

A SUPPLEMENT TO

PMP

Pest Management
Professional

INSIDE

BB2 Word from Our Sponsor

BB3 Sharing Knowledge

BB5 Bringing the Business

BB6 Survey Results

2025 BED BUG MANAGEMENT SUPPLEMENT

Training Sets the Tone

Prepare your team to be
thorough and compassionate,
and revenue will follow

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Aprehend[®]

Biological Bed Bug Control

Replace customer prep with customer education

No longer are bed bugs a novel problem for our industry. Technician training through attendance at continuing education unit (CEU) meetings, in-house sessions, and online offerings, such as those available on the Aprehend YouTube channel, provides pest management professionals (PMPs) with essential knowledge on bed bug biology and behavior, and successful management protocols.

Most tenants and homeowners, however, have an alarming lack of knowledge about bed bugs. Customers don't have access to industry-standard training, and the internet — everyone's favorite source of information — is riddled with misinformation and laughable "hacks" on eradicating bed bugs.

Most clients will have attempted do-it-yourself (DIY) bed bug control before calling in the professionals. If we don't (re-)educate our customers, their lack of understanding often results in callbacks, regardless of the efficacy of the products and treatment protocols deployed by PMPs.

What follow are 10 essential customer education points:

1 Share how to identify bed bugs. If possible, show customers several stages of bed bugs and eggs, so they understand what to look for. Photographs can be used if bed bugs are challenging to find on the property.

2 Explain where to look for bed bugs. Instruct your clients to check their personal items for signs of bed bugs: TV remotes, shoes, mobility aids, continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machines, books and any other items that are taken into the bed. You need to know about these items, and your customer needs to understand that these can be the source of repeated introductions of bed bugs to beds and seating areas.

3 Don't pack away any items that might be infested. Bed bugs can survive for up to a year without feeding, so infested items sealed in a box or bag will literally come back to bite you! Advise customers to alert you if they find an item that is infested. Heat (greater than 130 degrees Fahrenheit for more than one hour) and freezing (-4 degrees Fahrenheit for at least four days) will kill all life stages of bed bugs. Small, infested items can be treated using these thermal techniques.

4 It's good to kill bed bugs on sight. Use a vacuum or a lint roller, or grab or squish them as appropriate.

5 Leave the chemical applications to the pros. Eradication requires professional products with residual action and skilled application, especially to address hidden bed bugs. Do not apply over-the-counter chemical treatments, as they can interfere with the professional treatment.

6 Sleeping in a different room will allow hidden bed bugs to go dormant. If they don't come out to feed, the residual pesticide applied will not affect them, and the infestation will not go away.

7 Don't clean the residual away; it has to stay in place for at least a month to ensure that all bed bug life stages have been addressed. Bed bug eggs can take up to 14 days to hatch, and the first instars (babies) need to come out from their harborage (nest) and contact the residual. This process takes time, so be patient.

8 Ensure all bedding is dried at high heat for at least 40 minutes before remaking the bed after treatment. This includes all pillows and comforters.

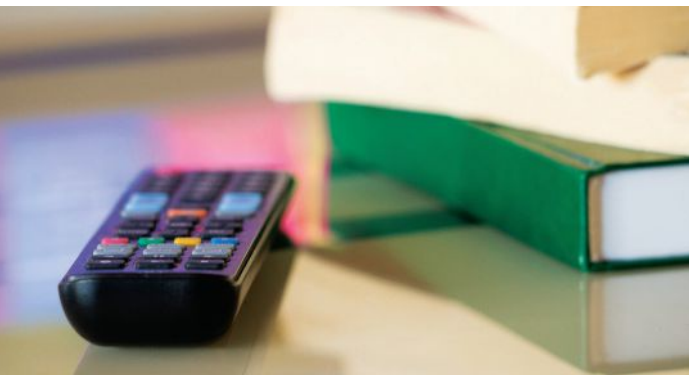
9 Live normally. Let the professional application do its work. Don't top up with other chemicals. Sleep in your usual bed.

10 Be vigilant; once bitten, twice shy. Understand how bed bugs might have been introduced to prevent recurrences.

The best bed bug protocol? No prep, customer education and knowledgeable technicians who foster customer collaboration.



