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“OUR STUDENTS ARE OUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY”

March 20, 2019

Dear Magdalena Parent or Guardian:

We have found bed bugs in several classrooms. We are not sure where it has come from and need to take precautions. The bugs found were fully mature and had recently feasted.

We have checked Magdalena School thoroughly and that the bugs were transferred from students' backpack/clothing.

The school has put traps in all classrooms, but we have not captured any and we are not seeing any signs of infestations. **We need to have you check your home and your child's belongings.** The risk is very slight, but sometimes a few bed bugs can hitchhike to school from the home by hiding in clothing or a backpack. For the safety of other homes and **prevention** of getting bed bugs please review this letter and contact myself or Nurse Holly Hagy if you have any questions.

Bed bugs are not from a clean or dirty house nor do they prefer high income or low-income families. They are nondiscriminatory and will invade any and every home.

Below are steps you can take that will help reduce the risk of bed bugs hitchhiking to the school or back to your home.

1. Please check all belongings coming to school.
2. Please keep all clothes, shoes, backpacks, lunch boxes, coats, homework, books and laptops away from beds and upholstered furniture.
3. Any items that must be stored near beds or other furniture should be placed in a clear plastic bin or plastic bag until the student needs to take them outside the home.
4. If you suspect that these items have been in contact with beds or other furniture, **please place these items in a dryer on medium-high heat for at least 20 minutes.** Also, items can be laundered by washing and drying on the hottest settings the fabric can safely withstand.
5. Please check sleeping areas along the seams and if bugs are found, please use appropriate care to rid them.
6. Have students take clothing/backpacks off immediately after school, transfer to washing machine and follow step 4.

If you have any difficulties with these steps, please let us know. We will be discretely conducting our own check of items that are brought to school. This check will be accomplished without interruption to your child's education.

Please don't hesitate to contact the school nurse or myself with any concerns you may have. Here is her information: Holly Hagy, BSN-RN, School Nurse, 575-854-8030. The students have asked if this will delay school at all and the answer is no. Bed bugs are a difficult pest and a nuisance, but they are not known to transfer diseases.

It is extremely important that you check your house and talk to your children about how to contain the problem. **These are preventative measures.**

Thank you,

Leslie Clark
K-12 Principal
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Bed Bug Myths

Myth: You can't see a bed bug.

Reality: You should be able to see adult bed bugs, nymphs and eggs with your naked eye.

Myth: Bed bugs live in dirty places.

Reality: Bed bugs are not attracted to dirt and grime; they are attracted to warmth, blood and carbon dioxide. However, clutter offers more hiding spots.

Myth: Bed bugs transmit diseases.

Reality: There have been no cases or studies that indicate bed bugs transmit diseases between humans.

Myth: Bed bugs are not a public health pest.

Reality: Bed bugs are a public health pest. We coordinated with CDC and USDA to identify pests of public health importance and issued a Pesticide Registration Notice that listed [pests of significant public health importance](#). Bed bugs are on this list. In 2009, EPA and CDC collaborated on a [joint statement to highlight the public health impacts of bed bugs](#).

Myth: Bed bugs won't come out if the room is brightly lit.

Reality: While bed bugs prefer darkness, keeping the light on at night won't deter these pests from biting you.

Myth: Pesticide applications alone will easily eliminate bed bug infestations.

Reality: Bed bug control can only be maintained through a treatment strategy that includes a variety of techniques plus careful attention to monitoring. Proper use of pesticides may be part of the strategy, but will not by itself eliminate bed bugs. In addition, bed bug populations in different areas of the country have developed resistance to the ways many pesticides work to kill pests. If you're dealing with a resistant population, some products and application methods may not work. It is a good idea to consult a qualified pest management professional if you have bed bugs in your home.

Myth: EPA has funding available for people who need help with controlling bed bugs.

Reality: Unfortunately, EPA does not have funding available to help people with controlling bed bugs. Our roles in the bed bug issue are to:

evaluate pesticides to ensure that when they are used according to label directions they are effective and will not harm people, non-target species or the environment, and

work with other federal agencies to provide reliable information about bed bugs and their control.

From: <https://www.epa.gov/bedbugs/bed-bug-myths>