

Bed Bugs in California: Local Agency Services and Response

Survey Summary, August 2011

Bed bug infestations are a growing problem in California and across the nation. The Vector-Borne Disease Section of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) conducted a survey in 2011 to assess local agency response to bed bug infestations and gain information on the extent of the problem. Fifty-two local agencies from 38 counties responded to the survey (63% response rate), representing public health, environmental health, and vector control. Agencies responded to questions regarding trends in bed bug incidents, services provided, and agency response. Of the 25 agencies responding to the question on bed bug trends, 12 (48%) indicated that the number of bed bug incidents had increased over the last three years, 9 (36%) indicated no change, and 4 (16%) were not sure of the trend. No counties reported a decrease in bed bug reports. Agencies indicated they received an average of 1.7 bed bug inquiries in 2005, compared to 45 in 2010. San Francisco County reported the highest number of reports in 2010 (567, compared to 215 in 2005) followed by Los Angeles County (390 in 2010) and Alameda (234 in 2010, compared to 25 in 2005).

Fifty-one agencies from 37 counties indicated that they are responding to bed bug infestations and inquiries. Actions taken are summarized in Table 1 and include: track reports (20 agencies), provide general information (49), refer individuals to the private pest control industry (43), perform inspections (37), and initiate enforcement proceedings against property owners (15), (Figure 1, Table 1). Only one agency, San Francisco Department of Public Health, reported that they conduct bed bug control. Services provided by counties to hotels, multifamily dwellings, single family homes, schools, businesses, and homeless shelters are described in Table 2. Bed bug related services are most commonly provided to hotels followed by single-family dwellings and multi-family units. Of the 25 agencies that indicated they conduct bed bug inspections, 9 (26.5%) conduct inspections as part of a licensing procedure.

In response to citizen complaints and to abate bed bug infestations, agencies cite the California Health and Safety Code (Section 17920.3), the California Uniform Housing Code (1997 UHC 1001.2), or various county or city specific codes. Eight respondents indicated that litigation against property owners due to bed bug infestations had occurred in their county.

Four counties have formed bed bug task forces or working groups (Contra Costa, Fresno, Los Angeles, and San Francisco). Table 3 provides a list of lead agencies by county that may be contacted by the general public for bed bug information or to report an infestation.

The California Department of Public Health provides information, guidelines, and public education materials pertaining to the prevention, surveillance, and control of bed bugs. Please visit our website for more information

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/BedBugs.aspx>.

