

PMP Pest Management PROFESSIONAL

UNDER CONTROL

**2022 Bed Bug Management
Supplement shows bed bug
jobs will pick up as more
people venture out**



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our sponsor
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BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Aprehend[®]
Biological Bed Bug Control



*Dr. Jenkins is
founder and chief
technical officer
for ConidioTec.*



Proven protocol slashes labor, fuel costs

By Dr. Nina Jenkins, Founder and CTO, ConidioTec

In the not-so-distant past, bed bugs were reported to be the most difficult pest to control. They required considerable resources in equipment, chemicals and labor. The Aprehend team has been working with industry partners to streamline bed bug protocols to reduce technician time and the number of services required to achieve bed bug eradication, even in the worst infestations.

Can the elusive “one-and-done” visit be achieved at a bed bug account? We say yes. Bed bug eradication can be achieved with a single service visit, plus a follow-up inspection at 30 days to confirm eradication. Pest management professionals (PMPs) who use Aprehend can cut out the middle two-week follow-up visit. This is made possible by the reliable, long-lasting residual efficacy provided by Aprehend. Aprehend keeps working for you, so your technicians can spend time on other income-generating services. Here's how:

VISIT 1: VACUUM/APREHEND

Vacuum visible bed bugs while conducting your inspection. Vacuuming is ideal for knockdown because there are no resistance concerns. It removes multiple layers of bed bugs and skins, which nymphs often use as harborage, and it leaves a clean surface for the application of Aprehend. Clients also see a visual improvement and an immediate reduction in bites.

Next, apply Aprehend to address the bed bugs that cannot be reached by the vacuum. Bed bugs are extremely predictable, and every life stage is dependent on accessing a bloodmeal. Even bed bugs hidden deep in closets or clustered in inaccessible parts of furniture must emerge to seek a bloodmeal.

Aprehend barriers are applied around beds and furniture where people spend sedentary time. This ensures bed bugs will soon expose themselves to Aprehend when seeking a bloodmeal between each life stage.

Furthermore, bed bugs carry the Aprehend spores back to their hidden harborages, where the spores are transferred to their nestmates.

VISIT 2: FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION

Return in 30 days. Having drastically reduced the bed bug population using a vacuum and targeting the remaining hidden bed bugs with Aprehend barriers, clients usually report that things are “solved” within a week of Aprehend service. However, it may take up to 30 days for all bed bugs to emerge, and for first-level instars to hatch and become exposed to Aprehend. Inspecting sooner than this could trigger an unnecessary re-treat. Aprehend users report that a second application during the 30 day follow-up is only rarely required.

What will you do with the extra time and travel saved by dropping the two-week follow-up? Call us today to discuss how Aprehend can help boost your reputation while saving technicians time and money.

Green-outlined areas show recommended locations for Aprehend barriers to target bed bugs when they emerge from hidden harborages.

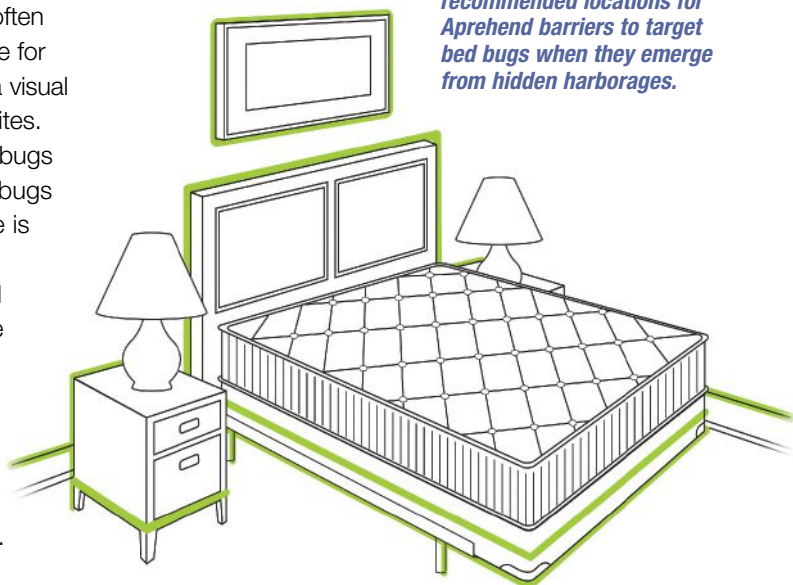


ILLUSTRATION: CONIDIO TEC

As more people venture out, PMPs will help customers who pick up bed bugs

By Diane Sofranec | PMP Senior Editor

UNDER CONTROL

Although most Americans traveled less and worked from home more over the past two years, pest management professionals (PMPs) continued to field calls for bed bug (*Cimex lectularius*) services.

