

Fauquier County Department of Fire Rescue

OPERATING PROCEDURE

No. 712

Bedbugs

Effective Date: September 13, 2018

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Revision Date:

Forms:

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PURPOSE

To outline measures and provide information that will help detect and prevent bed bugs in fire stations. This policy also provides procedures for emergency incidents with suspected bed bug infestation.

SCOPE

This procedure applies to all operational personnel within the Fauquier County Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Management and the Fauquier County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association and its associated departments.

I. BACKGROUND

- A. Bed bugs are small oval brownish colored insects that live off the blood of animals and humans. Bed bugs and their eggs will stick to anything that brushes against them which makes their transfer from an incident scene to the fire station a major concern. Left untreated, bed bugs can produce hundreds of new pests in a few days and cause an infestation. According to the CDC, Bed bugs are not considered a medical or public health hazard because they are not known to spread disease; however, they can be a nuisance because their presence may cause itching and a loss of sleep. Sometimes the itching can lead to excessive scratching that increases the chance of a secondary skin infection.
- B. Preventive measures taken during a known or suspected bed bug exposure can keep stations and personnel protected, and reduce the chance of a bed bug infestation. There are several preventative measures that can be taken at an emergency scene and around the station that can help prevent the spread of bed bugs.

Desire to Serve

Ability to Perform

Courage to Act

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II. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. When bed bugs are either seen or suspected on an incident scene, the OIC/AIC is responsible for assuring that all protective and preventative measures listed in this OP are followed. Information of confirmed or suspected cases should be forwarded to Fauquier Communications via email for inclusion in CAD notes to heighten awareness and to provide pre-arrival information.
- B. Logistics will stock and provide the 70% Isopropyl Alcohol, spray bottles, protective booties, gowns, and small trash bags.
- C. Station officers or lead technicians as appropriate are responsible for establishing a Station Policy in compliance with this procedure for bed bug decontamination. In that policy, a designated decontamination location will be defined for personnel when they return from an incident with a suspected bed bug infestation.
- D. Station Officers or lead technicians will also ensure there are sufficient supplies (70% alcohol, spray bottles, protective booties, gowns, and small trash bags) at the station and all transport vehicles in the station.

III. PROCEDURES

- A. At an Incident Scene
 - 1. Upon arrival and during the course of assessing the patient:
 - a. If bed bugs are suspected or observed, protective booties and gowns will be donned.
 - b. Booties and gowns will be doffed upon exiting the occupancy and placed in plastic bags; those bags should be disposed at the scene if possible, at the hospital in the appropriate receptacles or in fire station dumpsters (not to be brought into the station).
 - c. Officers/AIC should limit the number of personnel in the affected area.
 - d. Consideration should be given to decontaminating patients when they are stable enough for a slight delay in transport. This will limit the exposure to personnel and equipment. Decontamination of patients would include removal of their clothing, placing the patient in a gown and wrapping them in sheets or blankets as appropriate. Patient's clothing should be left on the scene and not transported in ambulances.

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- e. EMS bags and equipment should only be placed on hard surfaces and not on carpets, beds, or sofas.

B. Personnel Decontamination

1. As long as the patient condition permits the slight delay, prior to returning to the apparatus, personnel will spray their clothing, especially the legs, footwear, and shirt sleeves, with 70% alcohol.
2. Once at the station, personnel will remove their contaminated uniforms in the area designated by the station policy on bed bug decontamination. Personnel must spray the inside and outside of their footwear prior to returning to the living areas. The designated decontamination area will also be sprayed down with 70% alcohol.

C. Apparatus/Equipment Decontamination

1. When cleaning the apparatus after an incident where bed bugs are suspected, all EMS gear bags along with the interior of the apparatus and EMS storage compartments will be sprayed with the 70% alcohol and a visual inspection for any remnants of bed bugs or their eggs.
2. On an incident with a patient exhibiting signs of bed bug bites, this cleaning should be done at the scene prior to returning any equipment to the apparatus whenever possible. This applies primarily to ancillary units as the primary transport unit will not delay care by carrying this out on the scene.

D. Facility Monitoring and Cleaning

1. Guidelines for monitoring directly relates to visual inspections performed daily while conducting a thorough cleaning of high risk areas. If any of the following signs are experienced or observed, follow the decontamination procedures and contact the affected stations administrative and/or chief officer and ask that the pest control company be notified. Notify the DFREM station officer, appropriate volunteer officer and the on duty Battalion Chief.
 - a. Unexplained bites on the face, hands, neck, arms, or any other body part while sleeping.
 - b. Bed bug exoskeletons shed after molting.
 - c. Bed bugs in the folds of a mattress or on bed linens.

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- d. Rust colored blood spots on a mattress or bed linens.
 - e. A sweet musty odor.
2. Visually inspect the following areas:
- a. Behind and around head boards and night stands.
 - b. In the seams and tufts of the mattresses and box springs.
 - c. Along baseboards, moldings, cracks in walls and trim.

E. Prevention

- 1. During daily and weekly station maintenance and cleaning, careful attention should be given to bunk rooms and day room area furniture.
 - a. Remove clutter from bunkrooms.
 - b. Store bedding in sealed plastic containers when possible.
 - c. Ensure total encasement mattress and box spring covers are in place and in good condition.
 - d. Vacuum the dayroom and bunkrooms daily, including under the beds.
 - e. Wash personal bedding once a month using hot water and high heat in the provided station washer, dryer, and laundry detergent.
 - f. Wash all bed covers in the bunk rooms weekly using hot water and high heat in the provided station washer, dryer, and laundry detergent.

F. Treatment

- 1. If any personnel exhibit signs of bed bug exposure, that person will follow the personnel decontamination procedure and their bunk room quarantined pending the pest control company's inspection to confirm the presence of bed bugs. To prevent any further spread, the bunk room will be sprayed down with 70% alcohol by a person with appropriate PPE as discussed earlier; following that task, that person will follow the personnel decontamination procedure.

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2. All personnel that share that bunk room should be contacted immediately and made aware of the situation. The on duty Battalion Chief and or their designee will ensure that all appropriate personnel are contacted. They should also be asked if they are currently experiencing any symptoms.

3. Once the pest management company confirms the presence and location of bed bugs, they will make recommendations for preparing the room for treatment and will manage the treatment from that point on.

Life Cycle of the Bed Bug

Cimex lectulaius

							
Egg (1 mm long)	First Stage Larva (1.5 mm long) Takes blood meal then molts.	Second Stage Larva (2 mm long) Takes a blood meal then molts.	Third Stage Larva (2.5 mm long) Takes a blood meal then molts.	Fourth Stage Larva (3 mm long) Takes a blood meal then molts.	Fifth Stage Larva (4.5 mm long) Takes a blood meal then molts.	Adult (5.5 mm long) Takes repeated blood meals over several weeks.	Adult Female (6.5 mm long) Females lay up to 5 eggs per day, continuously.