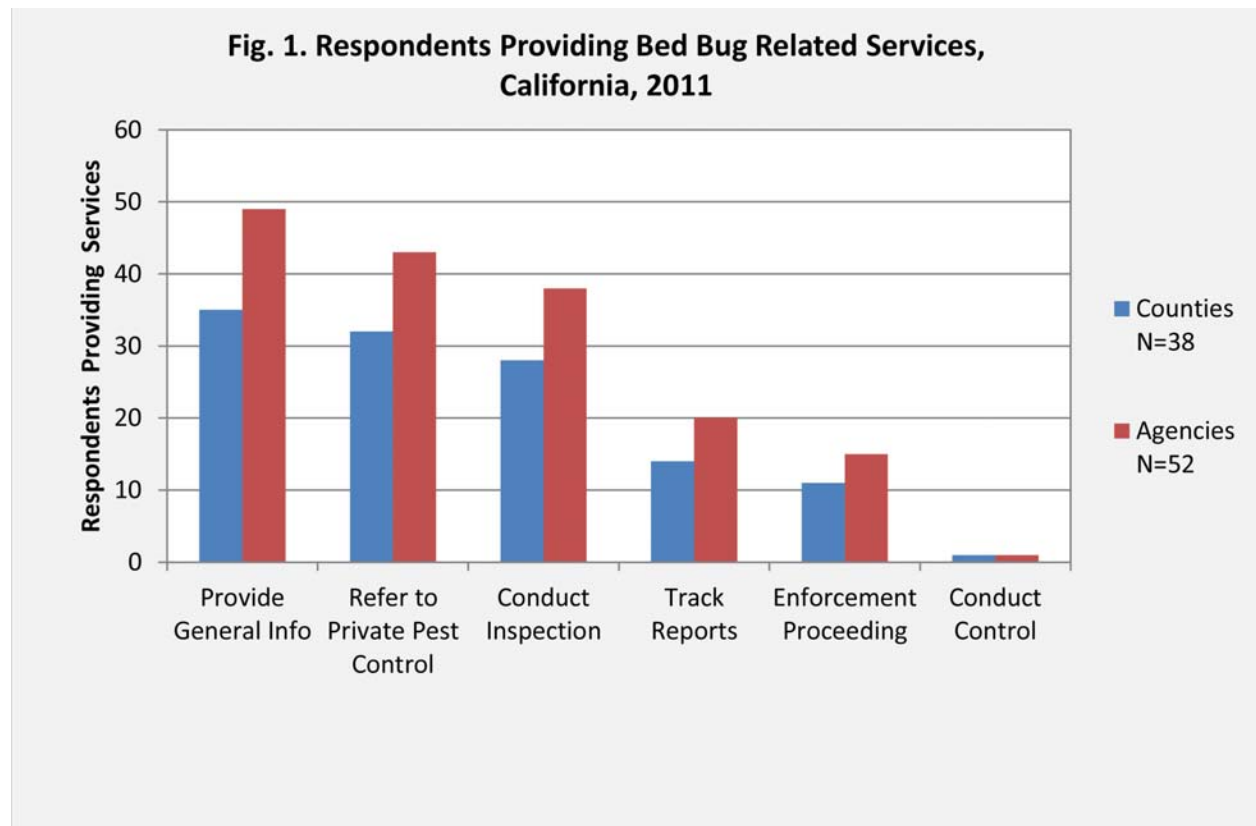


Table 1. Agency Response to Bed Bug Inquiries or Infestations, California, 2011

County	Agency name	Track reports	Provide general information (via website, literature)	Refer individuals to private pest control industry	Conduct inspections	Conduct bed bug control	Initiate enforcement proceedings against property owners
Alameda	Alameda County Vector Control Services District	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	City of Berkeley Environmental Health Division	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Alpine	Alpine County Environmental Health		✓	✓	✓		
Amador	Amador County Environmental Health Dept.	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Butte	Butte County MVCD		✓	✓			
Colusa	Colusa County Environmental Health		✓				
Fresno	Fresno Mosquito & Vector Control District	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Fresno County Dept of Public Health	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Glenn	Glenn County Environmental Health		✓	✓	✓		
Humboldt	Humboldt County Division of Environmental Health	✓	✓	✓			
Imperial	Imperial County EHS		✓	✓	✓		
Inyo	Environmental Health Services Department		✓	✓	✓		
Kern	Kern County Environmental Health Division	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Kings	Kings County Environmental Health Services		✓	✓	✓		✓
Los Angeles	City of Long Beach		✓	✓	✓		✓
	City of Pasadena Health Department		✓	✓	✓		✓
	Los Angeles County Public Health	✓	✓		✓		✓
	City of Vernon Health & Environmental Control Dept		✓		✓		
	Long Beach Health	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Department of Public Health, Environmental Health		✓		✓		✓
Marin	County of Marin Environmental Health Services		✓	✓	✓		✓
	Marin/Sonoma MVCD		✓	✓			
Mono	Mono County Health Department		✓	✓	✓		
Monterey	Monterey County Health Department		✓	✓	✓		
Nevada	Nevada County Department County Dept of Agriculture		✓	✓			
	Nevada County Environmental Health		✓	✓	✓		✓
Placer	Placer County Environmental Health		✓	✓			
Riverside	Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District	✓	✓	✓			
Sacramento	Sacramento County DHHS		✓	✓			
San Benito	San Benito County Environmental Health Services		✓		✓		
San Bernardino	San Bernardino County Vector Control Program	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	West Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District	✓	✓	✓	✓		
San Diego	San Diego County Environmental Health		✓	✓	✓		✓
San Francisco	San Francisco Dept. of Public Health.- Env. Health	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
San Joaquin	Public Health Services		✓	✓			
	San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department		✓	✓	✓		✓
San Luis Obispo	Environmental Health Services			✓	✓		
San Mateo	San Mateo County Mosquito & Vector Control District	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	San Mateo Environmental Health	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Santa Barbara	Environmental Health Services	✓	✓	✓			
	Mosquito and Vector Management District of Santa Barbara County		✓	✓	✓		
Santa Clara	Santa Clara County Vector Control District		✓	✓			
Santa Cruz	Environmental Health Services, Health Services Agency	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Santa Cruz County Mosquito and Vector Control	✓	✓	✓			
Sierra	Sierra County Health Department						
Siskiyou	Siskiyou County Public Health & Community Development		✓		✓		
Solano	Solano County Department of Resource Management		✓		✓		✓
Sonoma	Marin/Sonoma MVCD		✓	✓			
Sutter	Community Services Department				✓		
Tehama	Department of Environmental Health		✓	✓			
Trinity	Trinity County Environmental Health		✓	✓			
Ventura	Ventura County Environmental Health	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Yuba	Yuba County Environmental Health Dept.	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

