**IPM Policies and Procedures Work (when followed!)**

A section-8 housing site StopPests worked with in Philadelphia provides an excellent example of a proactive approach to bed bug management. Megan, a regional property manager, began implementing an IPM policy for managing bed bugs in November of 2015 after her staff went through the “IPM in Multifamily Housing” training with StopPests. In one building where she focused much of her effort, they saw over a 50% reduction in the number of bed bug infestations. In July 2015 they were treating 31 units in a 322-unit building for bed bug infestation, by July 2016, 14 units were being treated. Megan attributes their progress to aggressively inspecting, monitoring and addressing the education needs of her residents.

Following the IPM training, she revamped her bed bug protocols and service agreements, and is considering having her maintenance staff obtain pesticide applicator licenses. Megan facilitated the purchase of a portable heat chamber to treat furniture, wheelchairs and other hard to treat items. She recognized that it was cost prohibitive for her residents to replace these items. This alternative to disposal was a better option and less burdensome to the tenants. She continues to hold resident education programs but has been challenged by finding resources for non-English speaking residents. In a recent communication, Megan said it took “lots of hands-on blood, sweat and tears” to make progress but it has been worthwhile because in the long run they will be spending less time on managing infestations and her residents will live more comfortably.

Dion Lerman, StopPests consultant, said of Megan: “She has been the model client. She was committed to the StopPests process from the start, and used every part to gain value and improve services to her senior tenants.” It’s evident having a proactive and knowledgeable manager is necessary. Megan admitted that progress at one building under her care has been less remarkable. When she met with the staff at this building she discovered they were not following the “checklist” she designed to address bed bugs and they had returned to the “call the exterminator” approach. She’s meeting weekly now with staff of this building to keep them on track with applying her IPM policy to bed bugs and all pests.

**Lesson Learned: 1) Aggressively inspect, monitor and educate residents; and, 2) Update service contracts to reflect IPM methods and best practices for bed bug control.**