**LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION**

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It is obvious to everyone who has encountered a bedbug, that one bedbug – is one too many! However, as a professional in the business of trying to eliminate them, there is much more than just their presence to consider. As mentioned in our last newsletter submission – we plan to have an ongoing segment called “ Bo Nose” to answer any questions that come our way regarding bedbug detection or associated issues. Bo is our beagle that was trained to seek out bedbugs much like a bomb or narcotics dog – he is the cornerstone of our business. Bo is in the trenches and ‘nose” much more than you would think! It seems appropriate that he answer a question that we hear often relating to location…. “

If a person reports finding a bedbug (or many) on a mattress, we can assume, to some degree, that the population is somewhat established. When a bedbug finds its way into your home, it has a few ways of getting there; either on your person or belongings or through the walls from an adjacent unit. With that being said, a bedbug found along the baseboard may suggest migration from the adjoining room. If a bedbug is found on a chair or couch – there are a few possibilities; either it is a new introduction brought in by chance by a guest or by the tenant themselves, or could indicate an established population due to the resident using the furniture to sleep on or for the bulk of their leisure activities. Bedbugs on mattresses or living room furniture may indicate an established and happily fed population.

Conversely, if a bug is found in the bathroom – we may ask additional questions as there is the possibility that it is a bedbug brought in from another room in the house on the resident themselves– however there is an alternative answer that many people don’t even know about. There is an insect that looks identical to a bedbug to the naked eye, but under a microscope can be identified as a “bat bug”. Their behavior is similar; however their primary host is a bat. If that is the case – control and remediation should be approached in a completely different way. Certainly a well-established population of bedbugs can find themselves anywhere and in any room (including a bathroom) so locating where they all are can indicate the length of establishment, guide methods of control and assure the property owner and resident that measure taken will be appropriate.

*Dakota Bedbug Detection, LLC* will inspect all areas needed, but will start in living areas and bedrooms as this is the most likely environment for a new and isolated population, however – knowing more about their biology, life cycle and host preference will help us determine if we bring the dog through ‘Non-traditional’ rooms and seek out alternative areas. There is no template for bedbug control. They can find their way into our lives in a million ways, controlling them may take several methods and understanding that there is not a black and white answer to getting rid of them is important. It is important to consider the lifestyle of the resident, the home layout and design, the education level of the resident as well as the resources available before making a plan to get rid of them. We want property owners and tenants to feel assured that we have looked at the bigger picture before recommendations are given. It is our goal to take all things into consideration and find the best possible way to help the property owner or tenant in achieving the common goal – getting rid of the bedbugs altogether!

*Dakota Bedbug Detection, LLC* is honored to have been invited to be the featured at the September SDMHA meeting. We plan to discuss the most cost effective and accurate control method available – PREVENTION! Don’t miss this discussion as it will hopefully give you some guidance in decision making processes surrounding your properties and ways to work through this issue with your tenants.