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





Training Sets the Tone

Bed bug services are a reliable revenue generator — when the staff is trained to be thorough and compassionate

By Diane Sofranec | PMP Senior Editor

Bed bugs have been crawling onto suitcases, backpacks and shoes, and hiding in homes, hotels, buses and schools since their resurgence in the late 1990s.

Clients desperate to rid themselves of *Cimex lectularius* are wise to rely on professionals to eliminate the blood-sucking pests. However, not every pest control company offers bed bug management services. *Pest Management Professional's* (PMP's) 2025 Bed Bug Management survey shows many companies have no desire to learn alternate control methods, deal with distressed customers or risk bringing bed bugs into their own homes or vehicles.

Bed bug management helps build a solid reputation that is good for business. Providing this much-needed service sets a pest control company apart from the others, and thorough, patient and compassionate pest management professionals (PMPs) help build their company's favorable reputation.

A REVENUE BUILDER

"Bed bug treatments require precise knowledge of biology, behavior and control methods," says Jade Curtis, supervisor, Guaranteed Bug Control, Longview, Texas. "Offering this service showcases your advanced pest management skills and can distinguish your company from competitors who avoid complex pests."



Jade Curtis

Owners and managers of multi-unit facilities such as hotels, apartments, nursing homes and dormitories often are highly motivated to get bed bug infestations under control and avoid the damage the pests can do to their reputations.

"These facilities are often willing to pay a premium for proactive inspections and guaranteed treatments," she points out.

Anthony Sorrentino, ACE, agrees that bed bug jobs are rarely cheap. "Because bed bugs are difficult to eliminate — and require multiple visits, specialized equipment and expert knowledge — they justify higher price points," says the director of business development at Pest Pros of Michigan in Portage, Mich. "Properly marketed and executed, bed bug management services can become a solid revenue stream."



Anthony Sorrentino

Indeed, readers who answered PMP's 2025 Bed Bug Management survey reveal bed bug management services help generate revenue, as 66 percent say they differentiate bed bug job pricing based on the severity of an infestation. Many pest control companies charge accordingly for the extra time needed to inspect and treat a structure where bed bugs are rampant.

Sorrentino advises the use of multiple treatment tools to ensure success. "Combine chemical with mechanical, such as vacuum or steam, with monitoring, as each tool helps overcome bed bug resistance or harborage challenges," he says. "This is where the pros separate from the amateurs, especially in cluttered or high-turnover environments."

LOYAL CUSTOMERS

Bed bug customers tend to be loyal to the pest control company that eradicated their infestation and will rely on them for additional general pest control services. Pest control companies that restore peace of mind and return lives to normal often are rewarded with a business boost.

Continued on page BB4

Continued from page BB3

“Bed bugs freak people out. The client’s emotional urgency creates an opening to build trust quickly, offer immediate solutions, and often upsell follow-up services or monitoring tools,” Sorrentino says. “When handled correctly, it strengthens client loyalty and word-of-mouth referrals.”

Companies are adept at watching out for bed bug work, *PMP’s 2025 Bed Bug Management* survey shows, as 60 percent of those asked say they offer free bed bug inspections for current customers.

These complimentary inspections are a crucial first step toward customer support, says Sophia Rodriguez, CEO of Sophie’s Pest Solutions in Oakland, Calif.

“When people suspect an infestation, they’re often overwhelmed with uncertainty and anxiety. Many hesitate to take action because they are worried about the cost, unsure about the severity or embarrassed to ask for help,” she adds. “By offering a no-cost inspection, we remove that initial barrier and create a low-pressure, judgment-free opportunity for them to seek professional guidance.”

Rodriguez says the free inspections also help educate customers because technicians take the time to explain what they are looking for. They can reassure customers that bed bugs are common and not the result of poor hygiene.

“Once clients understand how we can help, most feel relieved and open to moving forward with a customized treatment plan,” she says. “Our goal is not just eradication, but also education and peace of mind — ensuring each client feels informed, supported and confident in their next steps.”

