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NKU dorm treated for bed bugs

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HIGHLAND HEIGHTS – The bed bugs bit at Northern Kentucky University's Callahan Hall – to the cost of \$10,000 in fumigation and displacing 12 students for 48 hours.

"One of the common myths associated with bed bugs is that they only affect dirty or unkempt places," said Peter Trentacoste, director of University Housing. "Bed bugs do not discriminate. They can affect a five-star hotel as easy as a one-star hotel. The tri-state is currently heavily burdened by this problem so it should come as no surprise that NKU Housing has handled a small number of cases this year."

Trentacoste said the source of the bed bugs is unknown.

"It was difficult in this case to identify a source room since we had multiple rooms report the issue at the same time," said Trentacoste. "As far as where the bugs originated, it's likely that they were brought in by someone from a location off campus."

"Nationally, a primary source that seems to be named is spending the night in an infested hotel room."

Two rooms were found to have bed bugs but the university followed their pest control company's advice to treat the entire floor of Callahan Hall.

The university used two pest control companies. One provided a chemical/enzymatic treatment while the other provided a thermal treatment where the air in the rooms is heated to over 120 degrees.

"From our first call of this incident to the end, the incident was successfully treated within one week," said Trentacoste.

Trentacoste said bed bugs will be discussed at upcoming freshmen orientations and dormitory floor meetings.

"The best defense is a good offense," said Trentacoste. "We encourage our students not to salvage discarded furniture or bring used furniture to campus as it is possible that the item may be infested. Great care should be taken by individuals sleeping in a new environment by inspecting the mattress and bed frame thoroughly. Luggage should also be inspected prior to returning home from a new sleeping location."

"Another important distinction that should be mentioned is that bed bugs do not live on people; they live in places and things. They are good hitchhikers but don't reside on people like lice do."

Trentacoste said placing exposed items such as clothing, stuffed animals or shoes in a dryer on high for 30 minutes should kill any bugs or eggs that may have been picked up.
