

A SUPPLEMENT TO

PMP

Pest Management
Professional

INSIDE

BB2 Word from our Sponsor

BB3 PMPs Alleviate Anxiety

BB4 Bed Bug Roundtable
Wrap-up

BB6 Survey Results

2024 BED BUG MANAGEMENT SUPPLEMENT

Easing Customer Concerns

The importance of professionalism
as bed bug awareness escalates

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Aprehend[®]

Biological Bed Bug Control

WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR

Take action with Aprehend®

Biological Bed Bug Control



An adult bed bug
(*Cimex lectularius*)

Is your bed bug protocol working some or most of the time? Is it not working well at all, making bed bug work unprofitable and not fun? Do you want to add bed bugs to your list of quarterly services but keep putting it off?

Are you avoiding difficult and hoarding situations? Are you considering adding a warranty to bed bug jobs?

Aprehend is the answer to all these questions.

✔ Ends protocol hit-or-miss

Yes, pesticide resistance is real, but it is also entirely manageable. There are no worries about resistance with

Aprehend. As a fungal agent, Aprehend's active ingredient, *Beauveria bassiana*, has a completely different mode of action (Group UNF) than the pyrethroid- (Group 3) and neonicotinoid- (Group 4)

based insecticides. This is per the Insecticide Resistance Action Committee (IRAC) "Mode of Action Classification" chart, which can be found at [IRAC-online.org](https://www.irac-online.org).

Aprehend's easy, one-and-done protocol saves time and increases profitability. Pest management professionals (PMPs) achieve control with a single service visit and a follow-up inspection at 30 days to confirm eradication.

Clients love the low-prep protocol, and by cutting out the middle two-week follow-up visit, technicians reduce travel and gain time to service additional accounts.

✔ Allows quarterly servicing

Aprehend also allows PMPs to expand quarterly servicing offerings and add new ones. Bed bugs are a growing, widely publicized public nuisance and concern.

As opportunistic hitchhikers, bed bugs are easily carried in bags and clothing. It's impossible to prevent the introduction of bed bugs, and their ability to hide and establish harborage in minute cracks and crevices makes detection extremely difficult, even for the most meticulous housekeepers. However, Aprehend prevents the establishment of an infestation. The long-lasting residual action of Aprehend remains active for up to three months and ensures that any bed bugs introduced will die before they can reproduce or establish.

Aprehend's residual effect is ideal for multi-unit housing, long-term care facilities, hospitality and other spaces that welcome the public. Libraries, churches and movie theaters have all benefited from proactive Aprehend treatment.

✔ Stands up to clutter

Aprehend professionals successfully tackle the worst infestations, even hoarding situations. Aprehend barriers are strategically placed in between the harborage and bloodmeal. When a bed bug encounters a treated surface en route to its meal, the fungal spores immediately stick to its feet and body and are taken back to its harborage. These spores transfer easily between bugs by direct contact, reaching the bugs you can't see. This is ideal for highly cluttered environments, clients who can't or won't prep, and massive infestations.

✔ Offers a warranty

Win bids and eliminate client hesitation with a warranty. With Aprehend's up-to 90-day residual, you can comfortably and confidently stand by your work, even in the event of a reintroduction. Many PMPs performing heat treatments follow their heat service with a protective round of Aprehend.

Whether you're looking to solidify your protocol, add a revenue stream or make bed bug work fun again, we can help. We offer free online or in-person team training that fits your schedule and existing team structure. Contact the Aprehend team at 800-891-8610 or orders@conidiotec.com.



BY DR. NINA JENKINS
Founder and Chief
Technical Officer,
Aprehend

Easing Customer Concerns

As bed bug awareness escalates, professionalism, education and compassion help alleviate customer anxiety

By Diane Sofranec | PMP Senior Editor

Bed bugs have been a revenue generator for pest management professionals (PMPs) for decades. But when public awareness of *Cimex lectularius* skyrocketed late last year thanks to highly publicized infestations in Paris, France, the public's fear of these blood-sucking pests seemed to escalate.

News reports and social media posts did little to alleviate anxiety about bringing home bed bugs, regardless of whether they were heading to the city for Paris Fashion Week, the Rugby World Cup or this year's Summer Olympics. That bed bugs are adept at hitchhiking a ride home from public places — theaters, hospitals, hotels, subways, airports — on shoes, clothes, luggage, purses and backpacks appeared to be a revelation.

"There is no shortage of hysteria regarding bed bugs on the internet, particularly social media, and with the hysteria comes ineffective do-it-yourself (DIY) treatments," says Mantis Pest Solutions Training Manager Alex McCurter. The Lee's Summit, Mo.-based company does its part to educate prospective customers. It includes on its website detailed information about what prospective customers can expect during a bed bug service call and assures them PMPs will get the job done.