Inspections are crucial to verifying bed bug infestations. “Always confirm bed bug activity — live bugs, cast skins, fecal staining or eggs — before launching into treatment,” says Sorrentino. “This builds credibility, sets expectations and avoids treating phantom problems that can be costly and lead to liability.”

SKILLED STAFF

A successful bed bug management program depends on a highly trained team.



“Our goal is not just eradication, but also education and peace of mind — ensuring each client feels informed, supported and confident in their next steps.”

Sophia Rodriguez

“Without skilled, knowledgeable technicians, treatments are more likely to fail and lead to callbacks, frustrated customers and damage to your reputation,” Curtis says. “Bed bug control requires precise identification, inspection and treatment techniques that only well-trained professionals can deliver effectively.”

Stefan Stankovic agrees, adding that technicians need more than just technical training when working with customers who have bed bugs. “Well-trained technicians are competent, calm and credible to the customer,” says Stankovic, manager of My Pest Crew in Chicago, Ill. “That makes it easier to earn trust, answer tough questions and guide customers through a stressful situation without losing control of the conversation.”

A well-trained technician also can combat misinformation customers may believe about bed bugs, adds Stankovic. “We train our team to explain the basics of bed bug biology in a simple and factual way, without overwhelming people,” he explains. “When a technician speaks clearly and with authority, it naturally replaces internet myths and bad advice without turning the conversation into a debate.”

The key is training the entire team how to talk to customers with compassion. It’s crucial that technicians and customer service representatives demonstrate patience and kindness, especially when customers become upset upon learning they have a bed bug infestation. Assuring them you have the know-how to eradicate the infestation — with their help, of course — can help ease their fears.

It’s like a three-legged stool, Curtis says. “Education helps prevent reinfestation and builds trust, while compassion eases the emotional stress customers often feel. But without solid technical proficiency, even the best communication and empathy won’t solve the problem.”

Because Rodriguez understands the stress bed bugs may cause, she makes easing the emotional burden the company’s top priority. “From the very first phone call, we take the time to listen, educate and reassure clients, because fear and uncertainty often make the experience worse than



Stefan Stankovic

the infestation itself,” she says. “We help clients understand that bed bugs are hitchhikers, not a reflection of cleanliness, and that they’re not alone in dealing with this issue.”

Her team continues this compassionate approach during the initial appointment by explaining the treatment process in a clear, calm manner. The goal is to help clients feel empowered rather than overwhelmed.

“Instead of rushing straight into treatment, we make sure clients understand what’s happening, what steps they can take and how we’ll support them every step of the way,” Rodriguez says. “Building trust and providing reassurance upfront not only eases their anxiety but also sets the foundation for a successful treatment plan.”

Bed bugs carry a stigma that can leave customers feeling anxious and even isolated. “There often is a misplaced sense of shame that prevents people from seeking help right away,” Rodriguez says. “A technician who reassures rather than shames, listens rather than lectures and educates without condescension builds trust and encourages people to take action sooner rather than later.”

Bed bug management services are a win-win for pest control companies that alleviate customer fears while eliminating the infestation. “Bed bug treatments are one of the few services where urgency and pricing align. Customers usually can’t wait, and the cost is significantly higher than regular pest control work,” Stankovic concludes. “It’s a service that supports the business while solving a major customer need. If you’re not offering it, you’re leaving serious revenue and relationships on the table.” **PMP**

Sofranec can be reached at dsofranec@northcoastmedia.net or 216-706-3793.

Bed bugs bring the business

Pest control companies that offer bed bug management services share what has worked for them, offering tips for overcoming challenging infestations and calming stressed-out customers. See more tips and share your own online at MyPMP.net.

“Conduct training for hospital, hotel, multi-housing staff and tenants to understand their roles in treatment and prevention tactics. This will help everyone.”

— **Scott Hornemann, ACE, Field Training/Quality/Safety Director, Adam’s Pest Control, Medina, Minn.**



“Never leave a job without taking photos. It tells the story.”

— **Brady Hilbert, Service Manager, Fox Pest Control, York, Pa.**

“Many property managers try to suppress information from tenants by requiring that technicians not speak to any other tenants while on the property. We recommend the opposite. Let tenants know about the infestation and have us perform inspections. It’s crazy how often this happens.”

