minoff-Michael said. "A simple routine when you arrive at a hotel and when you arrive home, can go a long way to decreasing your chances of catching hitchhikers in your luggage."

"Seventy percent of hotel dwelling bed bugs are taking up residence in mattresses, box springs, night stands and headboards, so these should be among the first places you look," Minoff-Michael said.

She offers the following steps to help travelers decrease their chances of dealing with a bed bug problem:

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Protect-A-Bed's basic tips for travelers to follow upon checking-in to their hotel:

1. Using a travel flashlight, conduct a very basic inspection of the bed by pulling back the bed linens and checking the visible edges of the mattress. Look for evidence of live bugs, dark brownish to black spots or stains that could indicate bed bugs.
2. Inspect the headboard and the spaces between the carpet and the wall where moulted skins, excrement and eggs of the bed bugs could be found.
3. Do not place your luggage near the places where bed bugs are typically found – on the bed, near the bed, on the couch or any type of upholstered furniture.
4. Elevate your luggage on a luggage stand.
5. Keep your luggage closed at all times. If possible, use hard shelled luggage.
6. When not in use, keep items like laptops, books, toiletries, jewelry and electronics in sealed plastic bags.
7. Notify the manager-on-duty immediately if you suspect bed bugs or if you begin to develop itchy welts on your body.

Protect-A-Bed's basic tips for travelers to follow upon returning home:

1. If you are a frequent traveler, encase mattresses and box springs before you leave home.
2. Do not take luggage inside your home.
3. Unpack your luggage in an area that is well-lit and away from furniture and sleeping areas, such as a garage.
4. Unpack one suitcase at a time. Immediately place all of your clothing that can be hot-laundered into the washing machine or into a garbage bag that can be sealed and placed aside.
5. All items being laundered should be laundered in the hottest possible wash cycle and placed in the dryer on the hottest possible setting.
6. Place all dry-clean clothing in a garbage bag, seal it and place it aside. Consider using dissolvable laundry bags to transport your clothes from your luggage to the washing machine a simple one-step process.
7. Empty items that you sealed in plastic bags (computer, books, toiletries, etc.) and immediately discard the bags in an outdoor trash can.

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“While our steps for preventing an infestation cannot guarantee bed bugs won’t make it home with you, they can significantly decrease the likelihood,” Minoff-Michael said.

[Mattress encasements](#) are an important part of a bed bug management strategy, and a vital tool for those wishing to minimize serious bed bug infestation in their mattresses and box springs. Protect-A-Bed offers bed bug entry, escape and bite proof mattress encasements featuring the company’s patented BugLock® with Secure Seal®.

Protect-A-Bed products are designed to make the tell tale signs of a bed bug infestation more easily identifiable, and are used as an essential part of the bed bug management process at most hotels and by a majority of pest control companies nationwide. If you’d like to learn more about Protect-A-Bed and its bed bug management solutions, visit www.protectabed.com.

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About Protect-A-Bed®

Protect-A-Bed offers consumers a complete line of protective bedding products to create a *Healthy Sleep Zone*. The unique technology featured in Protect-A-Bed’s mattress and pillow protectors was developed in South Africa in 1980 before the company was officially established in the United States in 2000. Now selling in 27 countries, Protect-A-Bed is a worldwide leader in mattress protection innovation. The company developed the proprietary Miracle Membrane® and patented Bug Lock® and Secure Seal®, which help create a dry, bed bug free, anti-allergy sleep zone for people of all ages. Protect-A-Bed products are listed as a Class 1 Medical Device with the Food and Drug Administration and have received the Good Housekeeping Seal. For more information, visit www.protectabed.com.