Share your expertise

Pest Management Professional's (PMP's) 2024 Bed Bug Management Supplement shows 53 percent of respondents expect bed bug jobs in 2024 to increase this year over last year. In addition, 72 percent of those asked say their company pricing is based on the severity of each customer's infestation.

PMPs say infestations often get out of hand because people don't understand bed bug biology and behavior. Sometimes, people don't realize they're dealing with bed bugs and attempt to eradicate the infestation themselves, with no luck.



Or they ignore the bed bugs when they discover them in their homes and make the problem worse by not taking immediate action and seeking professional help.

Fortunately, many of the recent news stories about bed bugs advised those who have them to contact pest control companies. Word is getting out that PMPs are trained to develop comprehensive treatment plans that can be implemented without spreading the infestation. PMPs achieve success when they employ an integrated pest management (IPM) strategy and rely on a combination of management methods such as vacuuming, inspection, monitoring, and heat and chemical treatments to target bed bugs at all stages of their life cycle.

In addition, PMPs are experienced sleuths who know where bed bugs prefer to hide. They know better than to limit treatment to beds and bedrooms. Training and hands-on experience teach PMPs that bed bugs often are found throughout a home, especially when customers seek a bug-free place to sleep in another room of the house.

Finally, identifying the species is critical, even with bed bugs. "Other *Cimex* species can be very difficult to distinguish from bed bugs," McCurter says. "If the identification is wrong, treatment is likely to fail."

Address customer concerns

Customers with bed bugs require additional education and care, PMPs who took our survey say. Customer service training is just as important as knowing bed bug biology.

Continued on page BB4

Continued from page BB3

“While eliminating customers’ bed bug problems is obviously critical, how we do it is equally important,” says Brett Lieberman, owner of My Pest Pros in Vienna, Va. “It’s not just the treatment, but the customer service.”

Educating customers while offering empathy, compassion and education is crucial. “We often have to play therapist and also provide cleaning and laundry advice in addition to pest management services,” Lieberman adds. “Technicians may be good at eliminating the pest issue; however, the best technicians — and customer service representatives — are the ones who provide education and compassion.”

Scott Hornemann, ACE, agrees. The field training, quality and safety director for Adam’s Pest Control in Medina, Minn., notes it’s imperative to hire capable technicians who also care and understand the psychological reasons needed to get bed bugs under control for customers.

“Given the psychological issues that anyone who has had a bed bug infestation creates,



Brett Lieberman

technicians need to be able to deal with people on a personal level more than any other pest service,” he adds. “They will encounter depression, fear, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) from customers.”

Hornemann says Adam’s Pest Control seeks technicians who meet certain requirements before they are hired or during the training process:

- 1 Can they empathize with the situation? We are in business to help people, not just treat the pest.
- 2 Can they communicate in a way that puts customers at ease, and still give them the facts while being compassionate?
- 3 Will the things they see and feelings they experience be too much for them to handle? Like it or not, we take these situations home with us every night.

“We are up front with what this position entails — not only the physical aspect of doing the job,



Scott Hornemann

PMP Growth Summit

Bed Bug Roundtable:

Pest management professionals (PMPs) and a biopesticide manufacturer discuss trends, obstacles and opportunities

By Marty Whitford | PMP Publisher and VP of Content



Judy Black

PREP WORK:

Sometimes less is more.

“One of the biggest issues with bed bug control service is often there’s a disconnect with what we as an industry ask customers to do prep-wise. Often, PMPs ask customers to do too much prep work. It can be overwhelming, and some ‘asks’ actually can work against control.”

— **Judy Black**, *BCE*, VP of Technical Services & Quality Assurance for Atlanta, Ga.-based Rollins Inc.



Don McCandless

“Good point. Some customers are simply unwilling to do some of the requested prep work. Other customers may be physically unable to do much of the prep work.”

— **Don McCandless**, *CEO of ConidioTec*, manufacturer of *Aprehend*, a natural biopesticide



Bill Haynes

proven to kill bed bugs of all life stages within three to seven days and leave a 90-day residual barrier.

“A decade ago, we wanted customers to do almost everything prep-wise. Eventually, we found out that a lot of what we requested prep-wise — even if done well — didn’t really help.”

— **Bill Haynes**, *CEO of Bedford, Ga.-based Haynes Exterminating*

I’M STILL STANDING:

Bed bug revenue is down, but this cryptic bloodsucking pest is making a comeback.

“I agree with our other roundtable participants: Bed bug control revenue is down for many. PMPs, and our bed bug control tools and techniques, have improved significantly. Both manufacturers

but the situations they will see and encounter,” Hornemann adds. “It is never easy to find technicians to fit this mold, but the good thing is that is who we are at Adam’s Pest Control, and I feel our culture attracts this type of person.”

