Dear MU student,

Although bedbugs are an unpleasant topic, we want you to be aware of what to do if bedbugs are found in your living area and, most importantly, how to reduce the likelihood of getting bedbugs. This brochure is designed to answer some of the most common questions regarding bedbugs. Although it may be a little difficult to get through, trust us when we say you’ll be glad you’ve read it.

Please know that the MU Department of Residential Life and the Department of Environmental Health and Safety are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for students living on campus. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions!

— The Department of Residential Life
Should I be concerned about bedbugs in my living area?
> Bedbugs have become a cause for concern, though most inquiries on the MU campus have not turned out to be bedbugs. Students should learn about the warning signs and when to contact a member of Residential Life staff.

What is a bedbug?
> Bedbugs are small, wingless, flattened insects that feed solely on the blood of animals. They range in color from brownish red to tan depending on their stage of maturity. Bedbugs do not fly, but move quickly over floors, walls, ceilings and other surfaces.

Where do bedbugs live?
> They live in mattresses, box springs, headboards and behind hanging pictures. Bedbugs thrive in crevices and can live under beds, in sofas, under the carpet or in the dresser.

What are the signs?
> Bedbugs are marked by dark spotting and staining as a result of the bugs’ excrement trail. You will also be able to see eggs and eggshells, molted skins of maturing bugs and the bugs themselves. Another sign is rusty or reddish spots on the sheets, mattresses or walls caused by blood from the bugs. If there is a heavy infestation, a musty odor is usually detectable.

Should I be concerned about bites?
> Bedbugs are active during the night, thus they tend to bite humans while they are sleeping.

> They feed by piercing the skin and drawing blood, which can result in an itchy red welt or localized swelling.
> Bedbugs only feed off bare skin, unlike chiggers or fleas. Marks frequently appear in clusters; however, they can sometimes appear as a single mark.

Can they transmit disease?
> Although bedbugs acquire human disease organisms during feeding, there are no known cases of bedbugs transmitting disease to humans. The only medical result from bedbugs is an irritating itch or allergic reaction at the bite site.

How do you get bedbugs?
> Bedbugs are found on beds and furniture and can be easily transported in/on luggage and clothing after traveling.
> High turnover of occupants in places such as apartments or hotels also allow bedbugs to be transmitted easily.
> Another cause of bedbugs is the use of second-hand furniture that has not been properly inspected.

How do you treat bedbug infestations?
> Pest control professionals will perform a thorough inspection of the living area. Possible treatment methods include low-odor sprays, dusts and aerosols as well as heat (sustained high temperatures for about 1 hour). Heat treatment kills bedbugs in all stages of development and allows occupants to return to the space within hours of treatment.

How can I reduce the likelihood of getting bedbugs?
> Here are some tips to help you avoid bedbugs in your living area:
  ■ Inspect any second-hand furniture or accessories before you bring them in.
  ■ If you’ve been traveling, check luggage, clothing and bedding after trips.
  ■ Clean up and reduce clutter to eliminate hiding spaces.
  ■ Keep rooms clean and tidy. Vacuum crevices and upholstery regularly.
  ■ Pull beds away from wall or other furniture.
  ■ Tuck in sheets to avoid contact with floors or walls.

> Note: The presence of bedbugs is not due to poor hygiene.

If I suspect bedbugs, what should I do?
> If you live in the residence halls, immediately contact your Hall Coordinator. He or she will determine the proper course of action.
> If you live in the University Student Apartments, immediately contact Residential Life Maintenance at 573-882-7211.