



Code of Best Practice

# Bed Bug Management and Control

Version 1. December 2020.

## British Pest Control Association Code of Best Practice for Bed Bug Management and Control

A BPCA Code of Best Practice is a set of written rules which explains how people working in our industry should behave in a particular situation. It encompasses relevant legislation but is not the law in itself.

However, were a member to act outside of the norms outlined in the CoBP, they may be subject to disciplinary action or be in breach of legislation. Members must abide by Codes of Best Practice

in their day-to-day work. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Association.

**Version 1. December 2020.**

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Driving excellence in pest management

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# British Pest Control Association

## Code of Best Practice for Bed Bug Management and Control

This Code of Best Practice outlines the minimum criteria that all BPCA members offering bed bug treatments must meet, to ensure not only professional control, but also provide the relevant information to their customer.

Those managing bed bug infestations need to ensure they follow the below process for all bed bug infestations.

This is not a "how to" document: for guidance on bed bugs and their treatment, please refer to our 'further reading' section below.



Bed bugs are a challenging, difficult to control pest.

### Legislation

#### Control of Pesticide Regulations (COPR) 1986:

- All insecticides must gain approval under COPR (or the BPR - see below) before they can be sold or used in the UK. Products approved under COPR can be identified by a 'HSE' number on the label, e.g. 'HSE 4321'
- COPR is a piece of legislation that makes the labels of our pesticide products a legal requirement to follow
- The product label reflects the

**"This Code of Best Practice is intended to outline the legal requirements of insecticide use, as well as the best professional practice for which the BPCA expects its members to observe."**

legal requirements of use. Pest controllers must consult the product label prior to every treatment to ensure safe use with regard to human health and the environment.

#### Biocidal Products

##### Regulation (BPR) 2012:

- The BPR was introduced in order to harmonise regulatory standards across the EU. Products authorised under the BPR can be identified by an 'Authorisation number' on the label e.g. Authorisation number UK-2019-4321
- The product label reflects the legal requirements of use. Pest controllers must consult the product label prior to every treatment to ensure safe use with regard to human health and the environment.

#### Health and Safety at Work

**Act 1974** of which the following resides under:

#### Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health regulations 2002 (COSHH) and Management of H&S at Work Regulations 1999:

- It is a legal and professional requirement for all companies using pesticides to produce COSHH assessments for each product used. COSHH assessments are produced by consulting the product label and the manufacturer safety data sheet (MSDS).

The COSHH hierarchy must apply to the use of all chemicals: if you do not need to use a pesticide, don't. If you do need to use one, make sure

it is the most appropriate for the situation and applied "at a rate which is of lowest risk to the operator whilst still ensuring sufficient efficacy".

A written COSHH assessment for each product will inform the user of all of the hazards and properties of the product. This helps inform decisions on appropriate product selection.

Consider the active ingredients, formulation and make sure it is right for the job. Assessment should not just consider the application of the pesticide, but also the transportation and mixing of the product whilst on the customer's site.

It is a good idea to record any COSHH training with staff and ensure they are familiar with what COSHH means.

If the technician does not agree with the assessment, or does not feel competent to carry out the relevant assessment, then guidance will be required from another company representative.

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#### Pre-survey

Occupants need to be made aware of the importance of the survey. At first contact, you must make your customer aware of the following:

- What preparation is needed before you arrive
- You will need access to all rooms and, will need to investigate many different areas including drawers and cupboards, and that it may be necessary to remove headboards, access

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duvan style bed bases and lift carpet edges, etc.

- Due to the nature of bed bugs, a full on-site survey is essential before being able to provide a full and reliable quotation
- If there are survey costs, you must make your customer aware before visiting.

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### Survey

Before any treatments are carried out, a thorough survey must be performed to ensure a reliable and robust treatment plan can be prepared. On a survey:

- All areas of the property should be inspected, especially resting areas ie sofas and beds
- Identification of the suspected insect is critical. If you cannot locate any evidence (droppings, adults, etc) then you must not use pesticides, however you may wish to implement a monitoring programme
- If the customer refuses access to all areas you must make it clear that you cannot assure them of successful control
- Decide upon your treatment strategy
- You must inform the customer of all evidence found and actions needed so that their expectations are managed.

For more information see BPCA COBP for Surveys.