For many pest control companies, effective bed bug management includes addressing the mental health issues customers may be experiencing. The stigma of having bed bugs is very real for many customers, and compassionate technicians are key to putting customers at ease. Many people isolate themselves from others because they are ashamed. Or they stop socializing to prevent spreading the pests to others. Education helps customers understand that bed bugs are interested only in a bloodmeal and do not care whether a person is rich or poor, or clean or dirty.

Prospective customers are relieved once they understand they will be able to resume their normal lives. “Most people assume the presence of bed bugs is somehow a sign of being ‘unclean’ and are understandably eager to resolve the situation,” McCurter points out.

Many people also do not understand that bed bugs do not transmit disease. Sharing the facts from reliable sources, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (**CDC.gov**), will help alleviate any fears of becoming ill customers may have.

Stop the spread

Asking a customer where they think they picked up bed bugs will help stop the spread in the community. It’s common for travelers to bring them back from a hotel stay or airport lounge. But the presence of bed bugs at a local school or hospital can be problematic if the customer continues to visit that location. Pest control companies may gain work if they alert the source to the pest problem. But proceed with caution; the customer may be looking for someone to blame.

“Often, a customer has a relative or friend that introduced the infestation. Offering bed bug control services to them can help stop a reinfestation,” McCurter says, adding, “Most customers seem to be fairly confident they know where the infestation came from, and are eager to refer that source for treatment.”

To help stop their spread, educate customers on how to prevent bringing home bed bugs. Hire technicians who understand that the stigma associated with these pests make getting infestations under control critical.

“Train technicians to do a thorough and proper job, but teach them that their work impacts people,” Hornemann concludes. **PMP**

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Alex McCurter

and PMPs have learned a lot about this pest, and in partnership are doing a much better job keeping bed bugs at bay.”

— **Judy Black, BCE**, VP of Technical Services & Quality Assurance for Atlanta, Ga.-based Rollins Inc.

“My brother recently brought home bed bugs from his job moving furniture. His wife was absolutely distraught. Bed bugs remain a real issue.”

— **Josh Petersen**, Regional Operations Manager, Austin, Texas-based Magna Pest Solutions

“Our bed bug business started picking up again late last year and has remained strong since. I expect this trend to continue, in part because of how fast bed bugs reproduce and in part because bed bugs have developed resistance to

many of the chemistries widely used.”

— **Glen Ramsey**, Technical Director for Atlanta, Ga.-based Rollins Inc.

“Last year’s media coverage of how rapidly bed bug infestations were spreading throughout Paris was good for business. Pop culture does a really good job of driving fear.”

— **Dr. Cassie Krejci, BCE**, Head of Science & Innovation for Reading, Pa.-based Rentokil Initial North America

“Bed bugs remain a problem throughout North America, Europe ... and the rest of the world. Just wait until this year’s Summer Olympics.”

— **Don McCandless**, CEO of ConidioTec, manufacturer of Aprehend, a natural biopesticide labeled for bed bugs in all 50 states.



Josh Petersen



Glen Ramsey



Dr. Cassie Krejci

2024 Bed Bug Management Supplement

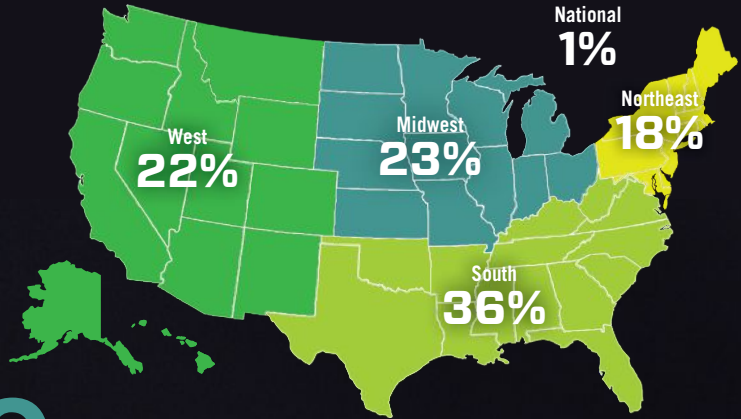
Area of Operations

WEST (AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY)

MIDWEST (OH, IN, IL, MI, WI, MN, MO, IA, ND, SD, NE, KS)

SOUTH (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV)

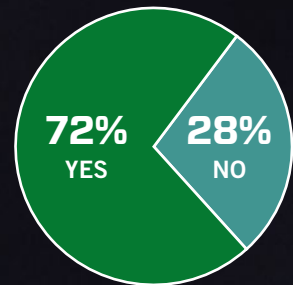
NORTHEAST (CT, DE, ME, MD, MA, NJ, NH, NY, PA, RI, VT, DC)