The PMPs who answered *Pest Management Professional's* exclusive 2022 Bed Bug Management Survey reported there was still bed bug work to be had. When comparing the number of bed bug jobs in 2020 to those in 2021, only 19 percent said the number of jobs decreased last year. Bed bug jobs increased for 39 percent and remained flat for 41 percent.

In addition, our survey shows 55 percent expect bed bug jobs to increase next year; 35 percent expect them to remain flat and 10 percent expect them to decrease.



DOUG FOSTER

When asked whether the coronavirus pandemic had an impact on bed bug work, several said the number of service calls dipped slightly, but business is now on the rebound because people are venturing out more.

"Initially, the coronavirus pandemic affected us negatively because no one was traveling," said Doug Foster, owner of Burt's Termite & Pest Control, in Columbus, Ind., and a *Pest Management Professional (PMP)* Editorial Advisory Board member. "Since then, it has picked up and continues to rise because folks are traveling again and allowing PMPs into their homes and offices to work."

Smart Pest Solutions' Owner Matt Hamblin had a similar experience at his Tempe, Ariz.-based business. "We saw a 24 percent decrease in bed

bug services revenue from 2019 to 2020, and then another 21 percent decrease in 2021," he explains. "But we are seeing a 29 percent increase in bed bug revenue in the first quarter of 2022."

HELP CUSTOMERS

PMPs are ready and waiting to serve customers who bring bed bugs back in while they've been out. Although bed bugs are not known to transmit disease, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) considers them to be a public health pest. That's because they affect physical health if bites cause allergic reactions and/or skin infections. They also have an impact on mental health because they cause anxiety, insomnia and feelings of shame.

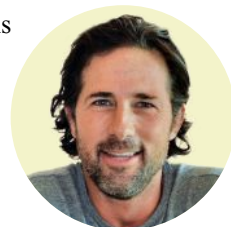
Hamblin advises taking every precaution to not scare customers during a bed bug call. Often, they are "freaked out" anyway once they realize the pests are present, so teach them no known diseases can be passed from bed bugs to humans.

"Explain how bed bugs are a huge nuisance, but not a threat," he says. "Don't hard sell them with fear; comfort them with facts. You are going to get the work if they have bed bugs."

Jade McClain, supervisor at Guaranteed Bug Control in Longview, Texas, advises PMPs to encourage customers to share how they feel about bed bugs, and talk about what they are going through. Do not hesitate to correct their misconceptions.

"Most customers already are uncomfortable about their situation when it comes to bed bugs,"

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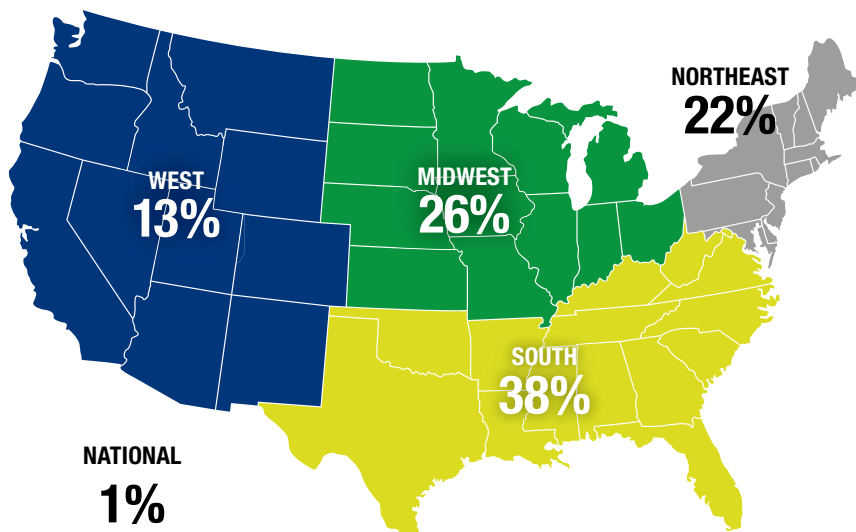


