

# PLAYING IT **SAFE**

Be safe and healthy on the job with these helpful tips provided by Peabody Insurance Agency.

## Watch for Pests in the Office

*How to recognize and deal with infestations*

Bedbugs are not limited to the bedroom. These apple-seed-sized pests travel on clothes or possessions, making it easy for infestations to spread, for example, from a hotel to an office. The bugs are generally found in upholstered furniture, carpet, cracks and crevices. They do not spread disease, but they do bite, causing large, itchy skin welts. It is important that you make your best effort to discover infestations in the office before they affect you and your co-workers. Follow these guidelines both for recognizing infestations and so can take prompt action.

### **Know How to Identify Infestations**

Whether you are at home, on the road or in the office, keep an eye out for living and dead bugs, small bloodstains from crushed bugs or dark spots from their droppings. You will often find these traces on linens and curtains, in seams of upholstered furniture or hiding in crevices and cracks.

Another sign of infestation is the bites themselves. Symptoms range from nothing at all to large, swollen welts. Although some people don't have a reaction to bed bug bites, those that do may experience a considerable amount of pain. Bites can appear as small, irritated areas or large, itchy welts.

### **What to Do When You See Them**

If you spot any of these signs of infestation, notify your supervisor or the appropriate authority immediately. If you are away from the office, put your clothes and other items (luggage, shoes, etc.) in

a dryer at the highest setting for at least an hour to ensure you will not spread the infestation when you return. Stay calm, and rest assured that you are not at risk of disease. A bed bug infestation is generally not a result of improper hygiene, but rather of high-traffic areas and international travel.

### **Pesticides**

When we discover an infestation, we may apply pesticide to the area to be sure we've gotten rid of all the bugs. Keep out of places that have had a pesticide application – the chemical can be harmful to your health. The exterminator or your supervisor will advise you when it is safe to enter. If you are not sure whether it is safe to enter a room, check with a supervisor.

### **Stay in Touch**

If you have any questions or doubts about insect infestations, do not hesitate to contact your supervisor. Your safety is our first priority at .



### **Where to Look**

Bedbugs are drawn to warmth, and can be found just about anywhere in an office, including chairs, carpeting, cubicle walls and bookshelves. They prefer fabrics and wood, but are able to survive almost anywhere. Know the signs and symptoms of infestations to catch them early.

