



Bite Back Halifax: Preventing and Combating Bedbugs in Your Buildings

Presented by Sara Rumbolt (Department of Environment) and Janet Burt-Gerrans
(Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority)
Building a Stronger Affordable Housing Sector
November 30, 2015

Workshop Notes

Sarah Rumbolt, Department of Environment

- Reports of bed bugs in Nova Scotia and across Canada are on the rise.
- What are bed bugs?
 - Cimex lectularius – most common.
 - Can produce up to 200 eggs.
- Why the sudden resurgence in bed bugs?
 - Lack of public awareness.
 - International travel.
 - Bed bug resistance to insecticides.
 - Changes in pest management practices.
- A health hazard?
 - Considered a nuisance, not a health hazard.
 - A fairly common pest in the developing world.
 - No diseases associated with bed bugs.
 - Secondary infections caused by scratching.
- Identifying bites
 - Bite at night.
 - Can be anywhere on the body.
 - Individual responses to bed bugs will vary.
 - Groups of three bites.

- Social Impact
 - Most vulnerable cannot deal with bed bugs (frail, elderly, physical and mental illnesses, poverty, struggling with dependency and addiction issues, homeless and hard to house).
 - Psychological impacts can be severe.
 - Shame / withdrawal / impact on pre-existing mental and physical conditions.
 - Stress, anxiety, depression, etc.
- High risk workers
 - Fire fighters, health care professionals, housing mgmt., etc.
- Severe infestation PPE.
- Laundry
 - It is the heat that kills them – dryer on high for 30 minutes.
 - Vacuum items that can't be placed in a dryer – seal and throw away the vacuum bag.
 - Contact licensed pest control expert.
- What you can do?
 - Don't try to treat them yourself.
 - Don't spray pesticides on vehicles, equipment or clothing.
 - Don't take clothing or equipment suspected of having bed bugs into another's home.
- Prevention
 - Clean up clutter.
 - Seal cracks and crevices with caulking.
 - Be careful when buying used furniture and clothes. Check thoroughly for bed bugs.
 - Never bring discarded furniture or electronics into your home, discourage clients from doing so also. These items may be infested with bed bugs.
- Travelling
 - Inspect the room and furniture and look for blood spots, droppings or live insects.
 - Request a different room if you find evidence of bed bugs.
 - Inspect luggage when you return home, preferably before you bring your luggage into the house, and wash clothing in the hottest water possible followed by 30 minutes in a hot dryer immediately after returning from a trip.

- Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
 - Physical, biological, chemical.
 - Plan, educate, identify, inspect, keep records, prepare, perform treatments, evaluate.



Increasing Energy Efficiency in your Portfolio

Presented by Carolyn van Gorp (High Hopes Co-op), Liam Cook (Efficiency NS), Chris Morrissey (Clean Foundation), and Shannon Miedema (Halifax Energy and Environment)

Building a Stronger Affordable Housing Sector Conference
November 30, 2015

Workshop Notes

Carolyn Van Gorp, High Hopes Housing Co-op

- Co-op over 30 years old
 - +100 years old, most up and down flats.
 - Members pay own utilities.
 - Created and Environmental Sustainability Projects Community.
- An Energy Audit made recommendations
 - Oil bill went from \$3500, \$2500, \$1800 to \$800 in 2014/2015.
 - Water use dropped by 25%.
- Upgrades:
 - Insulated wall and roof.
 - Major draft-proofing.
 - Efficiency NS “tune-up”.
 - Solar City domestic hot water heating (new electric water heater).
 - Low-flow toilet.
- Future Plans:
 - Water collection for backyard gardens.
 - Research efficient heating systems, furnaces.
 - Insulate around window frames.
 - Monitor new initiatives.

- Benefits:
 - Lower GHGs.
 - Saving money.
 - Greater comfort.
 - Benefitting future generations.

Liam Cooke – Efficiency One

- Bills and Rates
 - Consumption compared with electricity mix (coal fire generation).
- A culture of conservation and efficiency
 - GHG, mercury reductions.
 - Healthy environment
- Services of Interest
 - Product installation service.
 - Appliance retirement and replacement.
 - Small business energy solutions and auditing.
 - Business energy rebates.
- Production installation service
 - Energy efficient products that replace inefficient products.
- Small Business Energy Solutions
 - For buildings with <359,000 kWh/year.
 - No-charge audit.
- Business Energy Rebates
 - What you don't need an audit to do.
 - Mail-in rebate.
 - HVAC, Commercial Laundry, etc.
- Custom Projects
 - Larger buildings.
- HomeWarming
 - No-charge energy audit and building envelope upgrades to income qualified households.
 - Occupant must own the home.
 - Open to all fuel types.
- Benefits to the Affordable Housing Market
 - Some of the benefits of energy efficiency projects:
 - i. Low-cost when paired with related capital projects.
 - ii. Decreases operating risks of increasing fuel costs.

