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EDITORIAL OBJECTIVE

Sanitation Canada magazine is edited for the people who maintain high standards of sanitary cleaning in commercial, institutional, residential and industrial buildings (including, in particular, hospitals, schools, hotels and motels). The editorial objective of Sanitation Canada is to provide news and views about new technology, new sanitary cleaning methods, people within the vocation, methods for improving people management and news of educational opportunities.

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Perks Publications Inc. (HEAD OFFICE)

3 Kennett Drive, Whitby, Ont. L1P 1L5

Tel: (905) 430-7267 • Fax: (905) 430-6418

E-mail: mike@perkspub.com • www.sanitationcanada.com

Quebec Sales Office (Richard Bolduc)

1282 - 4th Avenue, Val Morin, Québec, J0T 2R0

Tel: (819) 322-1789 • Cell: (819) 323-7622

E-mail: jrbp@cogocable.ca

Mail Returns to 3 Kennett Drive, Whitby, Ont. L1P 1L5

Study Takes A Biting Look At BedBugs

As many as 20 per cent of Americans have had a bedbug infestation in their home or know someone who has encountered bedbugs, according to a study recently released by the National Pest Management Association (NPMA).

The study found that those Americans most affected by bedbugs tend to live in urban areas where the incidence of bedbugs is three times higher than in rural ones.

Further, most Americans believe the bedbug problem in the United States is on the increase, and are most concerned about encountering bedbugs in the following locations:

- Hotels – 80 per cent.
- Public transportation – 52 per cent.
- Movie theatres – 49 per cent.
- Their own homes – 36 per cent.
- Place of employment – 32 per cent.

Although the report finds Americans are taking steps to minimize their risk of encountering bedbugs – even washing luggage after a long trip – there are still a lot of misconceptions about the pests. Most specifically, that the only way to eradicate them is through the use of powerful and potentially dangerous pesticides.

“Our industry must take steps to help end users realize (that) there are effective and more environmentally responsible strategies available to eradicate bedbugs,” said Michael Schaffer, a senior executive with Tacony’s commercial floorcare division and president of Tornado Industries, who is publishing a white paper specifically addressing the bedbug problem.

For instance, Schaffer suggests using professional steam cleaners can prove very helpful. He adds that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends when controlling any type of pests, “the most effective strategy may be an approach known as integrated pest management (IPM), which emphasizes the limited use of pesticides.”

In fact, pesticide treatments alone can often prove ineffective because it may not kill the eggs, according to Schaffer.

“Due to the insidious nature of bedbugs, eradicating them can be a challenge,” he said. “But by using an integrated pest management approach and employing specific (cleaning) equipment and measures, bedbugs can be eliminated with less impact on users, building occupants and the environment.”