



Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department

Our role in public health is to:

PROMOTE community-wide wellness, preparedness, & self-sufficiency;

PREVENT illness, injury, & disease; and

PROTECT the community from infectious diseases, environmental hazards, & epidemics



Bed Bugs

Public Health and Human Services Subcommittee

David Lopez, Chief Sanitarian

August 20, 2013

Resurgence of Bed Bugs

- Bed bugs have been common in U.S. history. Bed bug populations dropped during the mid-20th century, but the U.S. is one of many countries experiencing a resurgence in bed bugs.
- Experts suspect the resurgence is due to:
 - increased resistance of bed bugs to pesticides;
 - greater international and domestic travel; and,
 - lack of knowledge re: control of bed bugs due to their prolonged absence.

The **Environmental Health Services Division** investigates citizen complaints re: bed bugs in the City of Austin where “sleeping accommodations are offered to the public”; e.g., hotels/motels, boarding homes, etc.



Number of Bed Bug Complaints Received by EHSD by Calendar Year



<u>Year</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
# of Complaints	3	5	12	11

Texas Health & Safety Code Chapter 341

- **§341.011(10)** defines the presence of ectoparasites, including bedbugs, lice, and mites, suspected to be disease carriers in a place in which sleeping accommodations are offered to the public as a “Nuisance”.
- **§341.012 mandates:**
 - (a) A person shall abate a public health nuisance existing in a place the person possesses;
 - (b) A local health authority shall issue a written notice to any responsible party to abate the nuisance.
 - (c) The notice must designate a reasonable time within which the nuisance must be abated.
 - (d) The local health authority shall file legal action if the nuisance is not abated within the time specified by the notice.

EHSD Enforcement Procedures to Abate Bed Bugs

A written Notice of Violation (NOV) is issued to the operator requiring them to:

- contract with a licensed pest management professional (PMP) and provide EHSD a copy of the PMP's inspection report and/or invoice by date specified on NOV;
- institute an Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPMP) designed by the PMP and provide copy to tenants; and,
- provide EHSD copy of IPMP by date specified on NOV.

Challenges to Abatement

- Bed bugs are not known to transmit disease, but can cause negative physical/mental health and economic consequences.
- Locating bugs for direct application of treatment (“bug bombs” do not work).
- Infestation may be apparent only when severe condition exists.
- Treatment costs are high.
- Difficult to maintain pest free environment with transient populations.
- Pesticide resistance/tolerance.
- Health risks associated with misuse of pesticides.

HHSD Bed Bug Sub-Committee

- **Scott Joslove**, Texas Hotel & Lodging Association (possibly 2 others)
- **Kathy Starks**, Austin Tenants Council
- **Allen Brown**, with ABC Home & Commercial Services (pest control)
- **Paul Tomasovic**, COA Code Compliance Department
- **Rachel Fischer**, Austin Apartment Association (possibly 2 others)
- **Katie Moore**, TX DSHS, General Sanitation

Questions?
