

## Ohio Bed Bug Workgroup's Final Report and Recommendations



The Ohio Bed Bug Workgroup, which was organized by the Ohio Department of Health and which first met in February, 2010, has released its final report (which you can download as a PDF from [ODH's website](#)), providing the Ohio Governor and General Assembly with a list of recommendations for fighting bed bugs in Ohio.

Its key recommendations are in bold below:

**“Pest management professionals need pesticides which are effective and safe alternatives to those currently available for the control of bed bugs.”**

The Working Group has supported the state's request for an exemption allowing the use of Propoxur under specific conditions, as well as petitioning the EPA and other federal agencies to direct funding towards developing and registering new pesticides and formulations to fight bed bugs.

**“Identify the roles and responsibilities of local and state agencies in addressing bed bug problems to better coordinate education and control efforts.”**

This addresses the current problem where agencies and citizens alike are confused about agencies' responsibilities and jurisdiction.

**“Implement measures to coordinate education and awareness to reduce the spread of bed bugs and prevent infestations.”**

This may include educational literature, a website, and educational campaigns.

**“Identify ways to assist low income persons with bed bug prevention and control.”**

This is one of the biggest problems everywhere: people on limited incomes have the most difficulty fighting bed bugs. They desperately need assistance.

The workgroup has already sought federal funding to develop outreach and education programs.

**“Create a state operated toll-free information line to provide information on bed bug prevention and control and direct callers to appropriate resources. Usage statistics could be used as a sentinel source of data to monitor bed bug complaints and concerns throughout the state.”**

No elaboration needed.

**“Individual [Local Health Departments] should have the ability to create local hotel/motel inspection programs, should the need for such programs be determined and should the political will to create such a program exist.”**

A number of recommendations pertain to hotel/motel inspections, notably:

**“Inspections must be done for all units that share a common wall with the infested unit. With regard to treatment, hotel and motel management must also be sure to hire only individuals and companies that are properly licensed as pesticide applicators.”**

It’s an interesting and useful report.

I was glad to see the emphasis on a need for federal funding to help support low-income residents in terms of outreach and control efforts. The amounts described in the appendices for these do not seem exorbitant. In fact, I would emphasize this need even more.

**The bottom line is that if we as a society do not help people who cannot pay for bed bug treatment to do so, they will continue to suffer with bed bugs, and bed bugs will continue to spread even further.**

*Ohio residents please note:* the [Ohio Department of Health](#) will provide identification services for samples sent in by Ohio residents. You can download [this form](#) or call ODH at (614) 752-1029 and press Option 1 for information.