

NEWS ADVISORY

Public Health Madison & Dane County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Beware of Bedbugs in “Free” Furniture

Madison WI – August 12, 2015 – We are rapidly approaching moving season in downtown Madison. Students leaving their apartments will be dragging all their unwanted furniture on to the street, turning many streets into outdoor marketplaces for free stuff. This phenomenon has, for many years, been called hippy Christmas. The furniture, ranging from the good to the bad to the ugly is free for the taking.

The bad news is that some of these freebies may come pre-infested with bedbugs.

As a reminder, bedbugs are small reddish brown insects that feed solely on the blood of people. Their flat bodies allow them to fit into tiny cracks and crevices throughout the infested area but they are most often found in bedding, mattresses, box springs, bed frames, headboards, dressers, and nightstands. Once in your home they become enormous nuisances and are extremely difficult to get rid of.

Many do it yourself approaches to getting them out of your home range from dangerous to simply ineffective. The best approach is to hire a qualified pest control professional. If you are a renter, call your landlord. If the landlord does not address the problem, call your local building inspector. In the City of Madison, call (608) 266-4551 to reach a building inspector. Outside of the City of Madison, check with your municipal government for help. If you don't have access to a building inspector, call [Public Health Madison & Dane County](http://www2.epa.gov/bedbugs) at (608) 242-6515

Bedbugs can be found anywhere which is a sign of the insect's talent to efficiently travel between locations by hitching a ride on clothing, luggage, furniture, and other items. Don't let a freebie from hippy Christmas provide bedbugs the opportunity to make themselves comfortable in your home.

For detailed information about bedbugs and how to get rid of them, see our webpage at

<http://www.publichealthmdc.com/environmental/healthyHomes/bedBugs.cfm>. Additional information can be found at <http://www2.epa.gov/bedbugs>.