MATT HAMBLIN

Bed Bug Management Survey

SOURCE: PMP ONLINE SURVEY CONDUCTED MARCH-APRIL 2022

AREA OF OPERATIONS



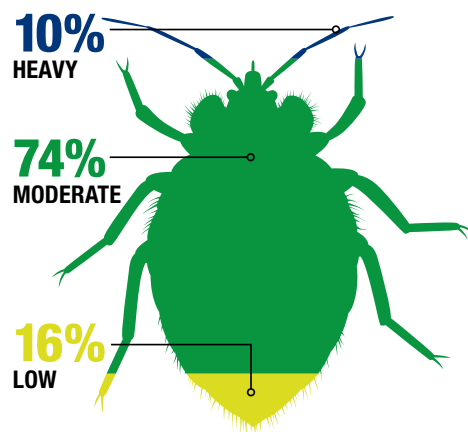
WEST: AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY

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

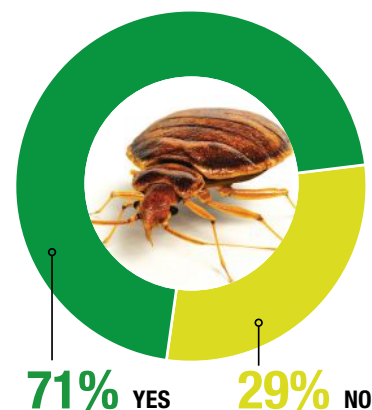
SOUTH: AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV

NORTHEAST: CT, DE, ME, MD, MA, NJ, NH, NY, PA, RI, VT, D.C.

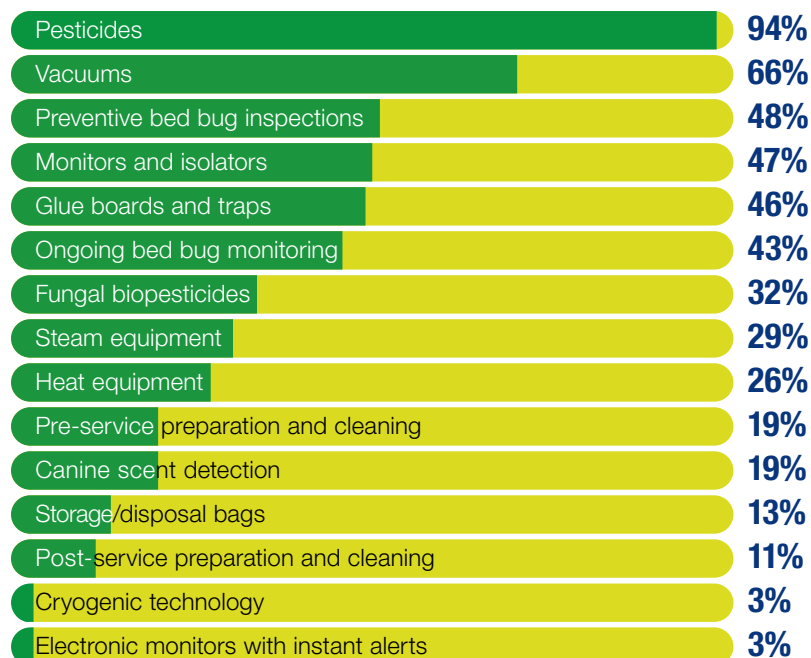
BED BUG PRESSURE



DO YOU DIFFERENTIATE BED BUG JOB PRICING BASED ON INFESTATION SEVERITY?



WHICH BED BUG MANAGEMENT TOOLS DO YOU USE?



Bed bugs are a public health pest that cause a variety of negative physical health, mental health and economic consequences.

SOURCE: U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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?

			
\$299 or less	9%	13%	25%
\$300 to \$599	36%	31%	43%
\$600 to \$899	30%	32%	19%
\$900 to \$1,199	13%	14%	8%
\$1,200 or more	12%	10%	5%

DO YOU INCLUDE MATTRESS AND/OR BOX SPRING ENCASEMENTS AS PART OF YOUR COMPREHENSIVE BED BUG MANAGEMENT PROGRAM?