- iii. Savings re-invested.
 - iv. Tenant retention.
- Barriers for adoption
 - Major challenges to becoming more energy efficient:
 - i. Knowledge and expertise.
 - ii. Education and training.

- PACE and Green Leases
 - Property Assessed Clean Energy.
 - Green Leases.
- Energy Solution Advisors.

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Benefits of Housing First in Your Community

Presented by Steve Gaspar and Karen Poffenroth (The Alex)
Building a Stronger Affordable Housing Sector Conference
November 30th, 2015

Workshop Notes

- Basic principles of Housing First are:
 - Housing is a basic human rights.
 - Homelessness individuals have experienced trauma and marginalization.
 - Individuals have different means of coping with trauma.
 - Means of coping with trauma shouldn't exclude people from housing.
 - Directly from homelessness into housing without the burden of 'proving' that they 'deserve housing'.
 - Most vulnerable and highest acuity are prioritized for housing.
 - Services are culturally appropriate and targeted towards marginalized populations in community.
- Goals of Housing First
 - Reduce justice, legal and health service usage.
 - Clients improve self-sufficiency.
 - Clients will engage in mainstream services.
 - Clients will have needs met and experience improved quality of life.
 - Clients will remain stably housed.
- The cost of homelessness in Calgary is \$134,000 per person per year.
- Housing First focuses on chronically homelessness (12 months or longer).
- Funded by the Calgary Homeless Foundation, which was originally created by a group of businesses.
- Alberta has the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness. The goal of this plan is that any person who accesses shelter services will be offered an appropriate housing placement option within seven days.
- Calgary has a centralized intake system – SPDAT, assessment done at SORCZE. A centralized office that provides diversion services and assessment to all persons requiring housing intervention.

Introduction to The Alex Home Base

- 53 is the average SPDAT score of a client entering the Home Base program.
- Program is intensive case management; clients must be 18 or over, chronically homeless.
- Recreation groups have high attendance compared to therapy groups.
- Do not force supports instead it is client informed/centered care.

HomeBase Outcomes: Benefits

- 95% housing retention.
- Cost per client under \$20K per year; save province over >\$100,000.
- 85% reduction in system usages
 - Some increase is positive though (e.g. psych care).
- 100% reduction in damage despite/damages in past year.
- Funded for only 1 damage deposit per client, previously exceeded budget to reduce negative stats.
- Important to maintain relationship with landlord – if unit damaged/client evicted, landlord keeps damage deposit and The Alex pays for repairs.
- 50% of clients looking/found employment or vocational activity.
- 50% of clients have gone to treatment or greatly reduced substance use.
- 100% of clients are linked to community resources or services.
- Described The Alex as service brokers, not service providers.
- 100% of clients have some form of income (including income assistance).
- 100% of clients report that they are more hopeful about the future.
- Annual cost is around \$3.2 million. Funding is based on a per client basis.



Maintenance on a Budget: Doing the Right Thing First

Presented by Alan MacPherson (IPOANS, Director), Glenn Wright (Four Seasons Roofing, Owner), and Dean Pike (Appliance Maritimes, Owner)
Building a Stronger Affordable Housing Sector
December 1, 2015

Workshop Notes

Maintenance: Alan MacPherson, IPOANS Director

Nova Scotia Community College has night courses on property management for those interested in learning and networking with those in the industry.

Roofing: Glenn Wright, Four Seasons Roofing, Owner

- Cheap and quality do not go together.
- Ask a lot of questions to the prospective roofing company
 - Do you carry Insurance?
 - What is your experience?
 - Ask for references from projects in your area
 - What product do you use?
 - What are the procedures for the project?
- Ventilation is a huge issue for roofing systems
 - If you improve the insulation of a building, you need to improve the ventilation in the roofing system or moisture and mold problems can occur.
- Old three tab shingles are a thing of the past, newer fibreglass sheets have higher wind resistance, last longer and cost the same.
- Recommend getting full roof ice and water shield (ice dam protection).
- Plan ahead, don't wait to be in emergency situations.

Appliances: Dean Pike, Appliance Maritimes –Owner

- Appliances have become more energy efficient over the past 20 years, but with that come higher maintenance costs.
- The cost of appliances has gone up recently due to poor Canadian dollar.
- The main task is managing repair cost vs. How far into the lifespan of the appliance.
- Keep track of appliance serial numbers and age of your stock for capital planning and theft prevention.

