

Winnipeg needs a bed-bug strategy

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Bed bugs are now a reality in Winnipeg. Rather than leaving individuals to fend for themselves, Winnipeg requires a coordinated effort that begins by setting up a committee modeled after the Toronto Bed Bug Project.

In the past, Winnipeg's maintenance and occupancy bylaw was the main tool to deal with bed bug infestations. It identified the owner as being responsible for dealing with an infestation. In November 2008, this by-law was replaced by the neighbourhood livability bylaw, which considers bed bugs to be a "nuisance" and "unsanitary" and places the onus on both owners and occupants to prevent their existence in a dwelling.

To combat bed bugs more effectively, however, bylaw changes are in order. First, bed bugs present their own unique set of circumstances and should constitute a separate section within the bylaw, rather than being grouped with other pests. Second, the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants need to be more clearly spelled out, while bed bugs need to be recognized as a public health threat and placed under the mandate of public health inspectors.

See the [full article here](#). Written by Elizabeth Comack in collaboration with John Lyons. They teach in the department of sociology, University of Manitoba.

Posted on the [Winnipeg Rental Network](#)