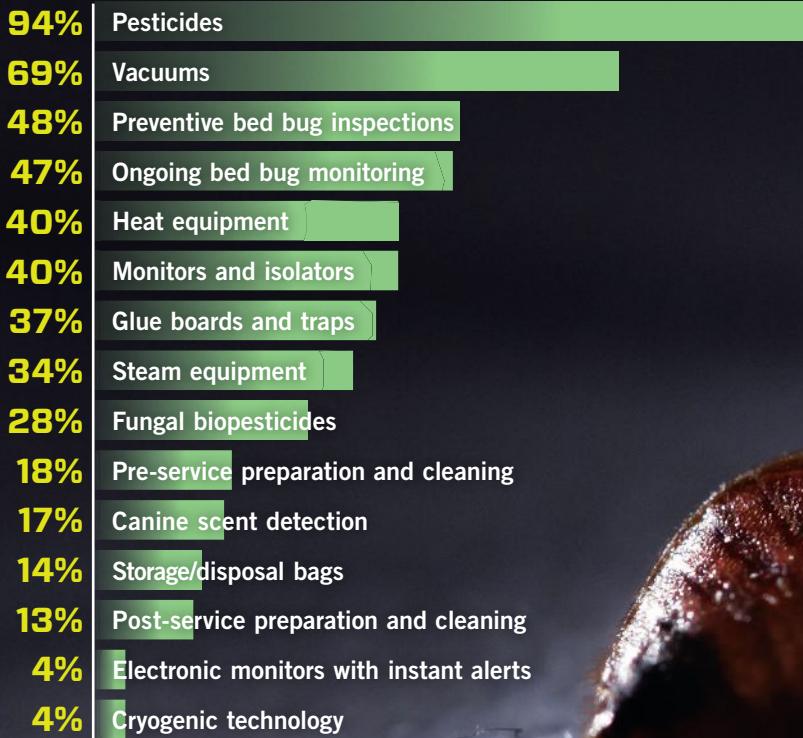
BED BUG MANAGEMENT SURVEY

SOURCE: PMP ONLINE SURVEY CONDUCTED MARCH-MAY 2024

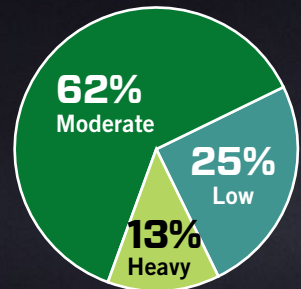
Do you differentiate bed bug job pricing based on infestation severity?



Which bed bug management tools do you use?



Bed Bug Pressure



What do you charge to treat ...



What do you charge to treat a single-bedroom apartment/condo involving a severe bed bug infestation?

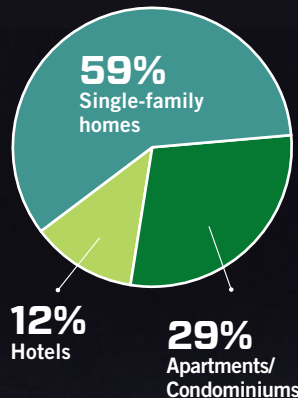


What do you charge per unit to treat a severe bed bug infestation spread across several apartments/condos?



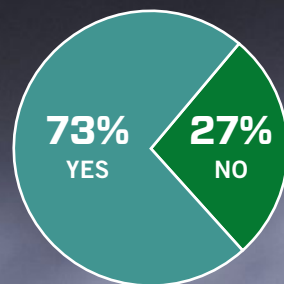
What do you charge per unit to treat a severe bed bug infestation spread across several hotel rooms?

Which types of bed bug jobs typically cost the most?



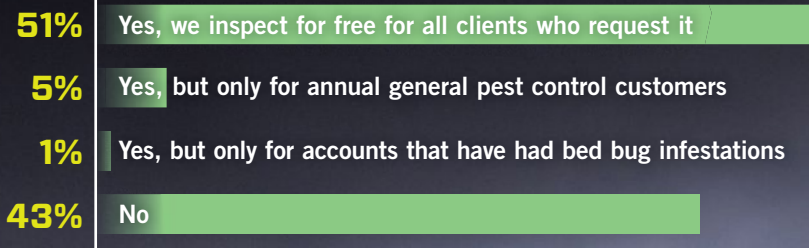
Customer Cooperation

Have you ever walked away from a bed bug job because a customer did not or would not follow your prep instructions?



Charge Range	Single-bedroom apartment/condo	Several apartments/condos	Several hotel rooms
\$299 or less	7%	8%	23%
\$300 to \$599	37%	38%	41%
\$600 to \$899	34%	27%	15%
\$900 to \$1,199	14%	15%	11%
\$1,200 or more	8%	12%	10%

Do you offer current clients *free* bed bug inspections?



Landlord Liabilities

Nearly half of our respondents say they believe most bed bug-related lawsuits and claims could have been avoided had the property managers hired pest management professionals to perform the correct work at fair prices.

Do you include mattress and/or box spring encasements as part of your comprehensive bed bug management program?