— **Greg Bausch, ACE, VP, American City Pest & Termite, Gardena, Calif.**



“Save live bed bugs in a sealed container for verification.”

— **Terry Brand, Owner, Alert 1 Termite & Pest Control, Savannah, Mo.**

“Keep it as simple as possible, but maintain consistent communication and availability during the entire process.”

— **Greg Kelly, Owner, Green Kastle, Sesser, Ill.**



“Be thorough in your inspections. You’ll have hot spot areas that you’ll always want to check, but don’t neglect those ‘other’ areas. I have heard technicians say things like ‘bed bugs avoid metal,’ yet we find bed bugs in the gaps on a metal ironing board. Repellent insecticides may move them to areas that are unexpected. Bed bugs will be wherever they have to be to survive.”

— **Natasha Wright, BCE, Technical Director and Entomologist, Braman Termite & Pest Elimination, Agawam, Mass.**



“If you could not gain control, start over and identify what part of the program wasn’t adhered to. When I’m called in to troubleshoot, I include the management team and the technician on the visit. If we failed to meet expectations, everyone who visited the property previously must learn something from the experience.”

— **Alan Harlan, VP, Service and Quality Control, Team Pest USA, Loganville, Ga.**



“Let bed bug customers finish what they have to say. When I feel like they’ve completed everything they wanted to say, then I’ll start talking to them and asking them questions or giving them the information I think they need.”

— **Kevin Citarella, Managing Director, Florida Pest Pros, Spring Hill, Fla.**



“Don’t accept jobs where a landlord and tenant relationship doesn’t exist. This is no time for reality shows.”

— **Stefan Stankovic, Manager, My Pest Crew, Chicago, Ill.**

2025 Bed Bug Management Supplement

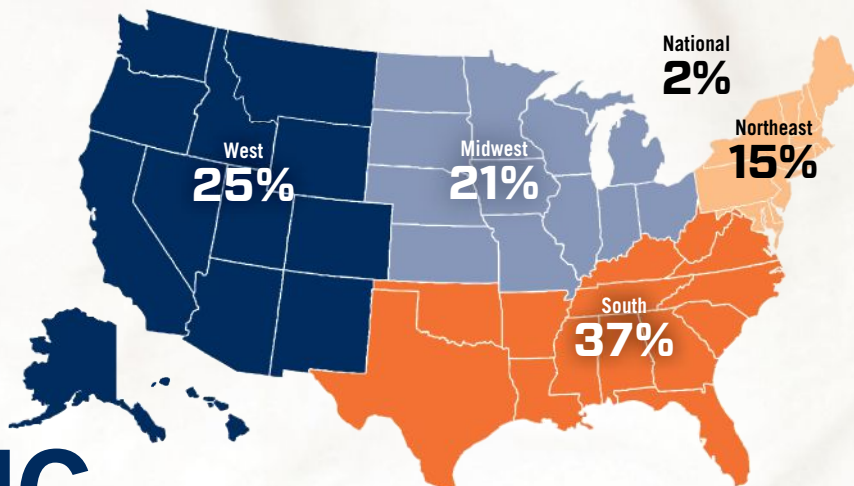
Area of Operations

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)

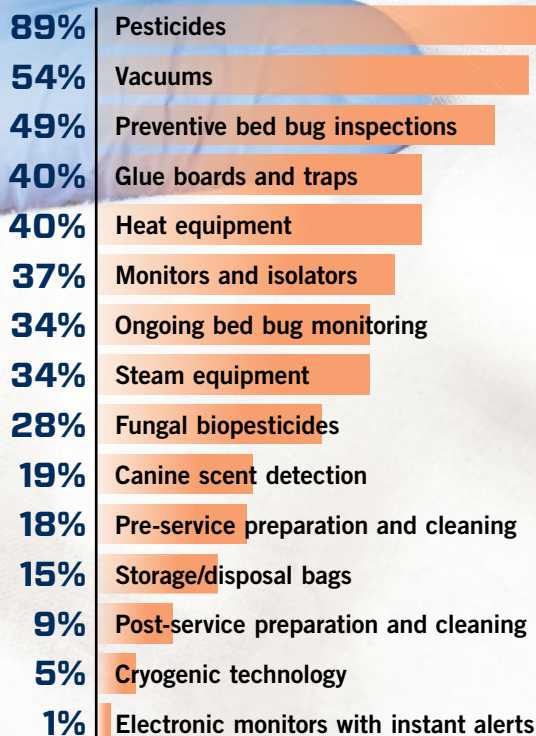
NORTHEAST (CT, DE, ME, MD, MA, NJ, NH, NY, PA, RI, VT, DC)