Refrigerators

- Common problems include:
 - Blockage in defrost- drainage system, defrost heater timer breaks, door gasket which are all relatively cheap to repair.
 - If compressor goes, replace fridge.

Ranges

- Coil top most feasible in comparison to ceramic top due to lower maintenance costs.
- Smart burners available for coil top range (does not heat past ignition point), great for older or more problematic residents.
- Tip: if disposing of a range keep the burners and elements for spare parts.
- Common Problems include:
 - Elements in oven or burners stop working (cheap to replace).
 - If timer goes consider replacing range (expensive part).

Dishwashers

- Shorter life expectancy 8-10yr.
- Cheaper appliance (\$300) approx.

Washer

- Top load best for commercial use (less maintenance required to be done by user).

Dryer

- Longer life expectancy 18-20yr.
- Repair over replace (cheap repairs).
- If clothes are not drying, it is usually a ventilation problem.
- Monitor and clean out lint buildup (fire hazard).



Housing First Intensive

Presented by Steve Gaspar and Karen Poffenroth (The Alex)

Building a Stronger Affordable Housing Sector

December 1, 2015

Workshop Notes

- Recovery orientation is the legitimate belief that individualized psycho-social recovery is possible for every client.

Client-direct support

- Client goals are self-directed and identified by the client as meaningful to the client at this time.
- Clients are supported in making decisions.
- Goals are re-evaluated regularly and SMART.
- Prioritize relationships.
- Practice motivational interviewing – navigate intricacies of conversation with clients.
- Support clients in making choices.
- Clients encouraged to progress from passive recipients of services to become actively engaged in their treatment plans.
- Both affirmative and behavioral correction must be provided in ways that relate to the client's goals.
- Constantly offer your client choices which will facilitate self-directed care.
- Break down goals, building from success to success.
- Important to take notes from the beginning.

Culture of Hope

- Key component of the Recovery Orientation is the conscious effort to promote a culture of hope.
- Prioritize the celebration of success, even small successes encourage clients to focus on their progress.
- Emphasize positive anniversaries, which can help clients shift their focus and increase awareness of the positives in their life.
- Be mindful and in the moment with the client.

Home Visit 101

- Initial visit is the baseline, used as a reference in order to assess changes in the client. Understanding how the client lives is key when supporting the client in maintaining housing.
- Home visits both assess and intervene.
- Be mindful that clients will face discrimination.
- Affirmation and behavioral correction must be provided in ways that relate to the client's goals.
- Change is more likely to occur if the client has 'buy in' and sees the value.
- Be mindful that you are a guest in your client's home.
- Risk management for home visits includes text check ins and outs. Texts contain the address, concerns and anticipated time to finish up. Scan the environment, and leave if concerned.
- Important to build rapport with client.
- Individualized assertive engagement – interpersonal skills; flexibility; creative intervention; identify client's strengths and interests.
- Focuses on building a working alliance with the client that addresses the needs of the individual.
- Meet the client on their terms and choices (e.g. preferred time).
- Program adapts to the client, the client is not expected to adapt to the program.
- Develop a supported failure.
- Program is funded based on outcomes (maintaining housing). This is a financial solution to behavioral problems. Lack of client buy in, and created a culture of enablement and learned helplessness.

Supported Fail

- Client support worker is still there, but doesn't interfere with the consequences of client's actions. Will be reflected in the stats for funder.
- Same level of support as before, but experience the consequences.
- In less than a year of following supported fail, housing retention went up and outcomes improved.
- Discussions with discharge of clients set up for long term independence. Track over several years after exit from program.
- From the beginning, link to mainstream resources.
- There are circumstances when supportive fail can and cannot be used (e.g. shouldn't be used when clients do not have the 'capacity' to make cognitive decisions).
- Provide one damage deposit per client, furnishings, food hamper.

Harm Reduction in Housing Programs

- Multi-modal and addresses risk in all areas of a client's life (e.g. nutrition, safety, basic needs).
- Targeted at people currently engaged in high-risk activities.
- Compassionate curiosity.
- Saves money by decreasing short and long-term use of public systems.
- Enables their ability to risk mitigate.
- Moves people through the stages of change in engagement and support.
- Good Harm Reduction Practice
 - Recovery orientation
 - Culture of hope
 - Stage-wise treatment
 - Individualized assertive engagement
 - Motivational interviewing
 - Integrated dual disorder treatment
 - Creativity/outside of the box thinking
 - One foot in one foot out