



Residential Services ✧ Commercial Services ✧ Bird Solutions

Recommendations for Realtors

Selling residences and commercial buildings is an already complicated process, as you well know. Until recently, the only insect issues that realtors had to be concerned about were wood-destroying insects, such as termites and carpenter ants. Now, add to that the risk of a building being infested with bed bugs and the process can become a nightmare. This page is offered as a list of practical tips and resources to assist realtors in maintaining their success with selling developed properties, despite the threat of bed bugs.

Unless a realtor has had experience with bed bugs, there is little way of knowing if a structure is infested with these insects, whether the living and work spaces are occupied or vacant and cleaned, at the time of prospect walk-through. Current occupants may not know they have a bed bug problem or they may hide this fact. Therefore, the responsibility of discovering bed bug infestations is in your court. Certainly, there are many resources already available to you via this Central Ohio Bed Bug Task Force website but the questions and answers that follow will help to speed your efforts.

Q. How can you find out whether or not a building is infested with bed bugs?

A. There are two courses of action from which to choose in order to discover whether live bed bugs are present: A **pest management professional** can be hired to perform a visual inspection of the property or a **canine bed bug detection team** can be called upon to screen the building. Some pest management companies offer a canine detection service for bed bugs. As a rule, visual inspections alone will not ensure that bed bugs are not present. A well-trained dog and experienced handler will provide the more reliable inspection.

Q. How can I find out which pest management companies are experienced and effective in controlling bed bugs?

A. There are several ways to investigate the competency of a pest management company:

- Look up the information provided by the Ohio Department of Agriculture about each commercial pesticide applicator licensed in the state of Ohio:
<http://www.agri.ohio.gov/apps/odaprs/pestfert-PRS-index.aspx#tog>
Online Services [+]
- Go to the prospective company's website and check for credentialing, satisfied customer references that relate to bed bug control.
- Check with the local Better Business Bureau to help gauge the track record of pest management companies in your area.
<http://www.bbb.org/us/Find-Business-Reviews/>
- Inquire with your fellow realtors during socials and meetings to get a straight answer.



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Q. How can I find out which bed bug detection canine service best suits my needs?

A. Currently, the COBBTF is aware of four canine detection businesses that service the state of Ohio. Your best course of action is to check their websites for information and then email or phone the business owner to arrange an interview. In this way you will find out a great deal of practical information about the level of compatibility of each dog and handler team with your business needs. The current list of candidates includes:

Contact	Business	Phone	Email / Website
Gary Broberg	Bed Bug Inspection Dog LLC.	440-223-0972	garybroberg@roadrunner.com http://www.bedbugK9.com
John Montgomery	Canine Bed Bug Finder	513-771-8096	JOHN@CANINEBEDBUGFINDER.COM www.caninebedbugfinder.com
Gretta MacIntyre	Sleep Tight LLC	724-986-7946	gretta@sleeptightllc.biz www.sleeptightllc.biz
Jeff Dunham	Police Dog Services LLC.	937-232-7034	sdunhamk9@woh.rr.com www.policedogservices.com

Q. Can I guarantee that a building or portion of a building is free of bed bugs?

A. *No.* Even following a canine inspection, there will be a slight possibility of bed bugs that escaped detection. Furthermore, bed bugs can easily be carried back into the building in furniture, other personal property, and in the clothing of people who subsequently enter the living spaces or workspace in question. Also, purchasers of a property can introduce bed bugs to a previously non-infested building. What you *can* do is show your clients printed documentation of an inspection and/or treatment for bed bugs to demonstrate that you have taken every reasonable precaution to render the property free of bed bugs.

If you have further bed bug-related questions of a specific nature, you can address them to me – Dr. Gerry Wegner, BCE, at 614-704-8169 or gerry.wegner@varmentguard.com.