

Appendix – Transcript

SPEAKER	TITLE: BED BUGS	TIME
Lydia	Bed bugs. Those two words can just set the heart a pounding and make you just feel a little itchy. Turns out with just cause here in Edmonton.	0:00
Rick	In a recent survey of local landlords, 80% said they've dealt with the pest in the past five years. But the problem's not confined to apartment buildings. Sandra Hamilton wants you to know what to look for where you live. She's a public health inspector with Alberta Health Services and she joins us now. Good morning.	0:09
Sandra	Good morning.	0:26
Rick	Now you've brought some friends with you.	0:27
Sandra	Yes.	0:28
Rick	What am I, what am I looking at?	0:29
Sandra	They're dead bed bugs that have been collected in an apartment here in the city.	0:31
Rick	They're not, they're not very big. Lydia, are you okay? You doing alright?	0:35
Lydia	Yeah, I'm good. Heart's pounding. I'm a little sweaty. I'm surprised at how big they are.	0:41
Sandra	The adults are about the size of an apple seed. The brand new hatched bed bugs are barely visible. They're about the size of the head of a pin. But the adults are quite easy to find.	0:45
Lydia	Both equally bad, though?	0:57
Sandra	Yes. Yeah.	0:59
Rick	And so let's talk about how we can be preventative about this. How do we, first of all, inspect our home or our apartment suite for them?	1:00
Sandra	I think everybody should learn what they look like. And I think everybody should be keeping an eye on their living quarters. And that is as easy as inspecting your mattress every time you change your sheets. And if you know, mostly what you will see in an early infestation is little black dots that look like a felt pen has made a dot on something and its run around the edges.	1:08
Rick	That's their excrement?	1:32
Sandra	And that's their excrement yeah. It tends to build up into smears because they nest together in clumps. But if you know, if you look for those little black dots that um sort of don't brush away, you can wash them away - then you know you've probably got bed bugs. They're very fast moving away from light. They like to hide in the dark. So you know, you need to look in dark places. Flashlight helps.	1:33
Rick	And if you see this, do you...is your mattress basically done? Throw it out?	2:02
Sandra	No, no. We're really encouraging people not to throw things away unless the pest control company advises them to. People are often throwing away the wrong things. If a mattress is in good condition, then it can be vacuumed to get rid of most of the bed bugs and then you can encase it. So you can buy a cover for it that is six sided cover with a zip and it should say "bed bug proof cover" on the packaging.	2:06

Rick	Okay	2:32
Sandra	Okay? And bed bugs don't chew holes in things. So if you put a cover on and there's a couple of bed bugs inside there, they're eventually going to die. And the covers are smooth on the outside.	2:33
Rick	I got bit by a bed bug. I'm not, I'm not afraid to admit it. Cause I think there's a lot of stigma. People think "ugh, you're filthy, you're unhygienic" and whatnot. It was a pillow belonging to a friend who lived at another suite. It transported, you know. It was a passenger as it were, and so I guess pillows too, we should be looking at as well.	2:44
Sandra	Anything.	3:04
Rick	How quickly can bed bugs move from one spot to infesting the whole house. Cause I've hear they go inside books, they go inside pieces of wood and whatnot.	3:05
Sandra	They go inside...well they're looking for dark hiding places. Um, to actually multiply to the point where you have a major infestation, I think it's a minimum of about three months. So you take one home, it lays a few eggs. You know a well-fed bed bug in an ideal environment will lay two to three eggs a day. But the females stop laying eggs if they don't feed every ten days. So you know, if there's someplace where it's not easy to get a meal, then they stop laying eggs. They prefer to feed in the early hours of the morning. So they are, you know, less likely to multiply in office buildings where there's no-one to eat at three o'clock in the morning. So you know, they'll come out, look for a meal and, you know, dehydrate.	3:12
Lydia	And sometimes the wound from a bed bug bite doesn't show up for a while, is that right?	3:55
Sandra	Yes, some people react within a couple of hours, some people react within days, and some people don't react at all. I've had some interesting conversations with "They bite me but they don't bite her." Um, the truth is they, you react, she doesn't.	4:00
Rick	Oh, that's what it is. Because we were speaking before this show about how they seem to prefer one person over the other, but you're saying it's just asymptomatic in the case of one.	4:15
Sandra	Yeah.	4:23
Rick	Oh wow, okay so how big is the problem? We've talked about this survey, four out of five in the last five year uh-...	4:24
Sandra	Well, the survey was done over a year ago, and it was a voluntary survey. So it's probably skewed in favour of the landlords who had dealt with bed bugs. Because if you're going to fill out a two-page questionnaire and you've never dealt with them you probably think it's a minor problem you don't have to deal with, but I don't think the problem has got any less. We have had less complaints in the last year. Our number of complaints have increased but the number of complaints that say bed bugs has decreased. But we're still getting an awful lot of phone calls from people looking for information. I think a lot of people, especially you know landlords and tenants in apartment buildings are more educated than they were. So the treatment happens faster and people are more aware of what they should be doing.	4:30
Rick	When it comes to their mobility, are they typically confined to one suite or is it very easy for them to move within a building?	5:15

Sandra	It's very easy for them to move within a building. It depends on the building. Like a concrete and steel building has less crevices in the walls than you know, 3-floor walk up that's made of 2 X 4s and drywall. So they, underneath baseboards is a favourite hiding place. So once they get in the wall cavity, they can go in both directions.	5:21
Rick	What are some of the ways you're suggesting and resources you're offering in this regard?	5:41
Sandra	Well, resources we're offering is advice and information. The vacuuming and discarding your vacuum cleaner bag. Or at least taking it out of the vacuum cleaner and storing it in, you know, plastic bag in the freezer. Uh, the dryer is probably your best tool, because heat kills all stages of bed bugs. All your bedding should go in the dryer once a week if you're dealing with bed bugs. So that's you're bedspread, you know, anything.	5:44
Rick	Thank you so much for coming in. I understand there is a booklet available through your department so...	6:11
Sandra	Uh, you can find it at eaa.ab.ca it's the Edmonton Apartment Association site and they represented the landlords on the committee that put this booklet together.	6:15
Rick	Thank you so much for coming in.	6:29
Sandra	You're welcome.	6:30
Rick	and talking about this uh... this subject.	6:31
Lydia	Very educational. Thank you.	6:36