Table 2. Bed Bug Services Provided to Hotels and Multifamily (>5 units) Dwellings in 39 Counties, California, 2011

County	Domicile type	Provide general information (website, literature)	Track reports	Refer to private pest control	Conduct general inspections	Conduct inspections (part of the licensing procedure)	Enforcement actions against property owners	Mediate disputes between tenants and owners
Alameda ¹²³⁴	Hotels	✓		✓	✓	✓		
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Alpine ¹²³	Hotels				✓			
	Multifamily (> 5 units)				✓			
Amador ¹²⁴	Hotels	✓	✓	✓				
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓	✓	✓				
Butte ¹²³⁴	Hotels	✓		✓				
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓		✓				
Colusa	Hotels			✓				
	Multifamily (> 5 units)			✓				
Fresno ¹²³⁴	Hotels	✓	✓	✓	✓			
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Glenn ¹	Hotels	✓		✓				
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓		✓				
Humboldt ¹²⁴	Hotels	✓	✓	✓				
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓	✓	✓				
Imperial ¹²³	Hotels	✓		✓	✓			✓
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓		✓	✓			✓
Inyo	Hotels	✓		✓	✓			
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓		✓	✓			
Kern ¹²³⁴	Hotels		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Multifamily (> 5 units)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Kings ¹	Hotels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Los Angeles ¹²³⁴	Hotels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Marin ¹²	Hotels	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Mono ¹	Hotels	✓		✓				
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓		✓				
Monterey ¹	Hotels	✓			✓		✓	
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓			✓		✓	✓
Nevada ¹²³⁴	Hotels	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Placer ¹²⁴	Hotels	✓		✓				
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓		✓				
Riverside ¹²³	Hotels	✓	✓	✓				
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓	✓	✓				
Sacramento ¹²³⁴	Hotels				✓			
	Multifamily (> 5 units)				✓			
San Benito ²⁴	Hotels			✓	✓			
	Multifamily (> 5 units)			✓	✓			
San Bernardino ¹²³⁴	Hotels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
San Diego	Hotels	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
San Francisco ¹²³⁴	Hotels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
San Joaquin ¹²³⁴	Hotels	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
San Luis Obispo ¹²³⁴	Hotels	✓		✓	✓			
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓		✓	✓			
San Mateo ¹²³⁴	Hotels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Santa Barbara ¹²³⁴	Hotels	✓		✓	✓			
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓		✓	✓			
Santa Clara ¹²³⁴	Hotels			✓				
	Multifamily (> 5 units)			✓				
Santa Cruz ¹²³⁴	Hotels	✓	✓	✓				
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Sierra ¹²³⁴	Hotels		✓	✓	✓			
	Multifamily (> 5 units)		✓	✓	✓			
Siskiyou	Hotels	✓						
Solano	Hotels				✓	✓	✓	
Sonoma ¹	Hotels	✓		✓				
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓		✓				
Sutter	N/A							
Tehama	Hotels			✓				
	Multifamily (> 5 units)			✓				
Trinity ¹²³	Hotels							
	Multifamily (> 5 units)							
Ventura ²⁴	Hotels	✓	✓	✓	✓			
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Yuba	Hotels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Multifamily (> 5 units)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Superscript indicates additional services to: 1=single family home, 2= school, 3=business, 4=homeless shelter

Table 3. Public Agency Contact List for Bed Bug Issues for 32 Local Jurisdictions, California, 2011

