

When bed bugs bite

It was one of the most infested apartments Pest Management Professional (PMP) John Bonsted had ever seen. There were hundreds of bed bugs crawling across the walls and bed. The man who lived there reportedly suffered from certain mental challenges and never alerted the building manager of the problem.

"He had so many bites on him," says Bonsted, owner-operator of Value Guard Exterminating, based in Gloucester County, New Jersey. "It was awful."

Bonsted's standard IPM protocol for bed bug jobs includes protecting mattresses and box springs with Allergy Technologies' ActiveGuard Mattress Liners while also treating bedding (including mattress and box spring) with both physical means (vacuuming and steam) and labeled-for-use chemicals. The company includes two follow-up inspection/services as part of the treatment program.

"We came back for a third treatment and the bed bugs were all gone," Bonsted says. "It was amazing to see the results. I've never seen residual activity like that. We directly attribute it to ActiveGuard."

Value Guard's technicians did have to inspect the adjacent apartments and found infestations there, as well. Bonsted and his team installed ActiveGuard on mattresses and box springs in all of the apartments as the last step in their bed bug remediation program. According to

Bed bugs covered the walls, floor and bed of the resident's home. John Bonsted of Value Guard Exterminating used Allergy Technologies' ActiveGuard Mattress Liners to help rid the apartment of the infestation.



ActiveGuard™

Mattress Liners for Use Against Bed Bugs & Dust Mites

Bonsted, they are easier to install than encasements, especially on deep (up to 17-in.) mattresses.

Like many PMPs, Bonsted has seen a huge uptick in his pest management business. A few years ago he had one or two bed bug jobs a month. These days he sees four or five a week. Bonsted has been a PMP for more than 25 years and owns his full service pest management company for the past 10. Currently, Value Guard Exterminating has three full-time employees.

Bonsted has been a longtime advocate of mattress covers, but he hasn't always used ActiveGuard. The problem with encasements is that when they rip they're no longer effective. Not only does even a small hole in a standard encasement render it useless, it might even make the situation worse by providing bed bugs a place to hide while still giving them access to a blood meal.

That's not the case for ActiveGuard Mattress Liners. They kill bed bugs on contact and continue to do so for as long as two years according to Allergy Technologies, even if they tear. That's a huge benefit, says Bonsted, who's seen customers do some pretty strange things on their beds, like ironing and burning a hole in their encasements. Bonsted is so confident in ActiveGuard he offers customers a 90-day guarantee.

"Bed bugs are easy to pick up," he says. "Customers have to try to sit down and realize where they picked up the bed bugs. They're going to have to change their lifestyle somehow. But by including ActiveGuard in my bed bug programs, I know I have a proven, tested solution that delivers long-term results so I'm more than happy to offer a guarantee to my customers."

Bed bug jobs can be challenging, and because of it many companies don't want to take on the responsibility. "You have to be meticulous," Bonsted says. Perhaps the most important testimonial is from Bonsted himself. Proper pest management takes education and the proper tools. And for Bonsted that means using ActiveGuard Mattress Liners on all his pest management jobs. He even suggests using them before a problem appears as a preventative; he uses them on all his family's beds.