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### Quotation

You must be very clear on what you are quoting for and you must provide some form of written quotation/survey. This may be email, a quotation template or a full survey and quotation report. In all circumstances, you must communicate the following:

- What areas/rooms will be treated
- How many visits may be needed
- What happens if, after the final quoted visit, control is not achieved
- If using heat, have a clear distinction between genuine 'heat treatment' and the use of a steam generator
- A clear treatment plan that has been discussed and agreed with the customer prior to the commencement of the treatment programme
- It is advisable to be very clear on any guarantees within your quotation
- Include any pre-treatment preparations required by the customer.

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### Pre-treatment checks

This is one of the most important aspects of successful treatments, you must ensure that the customer is made aware of their role in the treatment process.

Prior to any treatment, the areas to be treated need to be prepared either by the pest management company or the customer, if they are able and willing to do so. This should be agreed prior to the treatment commencing.

This can include but is not limited to:

- Removal of clutter
- Items moved away from walls/floor junctions
- Loosening of carpet edges
- Bagging up bedding/clothing to be laundered
- Any disposal of furniture needs to be carefully considered if necessary, discussed, agreed and documented
- The arrangements for any new furniture must be discussed, agreed and documented.

This preparation needs to be checked prior to any treatment. It is advisable to have a check list to ensure all preparations have been carried out before treatment commences.

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### Treatment

A combination of different treatment methods will be needed (IPM) in most cases of bed bug infestations.

These can include but are not limited to; cleaning, steam, heat or cold, non-chemical preparations and insecticides.

Treatment methods will depend greatly on the level of infestation established at survey.



**A combination of treatment methods will be needed in most bed bug infestations. Image: Venables Pest Control.**

It is important at this stage to give clear detailed information to the customer of what your chosen treatment methods are, this must be communicated on a treatment report.

Other considerations:

- You should consider the possibility of resistance and

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it is highly recommended that multiple active ingredients are used

- Treatment must reflect the level of infestation and as a minimum, two visits must be carried out
- Visit intervals must reflect the insect's biology and behaviour
- Steam generators are only suitable as part of an integrated pest management plan (IPM).

For further information on the treatment of bed bugs, please see our further reading section below.

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### Post treatment

Clear instructions must be given to the customer after treatment. This may be done on a written treatment report form or on an electronic system but, either way, the customer must receive the relevant information.

A treatment report must be completed on EVERY visit, regardless of time spent or actions taken.

Any disposal of furniture needs to be carefully considered and if necessary, discussed, agreed and documented.

**"A combination of different treatment methods will be needed (IPM) in most cases of bed bug infestations. These can include but are not limited to; cleaning, steam, heat or cold, non-chemical preparations and insecticides."**

You must adhere to BPCA Code of Best Practice for Reporting. You can also use the BPCA Treatment Report template, available in the Member's Area of the website (login required).

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### Training

Bed bugs, in many cases, are a challenging, difficult to control pest.

Any individual involved in their control and eradication, must be trained and competent. This needs to be in addition to the RSPH Level 2 Award in Pest Management (General Pest Control) or equivalent.

Heat treatments must only be carried out by experienced individuals who understand the complex nature of heat treatments. The damage it could cause to a customer's property, the requirement for 'cold spot' temperature probes and the equipment, generally, is specialist and complex.

### Useful links:

CIEH Pest control procedures manual bed bugs:  
[urbanpestsbook.com/downloads/procedures-pest-specific/](http://urbanpestsbook.com/downloads/procedures-pest-specific/)

European Code of Practice for Bed Bug Management:  
[bedbugfoundation.org/ecop/](http://bedbugfoundation.org/ecop/)



The British Pest Control Association requires that its members meet a range of criteria including strict abidance to all of our Codes of Best Practice. You can search for our members on the BPCA website [bPCA.org.uk/find](http://bPCA.org.uk/find)

BPCA makes strenuous efforts to ensure the accuracy and current relevance of its publications, which are intended for use by technically competent persons.

However, this does not remove the need for technical and managerial judgement in practical situations. Nor do they confer any immunity or exemption from relevant legal requirements, including by-laws.

If you suspect something in this document is incorrect or out of date, please report it to [technical@bPCA.org.uk](mailto:technical@bPCA.org.uk).

### Further reading and related legislation

- Control of Pesticide Regulations 1986
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002
- EU Biocidal Product Regulations (528/2012)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002
- BPCA COBP - Precautionary Insecticide Use, Pesticide Waste, Professional Reports, Surveys, Insecticide Usage
- EH40/2005 Workplace exposure limits.

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