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City Room



July 27, 2010, 4:02 PM

Bedbugs II: The City Strikes Back!

By J. DAVID GOODMAN

By all accounts, the bedbugs are swarming our defenses.

Now after months of planning and, one can only assume, military-campaign-like preparation, the city is ready to release its counterattack strategy on Wednesday at 2 p.m. on the steps of City Hall.



Piotr Naskrecki/CDC, via Reuters

“If fully implemented, the recommendations could reverse the current increase in bedbug activity and actually improve our situation,” Gil Bloom, president of Standard Pest Management, [told Brick Underground](#).

Mr. Bloom, one of 10 members of the mayor’s Bedbug Advisory Board [created last year](#), also provided the blog with some of the key points of the 39-page report, which is said to include: 1) a team to coordinate bedbug control efforts; 2) a “Bedbug Academy” for building managers; 3) an online resource of bedbug facts, checked by the city (presumably to counter user-generated sources of information like [Bedbugregistry.com](#)); 4) better

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guidelines for disposing of infested furniture and clothes, and better public education about how to handle such items; and 5) higher priority for bedbugs in housing court.

Paying for the effort may pose a problem, as Mr. Bloom acknowledged to Brick Underground. “There are many obstacles, including misinformation, unwarranted stigma and fear, and cost factors,” he said. “But if these obstacles are not overcome, the situation will get worse, and the bedbugs will just laugh.”

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1 2 Next »

1. July 27, 2010 4:06 pm New Yorkers will be asked to turn their thermostats to 140 degrees and vacate their homes for two weeks.

[Link](#)

— *This should work.*

2. July 27, 2010 4:10 pm “...higher priority for bedbugs in housing court.”

[Link](#)

Is this, like, if the bedbugs sue the landlords for trying to kill them?

— *Bedbugs don't laugh, they bite.*

3. July 27, 2010 4:17 pm In a complete turnaround from my usual stance on extermination projects, I unhesitatingly support the attempted extermination of bedbugs. I'm karmically secure in the knowledge that nothing we could ever do would wipe them out completely.

[Link](#)

If you're personally plagued by bedbugs, and apparently a lot of New Yorkers are, my advice is to get a hammock. Don't sleep in your bed for a while (no idea how long but a month would probably work), and the bedbugs will starve. Note that bedbugs have not yet learned how to effectively

Treatment. NY.
www.nybedbugdogs.com

[Kill Bed Bugs Fast](#)

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www.Bed-Bug.net

Comments of the Moment

“ If a commenter doesn't have anything to say, then they shouldn't be commenting!”

— Perley J. Thibodeau
[Look Building Is Named a Landmark](#)

“ Governor Paterson dodged a bullet. There was impropriety (i.e., inappropriate conduct”) that could have easily morphed into obstruction of justice. Very stupid conduct, even if not found to be illegal.”

— Eugene Gorin
[Ex-Judge Recommends No Charges Against Paterson](#)

“ When my grandmother was a girl in Iowa, they put each leg of their metal bedstead in a saucer of kerosene. The bedbugs could not get into the bed to bite them. Just don't light a match.”

— mopar
[Bedbugs II: The City Strikes Back!](#)

“ We have lowered our rate of intercourse to four times a week.”

— manrico
[Tell Us How the Heat Has Changed Your Life](#)

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NEW NYC APP
[The Scoop](#)

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invade hammocks.

— Dan Stackhouse

4. July 27, 2010
4:26 pm

“But if these obstacles are not overcome, the situation will get worse, and the bedbugs will just laugh.” Bloom

[Link](#)

They'll be feeding off us, too. Nothing wrong with eating and having a good time.

However, my ironclad opinion is that the only good bedbug is a dead one. And we'll go nuclear to get rid of them if we have to.

— *blacklight*

5. July 27, 2010
6:06 pm

what is the sound of bedbugs laughing? I think it is like hummingbirds here in Ca. — always sound like the world's smallest violin..

