



A Guide to SAFELY CONTROLLING PESTS in your HOME



PESTS can HARM your FAMILY!

Pests in your home can cause a variety of health problems for you and your family, including asthma, infections caused by rat bites, and salmonellosis. *Cockroaches can cause asthma symptoms to get worse.*

Take the following steps to prevent and get rid of pests in your home and keep your family safe:

STEP 1: CLEANING

Reduce clutter:

- Store extra clothing/linens in sealed plastic bags or containers
- Clean out cabinets of clutter and old food
- Take out trash every day
Bag and tie garbage; place it in a container with a tight fitting lid



Keep your house clean (especially the kitchen), to make pests unwelcome at your home.

Vacuum

- Starting at the ceiling, work your way down to the floor
- Behind and under appliances
- Inside gaps and holes in the walls
- Inside cabinets
- Seal & discard vacuum bag when done

Wash hard surfaces:

- Fill two buckets with warm water (one with soap and one just water for rinsing)
- Use a sponge with a plastic scouring pad and change water often
- Clean all surfaces where food is stored or eaten: counter tops, tables, drawers, cabinets, and inside rubber seal on refrigerator door
- Use a cleaning solution for tough stains

****Never mix bleach and ammonia products!
Follow instructions on labels.***

****For poison emergencies contact the American Association of Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222.***

Clean small appliances:

- Unplug appliances and vacuum them out (i.e. toasters, microwaves, and clocks).

STEP 2: ELIMINATE ALL HIDING SPOTS

- Seal cracks with 100% silicone caulk in walls, floors, around tub, sink, inside cabinets, around water heater and piping (underneath kitchen sink)
- Stuff holes with steel wool or copper mesh to prevent rodent chewing and then fill with spackle or joint compound
- Attach door sweeps to bottom of doors leading to the outside
- Use mesh screens in bathroom and kitchen vents to block the entry of pests

STEP 3: ELIMINATE FOOD/WATER SOURCES

- Store all foods and pet foods in tight fitting plastic or glass containers
- Fix leaks
- Use garbage cans with tight fitting lids, clean often and take out trash every night

PESTICIDES are poisons and can be harmful to humans and animals and should be a last resort. To protect your family:

- NEVER buy pesticides without a label or from street vendors
- AVOID foggers and sprays as they “go everywhere” even places you eat, sleep, and play
- MAKE SURE that whenever pesticides are used, the area is well ventilated and family members with asthma are out. Open your windows!
- ALWAYS follow the directions on the manufacturer’s label
- ALWAYS store chemicals and traps where children and pests cannot get to them



BED BUGS



Bed bugs are insects that feed on human blood at night while people are sleeping. They have small oval bodies and are rust colored. They are a nuisance, but are not known to spread disease.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND Bed Bugs?

- Along the seams of mattresses and inside the box spring, along bedroom baseboard cracks
- Behind the headboard, in and around nightstands, on nearby furniture (they are usually within a 15 foot radius of the bed)
- Inside loose wallpaper, along cluttered areas

Remember that bedbugs can live for one whole year without a meal!

DO YOU HAVE BED BUGS IN YOUR MATTRESS?



This is the seam of a mattress infested with bed bugs. Check your mattress for infestation.

HOW DO I KNOW I HAVE Bed Bugs?

- They will leave large itchy skin welts usually on the arms, legs, and torso
- They will leave blood stains that will look like small rust spots on mattresses



Signs of bedbug bites on a person's shoulder and neck.



Welts on a person's back caused by bed bug bites.

HOW DO I GET RID of Bed Bugs?

- Thoroughly wash bedding, linens, and clothes in hot water; dry on the highest dryer setting.
- Clean rugs or carpets with soap and hot water
- Scrub mattress seams with a stiff brush to dislodge bed bugs and their eggs
- Vacuum bed and nearby furniture; throw away vacuum bag when finished
- Clean clutter from your house
- Place mattresses inside waterproof, zippered cover labeled "allergen rated" and leave on for at least one year
- Dispose of infested items that cannot be cleaned
- Repair any wall cracks or loose wallpaper
- For more persistent infestations utilize a licensed pest control company that will use the least toxic pesticide
- Treat mattresses and sofas by applying solution in SEAMS ONLY, not on top where people sit or sleep
- ALWAYS inspect luggage and clothing when returning home from a trip; check any used furniture before purchasing
- NEVER bring discarded furniture items into your home

For additional information about rodents, see:

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
www.cdc.gov/rodents

For additional information about bed bugs see:

The Environmental Protection Agency
www.epa.gov/pesticides/bedbugs

To report Housing COMPLAINTS* call: (858) 505-6903

***Please note that while the Department of Environmental Health does not have jurisdiction over all cities in the County of San Diego, they can provide you with referral information for the corresponding agency.**