

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 7, 2010
TO: Parents / Staff of RSU # 14
FROM: Sandy Prince, Superintendent
SUBJECT: “Don’t Let the Bed Bugs Bite” – Building Awareness for RSU # 14 Families

The purpose of this communication is to build awareness of bed bug factors, which is an important step in avoiding an infestation in our schools.

You may have learned that a school in Maine this week reported a small breakout of bed bugs. Fortunately, we do not have any knowledge or understanding of a bed bug problem in any of the RSU # 14 schools. I feel it is important to be proactive and communicate to you some of the information I have learned about bed bugs.

Bed bugs are small insects that feed on human blood. They are usually active at night when people are sleeping. Adult bed bugs have flat, rusty-red-colored oval bodies. About the size of an apple seed, they are big enough to be easily seen, but often hide in cracks in furniture, floors, or walls. When bed bugs feed, their bodies swell and become brighter red. They can live for several months without food or water.

Bed bugs do not transmit disease, but they are a nuisance. Infestations are very difficult and expensive to control. It is important to combine insecticide treatments with environmental measures such as laundering bed linens, vacuuming rooms, and cleaning mattresses. Insecticides, if used, should be applied by a professional exterminator.

Bed bug bites usually cause small, itchy red bumps on the surface of the skin. Bites should be kept clean to prevent infection. Unlike head lice, bed bugs do not live on a person. However, they can hitchhike from one place to another in backpacks, clothing, luggage, books, and other items.

If you have any questions regarding bed bugs found in your home, you may visit <http://mainepublichealth.gov/bedbugs> In the meantime, please be reassured that as a school district we will continue to stay informed and given direction from the Department of Education and the Maine Center for Disease Control.

In the event we ever do recognize any pests that pose significant problems for our students, we have an approved policy on *Pest Management in School Facilities and on School Grounds*.

I remain confident that we can avoid infestation and do appreciate your due diligence with remaining informed on this issue.