51% YES

49% NO



CUSTOMER COOPERATION

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

80% YES

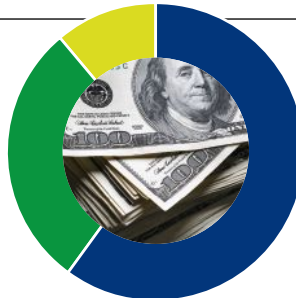
20% NO

WHICH TYPES OF BED BUG JOBS TYPICALLY COST THE MOST?

60% Single-family homes

29% Apartments/Condominiums

11% Hotels



DO YOU OFFER CURRENT CLIENTS *FREE* BED BUG INSPECTIONS?



50% Yes, we inspect for free for all clients who request it

7% Yes, but only for annual general pest control customers

4% Yes, but only for accounts that have had bed bug infestations

39% No

RESIDENT LIABILITIES

Nearly one-third of PMPs say they believe most bed bug-related lawsuits and claims are the fault of uncooperative residents of infested dwellings.



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she says. “The customers think they’re dirty because of the bed bugs, when we all know bed bugs do not care whether you’re clean or dirty.”

Assure them bed bugs are adept at hitching a ride on clothes, furniture, luggage and other soft surfaces, sight unseen. They often are brought home from places where people congregate, such as schools, theaters, libraries, hotels and waiting rooms.

Eliminating a customer’s bed bug infestation can be highly motivating for PMPs.

“I believe in bed bug management because it is one of the most rewarding services a pest control company can provide,” says Timothy Rudisill, director of Service at A1 Termite and Pest Control, Lenoir, N.C. “Bed bugs are the thing of nightmares, so when you are able to resolve the issue for a customer, it is a feeling unlike any other.”



TIMOTHY RUDISILL

He says his ability to successfully treat bed bugs goes back to when he treated his grandmother’s house for the pests. “Thinking about how much [having bed bugs] affected her mentally is what I now think of every time I inspect and treat other homes,” he says. “I do not want anyone to ever feel that way.”

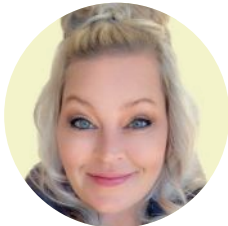
For Bill Melville, ACE, providing bed bug management services is a vital component of his pest control service package, because it confirms his expertise and competence to customers.

“A successful treatment provides the customer much-needed ‘peace of mind,’ and provides me with professional satisfaction and referrals,” says the owner of PRIZM IPM Solutions in West Linn, Ore. “And yes, it is a profitable service offering.”

HELP YOURSELF

Melville, who will celebrate 50 years in the pest control industry this month, considers bed bug issues routine — and the hysteria surrounding them overblown. He says PMPs can solve their customers’ bed bug problems if they simply learn about the pest, implement control strategies and then follow up.

“Take the time to learn and understand bed bug biology



JADE MCCLAIN

and habits. Provide thorough initial inspections to confirm the presence of bed bugs, prepare the areas properly prior to treatment, treat thoroughly using a variety of products and/or tools, and recommend mattress and box spring encasements,” he says. “Don’t be reluctant to provide bed bug control services because of fear; you are a trained professional and all the tools needed to be successful are readily available.”

McClain agrees that PMPs who are thinking about treating for bed bugs should learn everything about them. “Take your time with inspections and treatments,” she adds. “Never rush.”

Many PMPs learn the hard way that it does not pay to skip on bed bug control protocols just to land a job. Eliminating important steps to help reduce costs for your customer rarely works.

“If you believe all rooms in a home need to be treated or that all surrounding apartments need to be inspected, make that part of the agreement,” says Adam Carace, ACE, CEO at Pest-End in Plaistow, N.H. “Bed bugs, more than any other pest, always need the full service provided to help achieve elimination.”

Hamblin agrees PMPs should never skip steps when during treatment. “As with any proper application, protocols are in place for a reason,” he points out. “The step wouldn’t be there if it were not absolutely necessary.”

HELP YOUR TECHS

PMPs have a number of effective tools at their disposal, from pesticides and monitors, to fungal biopesticides and vacuums. No matter what tools and treatments are used, technicians tasked with eliminating bed bug infestations require training to ensure they are successful.

They also need to have a good attitude. “Bed bug work rarely goes as expected,” Carace says.

