

## BED BUG MYTHS

### What Bed Bugs Are

- Bed bugs cannot be seen with the naked eye.
  - FALSE—adult bed bugs are about the size of an apple seed.
- Any bug found on a bed is a bed bug. ○ FALSE—get the bug positively identified.
- Bed bugs are ONLY found on the bed. ○ FALSE—they like any small dark space near where people sleep or rest.
- Bed bugs ONLY come out at night.
  - FALSE—they prefer the night, but they will come out during the day if they are hungry.
- Sleeping with the lights on will keep bed bugs away.
  - FALSE
- Bed bugs burrow into or cling to your skin.
  - FALSE
- You can get HIV / HBV (vectored diseases) from a bed bug.
  - FALSE—BED BUGS DO NOT SPREAD DISEASE!
- Bed Bugs are the same as scabies or lice. ○ FALSE
- Bed Bugs can live without a blood meal.
  - FALSE

### Getting Rid of Bed Bugs

- I can get rid of them by myself.
  - FALSE—you may get rid of some, but to solve the problem, hire a pest control company.
- I can kill them if I turn up the heat in my home. ○ FALSE—this will not kill them or drive them away.
- If I open all the windows in the winter it will kill them.
  - FALSE—it will NOT kill bed bugs.

- Leaving infested items in black plastic bags in the sun will kill any bed bugs.
  - FALSE—the bagged items do not usually get hot enough (120°F) to kill bed bugs.
- I can use bed bug traps to solve the problem.
  - FALSE—bed bug traps may catch some (or even many) bed bugs. Traps WILL NOT get rid of ALL bed bugs and eggs.
- If I go into an infested home I will get bed bugs too.
  - FALSE—if you know what they look like, where they hide and how they spread, you can avoid them. Pay attention to your surroundings and inspect yourself and your belongings before and after you leave.
- If I throw out the mattress I will solve the problem.
  - FALSE—bed bugs are not ONLY on the mattress. They hide in other places near the bed too. A mattress can be encased so you won't have to throw it out.
- If I go sleep on the couch it will solve the problem.
  - FALSE—they will follow you and then your couch will have bed bugs.
- If I leave my home empty for a few months they will starve to death or leave.
  - FALSE—bed bugs can live over a year with no food.

### **Pest Control Products**

- I can use ANY bug spray to kill them.
  - FALSE—if you choose to use pesticides, only use a product if it states it is for bed bugs.
- I don't have to read the label.
  - FALSE—ALWAYS read and follow the directions on the label.
- The website said it would work; it must be true.
  - FALSE—DO NOT BELIEVE everything you read on the internet.
- NATURAL means SAFE.
  - FALSE—if you do not use them in the right way, natural products can be a danger too. ALWAYS read and follow directions.
- The spray will keep working for days/weeks.
  - FALSE—most bed bug sprays are contact sprays. If you do not spray it directly on the bugs, it will not kill them.
- DEET will repel bed bugs. ○ FALSE—there is no product proven to repel bed bugs.
- Moth balls will repel bed bugs.

- FALSE—moth balls do not repel or kill bed bugs and they contain naphthalene or PDCB (paradichlorobenzene) and they are both are considered poisons, as well as being a choking hazard for kids.
- Kerosene will repel bed bugs.
  - FALSE—kerosene does not repel or kill bed bugs and is also TOXIC and FLAMMABLE!
- Boric acid will kill bed bugs.
  - FALSE—boric acid has to be eaten by the bug to work. Bed bugs only eat blood.
- A bug bomb will kill them.
  - FALSE—BUG BOMBS DO NOT WORK ON BED BUGS! Bug bombs work on contact. They kill bugs that are out in the open that the spray falls on. It cannot get into the places where bed bugs hide. It may even cause the bugs to scatter, making the problem worse.