[Link](#)

— *trace*

6. July 27, 2010
6:08 pm

lol Blacklight, no reason to go nuclear. As poster #1 states, simply letting our infected areas reach 140 degrees for a week would do it. Plus, I hate to tell you, but bedbugs do a lot better in radioactive environments than we do.

[Link](#)

When y'all get bored of fighting bedbugs you can get back to head lice, I think they're basically the same critter.

— Dan Stackhouse

7. July 27, 2010
6:26 pm

There are insecticides/pesticides in use in other parts of the US and throughout the world, but not in NY... which do a pretty credible job if killing off the bedbugs. But not in NYC.

[Link](#)

— *dannyb*

8. July 27, 2010
7:25 pm

We also have them in Florida but the ones down here have WINGS.

[Link](#)

So much 4 the hammock idea.(God or satan)? I'll take some lambs blood for my doors please. Oh, Wait, too late



An insider's guide to what to eat, drink and do in New York, compiled by the staff of The New York Times for your iPhone.

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News Analysis: Paterson and Cuomo Both Avoid the Worst Case



With Gov. David A. Paterson of New York found not to have committed a crime, Attorney General Andrew M. Cuomo, who hopes to succeed him, also stands to benefit.

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City Room® is a news blog of live reporting, features and reader conversations about New York City [\[Highlights\]](#). Reader

— Roger

9. July 27, 2010 7:32 pm Just another way for bloomberg to bleed NYC dry.

[Link](#)

— carl

10. July 27, 2010 7:42 pm Did the Bed Bugs carry you away? LOL

[Link](#)

— Roger

11. July 27, 2010 7:52 pm October 14, 2008 |Article
Bedbugs
Bedbugs are flat and wingless insects about 0.25 in (0.64 cm) long. Like mosquitoes, they feed on blood from animals or people. The bugs range in color from almost white to brown. They turn rusty red after feeding.

[Link](#)

TAGS: Allergies, Health and Medical Professionals, Invasive Species, Furniture, Hotels and Accommodations

Roger

— Roger

12. July 27, 2010 7:56 pm And yes, these in Florida do have winks.

[Link](#)

Roger

— Roger

13. July 27, 2010 7:57 pm OppS, I meant Wings. Or, Maybe both. LOL

[Link](#)

Roger

— Roger

14. July 27, 2010 9:15 pm Bedbugs with wings, are not bedbugs. The hammock idea? A month? They can live over full 12 months without a blood meal. Additionally the bugs are attracted to co2 we emmit so if the hammock has strings the bug will crawl down them...to you. 140 degrees? Yea that would do the trick if a. we controlled our thermostats and b. There were no "hiding" places. Since bedbugs can fit anywhere this is only a temporary solution...if any at all.

[Link](#)

comments are moderated [Details]. Send questions, suggestions or complaints by e-mail for prompt attention.

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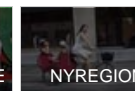
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Good news: They don't actually "harm" us. But ask anyone with bedbugs if that is consolation.

— Clarification

15. July 27, 2010
10:12 pm

[Link](#)

As someone who is dealing with post-traumatic stress from a bedbug infestation that I hope to G*d is over...I would nuke my apartment and bathe it in napalm if I thought I would never see another bedbug. The whole situation has been pure and utter hell.

— S. Peoples

16. July 27, 2010
10:12 pm

[Link](#)

...and I welcome solid info from the City!

— S. Peoples

17. July 27, 2010
10:46 pm

[Link](#)

Unwarranted fear?

Is there anything remotely encouraging about having micro-vampires dining on your blood at night?

Sheesh!

— Xavier

18. July 27, 2010
11:05 pm

[Link](#)

@dannyyb and anyone who knows: About the chemicals used elsewhere: but "not NYC": what are these chemicals? What are their commercial names? Where, if at all, can one buy DDT over the internet (perhaps overseas)? I have clear memories of serious baseboard spraying for roaches etc. growing up in Texas which must have contained all kinds of horrible stuff—which we could really use right now as a preventive. I think I picked up one in a Manhattan movie theater last week, and another in a concert hall—strip/bag/heat-kill/vac protocols seemed to have held them off (plus see below), but if you leave your apartment you're exposed again.