County	Agency Name	Phone Number
Alameda	Alameda County Vector Control Services District	(510) 567-6800
Alpine	Alpine County Environmental Health	(530) 694-2235
Butte	Butte County MVCD	(530) 533-6038
Contra Costa	Contra Costa County Health Department	(925) 313-6712
Glenn	Glenn County Environmental Health	(530) 934-6102
Humboldt	Humboldt County Division of Environmental Health	(707) 445-6215
Imperial	Imperial County EHS	(760) 482-4438
Kern	Kern County Environmental Health Division	(661) 321-3000
Kings	Kings County Environmental Health Services	(559) 584-1411
Los Angeles	City of Long Beach	(562) 570-4170
	Los Angeles County Public Health	(888) 700-9995
Marin	Marin County Environmental Health Services	(415) 499-6916
	Marin/Sonoma MVCD	(707) 285-2200
Monterey	Monterey County Health Department	(831) 647-7654
Nevada	Nevada County Department County Dept of Agriculture	(530) 265-1222
Orange	OCVCD	(714) 971-2421
Riverside	Riverside Co. Dept. of Environmental Health - Vector	(951) 358-5172
San Bernardino	San Bernardino County Vector Control Program	(909) 388-4600
San Francisco	San Francisco Dept. of Public Health.- Env. Health	(415) 252-3931
San Joaquin	San Joaquin County Environmental Health Department	(209) 468-3420
San Luis Obispo	Environmental Health Services	(805) 781-5544
San Mateo	San Mateo County Mosquito & Vector Control District	(650) 344-8592
	San Mateo Environmental Health	(650) 372-6200
Santa Barbara	Mosquito and Vector Management District of Santa Barbara County	(805) 969-5050
Santa Clara	Santa Clara County Vector Control District	(408) 918-4770
Santa Cruz	Environmental Health Services, Health Services Agency	(831) 454-2022
	Santa Cruz County Mosquito and Vector Control	(831) 454-2590
Sierra	Sierra County Health Department	(530) 993-6716
Sonoma	Marin/Sonoma MVCD	(707) 285-2200
Trinity	Trinity County Environmental Health	(530) 623-1459
Tulare	Delta Vector Control District	(559) 686-6628
Ventura	Ventura County Environmental Health	(805) 654-2813
Yuba	Yuba County Environmental Health Dept.	(530) 749-5450

Appendix A: Codes Cited in Response to Bed Bug Infestations

California Health and Safety Code

DIVISION 13. HOUSING

PART 1.5. REGULATION OF BUILDINGS USED FOR HUMAN HABITATION

CHAPTER 2. RULES AND REGULATIONS

Section 17920.3. Any building or portion thereof including any dwelling unit, guestroom or suite of rooms, or the premises on which the same is located, in which there exists any of the following listed conditions to an extent that endangers the life, limb, health, property, safety, or welfare of the public or the occupants thereof shall be deemed and hereby is declared to be a substandard building:

(a) Inadequate sanitation shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(12) Infestation of insects, vermin, or rodents as determined by the health officer.

California Code of Regulations

TITLE 25. Housing and Community Development

DIVISION 1, CHAPTER 1, SUBCHAPTER 1

Article 5. Existing Buildings

Section 40: Bedding

In every apartment house or hotel subject to this part, held out for rent and furnished with a bed and bedding, every part of every bed, including the mattress, sheets, blankets, and bedding shall be kept in a clean, dry and sanitary condition, free from filth, urine, or other foul matter, and from the infection of lice, bedbugs, or other insects. The bed linen in a hotel shall be changed before a new guest occupies the bed. In every dwelling unit where linen is furnished, the linen shall be changed before a new guest occupies the dwelling unit.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 17003.5, 17921, 17922, 50061.5, and 50559, Health and Safety Code. Reference: Sections 17920.3 and 17922, Health and Safety Code.

The section above is the pertinent part of the 1997 Uniform Housing Code (International Conference of Building Officials//Uniform Housing Code), which was incorporated into California State regulations by total adoption.

Uniform Housing Code (1997 edition):

<http://www.codepublishing.com/ca/Dublin/Dublin07/Dublin0748.html>

Chapter 7.48

Section 7.48.080

Chapter 5 Sanitation – Added

Section 505.9 Bedding

505.9 Bedding. In every apartment house or hotel every part of every bed, including the mattress, sheets, blankets, and bedding shall be kept in a clean, dry and sanitary condition, free from filth, urine, or other foul matter; and from infection of lice, bed-bugs, or other insects. The bed linen shall be changed before a new guest occupies the dwelling unit.