“Whether it is tenants who will not leave on time, places not properly prepared, or unknown circumstances found once you start moving everything around, bed bug work is always unique — and technicians need to be able to thrive in those situations.”

Additional steps for success include using two technicians when appropriate and following strict standard operating procedures. “Bed bug technicians must be meticulous, thorough and



ADAM CARACE



BILL MELVILLE



BILL COWLEY

detail-oriented,” notes Bill Cowley, owner of Cowley’s Pest Services in Farmingdale, N.J.

Technicians need to remember bed bug management services cannot be rushed. “Inspecting the location and finding all bed bug activity is paramount to success,” says Rudisill.

So is being thorough in an effort to find visible evidence of an active bed bug infestation.

“Whether it is a live bed bug, a cast skin, or blood marks on a sheet, these all are fail-proof confirmation that treatment is required,” says Hamblin.

HELP YOUR BOTTOM LINE

Even if you’ve mastered your company’s bed bug management services, you need to price the work accordingly. Figure out how much time and product a technician needs to complete the work. “Once you know your cost, decide on an acceptable margin and set your price-per-hour to perform the work,” Cowley says. “Stick to your price; don’t lowball. Remember, if you lower your price, it’s a race to the bottom.”

PMPs always will encounter customers who are price-sensitive, he says. But if you don’t charge what it costs to do the work, you won’t make money.

“Get your price and focus on selling and servicing the profitable jobs,” Cowley adds. “That’s the winning formula.” PMP

You can reach SOFRANEC at dsfranec@northcoastmedia.net or 216-706-3793.

TIPS TO TRY

Pest management professionals who provide bed bug management services offer advice to help get customers’ infestations under control

► “Canines are a valuable tool for locating bed bugs. Canines are very good at sniffing out bed bugs hiding in cracks humans can’t see. Hire an independent team that is certified by a third-party organization. Ask questions, and watch the canine work. I perform a visual inspection along with a canine inspection, and I always confirm my canine’s alert.”

— Terry Rials, Owner, Elite K9 Bed Bug Hunters, Ashland, Va.



Elite K9 Bed Bug Hunters also uses canines during post-treatment inspections to help ensure success.

► “Schedule enough time for technicians to properly perform the bed bug service. Don’t lower your price to match your competitor’s price.”

— Michael Broder, Owner, BHB Pest Elimination, New York, N.Y.

► “Respond to customer issues or concerns in a timely and compassionate manner.” — Scott Robbins, ACE, Technical Services Manager, Action Pest Control, Evansville, Ind.

► “Communicate to your customer very clearly what you will and won’t do.” — Peter Anderson Jr., President, Pest-All Exterminating, Cincinnati, Ohio

► “Never criticize a competitor’s offered solution; just educate and inform your customer why you offer a particular management road map.” — Bill Melville, Owner, PRIZM IPM Solutions, West Linn, Ore.

► “Wear proper safety equipment.” — Josh Jones, Owner, P.M.S. Pest Management Specialists, Enterprise, Ala.

► “Review preparation instructions with your customer thoroughly.” — William Petrino, President, Gotham Pest Control, Fairfield, N.J.

► “In pest management, treating at the source of an infestation is key, but with bed bugs, this often is not a possibility. Unless you communicate the need for a change in behavior, the threat of reinfestation will be present forever.” — Matt Hamblin, Owner, Smart Pest Solutions, Tempe, Ariz.

Eliminate & Prevent

Professionals conquer the toughest infestations with Aprehend, even in hoarding situations.

Up to 3-month residual is ideal for proactive treatment and quarterly servicing.

Any level of infestation: 5 or 5,000+ bugs
Any level of prep: no clutter to hoarding situation
Any structure: single or multi-family housing, public spaces, assisted living

Field tested and proven to work.

Contact us today to add it to your bed bug protocol.

"An Ounce of Aprehend Is Worth 3 Months of Cure."

—Ben Franklin & **Aprehend**

OK, Benjamin Franklin said *something* like that. He famously advised fire-threatened Philadelphians about "prevention" in 1736, and the same holds true for bed bugs: be proactive. **Just one ounce of Aprehend is enough to treat a bed-room for up to three months of protection against the establishment of an infestation.** It's ideal for community and hospitality environments, multi-unit housing, or any space that welcomes the public. Contact us to see how easy and profitable it is to add bed bugs to your list of quarterly servicing offerings.