Also, while on the road for several weeks this summer I found that (in addition to following all the precautions about bringing ANYTHING back into our apt before de-bedbugging it 1st) that that weird skin-memory of recent bites (itching but also sometimes crawling feelings) is alleviated immediately with a soaking application of the astringent Sea Breeze, whether on cotton balls (tiny areas)

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- Municipal Art Society
- New York Today
- Nonsense NYC
- nyc.is
- onNYTurf
- outside.in: New York
- Radaronline
- Smith
- The Lede
- The Medium
- The New Yorker
- Young Manhattanite

- Newark06 (Archive)
- noLandGrab
- polit.bureau
- Politico
- Politics on the Hudson
- Public Advocate's Corner

or a soaked washcloth (for wider coverage). I found that this eliminated the itchy-they're-back sensations and made it possible to determine whether I was really still being bitten or not afterwards. It also seriously cuts back on the anxiety/trauma/fear stuff associated with this experience.

I want my DDT!

— CathyNYC

19. July 27, 2010
11:09 pm

[Link](#)

One other thing on the re-exposure question: if you're sitting in a movie or at a concert or anywhere and feel like you're being bitten, assume that you are, and in addition to securing and de-bugging your clothes, bag(s), shoes, etc. (I have personally vacuumed a Kindle case, glasses cases, wallets, etc.), WASH YOUR HAIR—after your bag or luggage, it's a bedbug RV.

— CathyNYC

20. July 28, 2010
8:26 am

[Link](#)

bedbugs can be eliminated if pesticides that were effective were used. That's the problem. DDT, which has been outlawed and would do the job.

— carol

21. July 28, 2010
9:25 am

[Link](#)

Better education, and more websites? A waste of money in my opinion, out of the total redundancy of both. I guess it's for the folks who haven't learned how to do a Google search. And if the city is actually spending money to COMBAT websites like bedbugregistry.com, they've got a stunted sense of priority.

This city should be spending more time funding research. Obviously on pesticide use, but also on simple household products, and/or treatment, and also on making some proven treatments more affordable. Some ideas:

1. Developing a better bedframe. Solid metal, with no nooks or crannies, and perhaps some sort of trap built into each bedleg.
2. CO₂ bedbug monitors that you (or a PCO) can rent directly from the city.
3. A city-operated Vikane chamber to gas all of your belongings, for people who have to move out of hopelessly infested buildings! This price of this stuff is out of reach for, like, 85% of people in this city at the moment? And to

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- Rockawave.com
- SILive.com
- The Brooklyn Paper
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my knowledge there's only one or two firms in the city offering this treatment.

Of course, there's room for education: for NYC exterminators, dude! I had the b-bugs and my PCOs, while they tried their best, also gave me a lot of contradictory information. Some seem to be totally helpless at the moment with these bugs.

— *house herps*

22. July 28, 2010
9:44 am

@ #18 – They've developed DDT resistance.

[Link](#)

— *HCG*

23. July 28, 2010
10:05 am

#18, DDT would do the job. So would a nuclear warhead, but there are good reasons not to use that on bedbugs, either.

[Link](#)

— *ACW*

24. July 28, 2010
11:03 am

Get a vapor steam cleaner. They kill the little buggers immediately without harmful chemicals.

[Link](#)

— *JP*

25. July 28, 2010
12:33 pm

90% rubbing alcohol and a clothes steamer was the only thing that worded for me after a 1 month battle with them be every time I feel a slight itch I still go into panic mode

[Link](#)

— *Andre*

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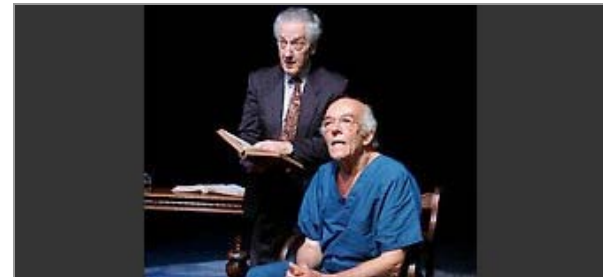
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