

Pest Management Tips for Shelter Residents

Everyone has a role in pest control. To get rid of pests and keep them from coming back, you have to take away everything they need to survive: food, water, a place to nest and ways to get around. Follow these simple steps to control pests safely.



Step 1: Keep your home clean and dry

- Keep food in sealed containers—plastic, glass or coffee cans with lids.
- Wash and dry dishes as soon as you are finished using them. Keep counters dry.
- Wipe down counters, sinks, stovetop and surrounding areas with a wet cloth to get rid of food or grease. Degrease ovens regularly.
- Sweep up or vacuum away food on the floor.
- Don't leave pet food out overnight.



Step 2: Get rid of garbage and clutter

- Reduce clutter. Make sure nothing is blocking the fire exits.
- Remove and recycle piles of newspapers, paper bags, cardboard and bottles—especially those left around stoves, refrigerators and beds.
- Rinse recyclables before throwing them out in designated bins.
- Put garbage and recyclables into containers with covers that close tightly. Use a bag inside each container.
- Take garbage and recycling out every day. Use the chute if your building has a garbage compactor.



Step 3: Work with shelter management and pest professionals

- Report pests, water leaks, holes and other conditions that can attract pests to building or shelter management. Call 311 if management fails to respond.
- Use bait stations and sticky traps for pests.
- Only professionals should apply pesticides.
- Never use foggers, bombs or loose rodent bait. They spread everywhere and land on surfaces where people sit, prepare food, play and eat.
- Never use illegal pesticides like Tres Pasitos, Chinese chalk or Tempo. ***These are dangerous and can harm you or other people you live with.***



Step 4: Prevent and get rid of bed bugs safely

- Anyone can get bed bugs. If you think you may have bed bugs, report it to your building or shelter management right away. It is best to deal with bed bugs as soon as possible. Call 311 if management fails to respond.
- Get rid of clutter to reduce places where bed bugs can hide.
- Wash all items that have bed bug stains in a washing machine using hot water (140°F). Then put all items in the dryer, on the highest setting for at least 20 minutes, to kill bed bugs.
- Vacuum carpets, floors, bed frames and any furniture daily. Empty the vacuum—or seal and throw away its bag—outside of your home after each use.

For more information, visit nyc.gov/health or call 311 and ask for “Healthy Homes.”