BED BUG MANAGEMENT SURVEY

SOURCE: PMP ONLINE SURVEY CONDUCTED MARCH-APRIL 2025

Which bed bug management tools do you use?



\$\$

Landlord Liabilities

Nearly half of those surveyed 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?

50% YES

50% NO



GETTY IMAGES; ANDRII ATANOV (BACKGROUND); TINNAKORN (MAP) / ISTOCK / GETTY IMAGES PLUS

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?

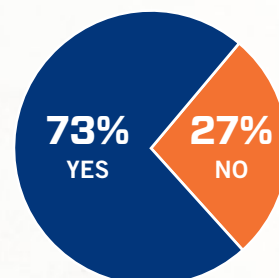


What do you charge per unit to treat a severe bed bug infestation spread across several hotel rooms?

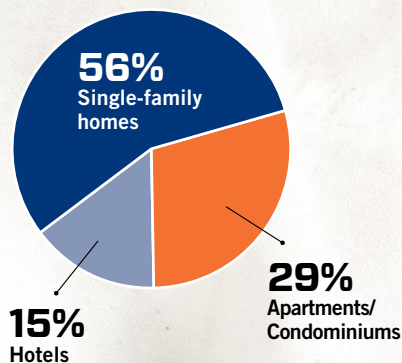
Charge Range	Single-bedroom apartment/condo	Multiple units	Hotel rooms
\$299 or less	6%	9%	14%
\$300 to \$599	31%	30%	47%
\$600 to \$899	38%	32%	18%
\$900 to \$1,199	16%	10%	7%
\$1,200 or more	9%	19%	14%

Customer Cooperation

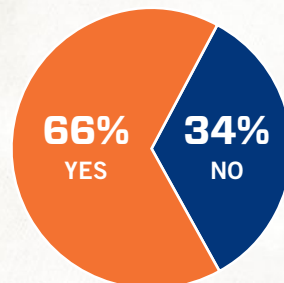
Have you ever walked away from a bed bug job because a customer did not or would not follow your prep instructions?



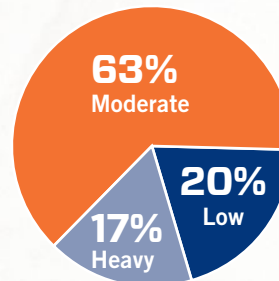
Which types of bed bug jobs typically cost the most?



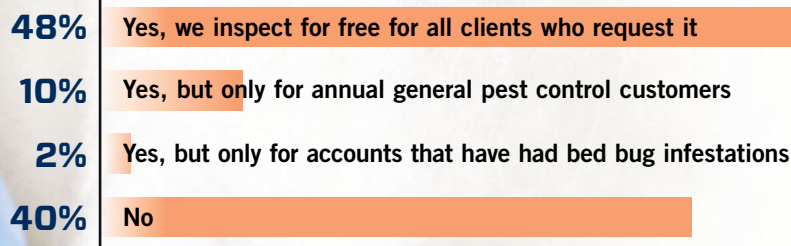
Do you differentiate bed bug job pricing based on infestation severity?



Bed Bug Pressure



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





BED BUG simple

**One product.
One sprayer.
One treatment.**

Join the thousands of satisfied PMPs across the US and Canada. Contact us to get started today.

FREE
Customized
Live Zoom Bed
Bug Training



We offer practical, relevant bed bug training for pest professionals and their teams. Contact us today to tailor your topics and schedule a session.

800-891-8610
orders@conidiotec.com
www.aprehend.com

Aprehend[®]
Biological Bed Bug Control