

# Dogs trained to sniff out bed bugs

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Michael Goldman, based in Richmond Hill, trained the world's first bedbug-sniffing pooch in 2005. He now has three canine experts in his arsenal. All are in demand throughout Southern Ontario, dealing with the growing problem of bedbugs.

Although humans can see the live critters as well as their spent exoskeletons and fecal spots, it's no match for the superior capabilities of a dog's nose. "If there is a bedbug behind the baseboard, I would never know about it," says Goldman. "In a hotel, for example, it would take a human inspector 45 minutes to come out with 35% accuracy. You use a dog, you're in and out of that room in 60 seconds with about 95% accuracy," he says.

Heat is an excellent tool - a clothes dryer set at "high" will kill all stages of bedbugs in clothing and sheets, Goldman notes. For beds, he says the most effective preventive is a mattress encasement that is specifically designed to seal insects out - or in. Anything inside will die. "If you can get past the ick factor, knowing that there is potentially something alive in your mattress for the next couple of months, it's a great tool," Goldman says.

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