

Bug-bomb foggers are no match for bed bugs

June 4 2012

Consumer products known as "bug bombs" or "foggers" have been sold for decades for use against many common household insects. However, recent research published in the *Journal of Economic Entomology* (JEE) shows these products to be ineffective against bed bugs.

In "Ineffectiveness of Over-the-Counter Total-Release Foggers Against the Bed Bug (Heteroptera: Cimicidae)," an article appearing in the June issue of JEE, authors Susan C. Jones and Joshua L. Bryant provide the first scientific evidence that these [products](#) should not be recommended for control of this increasingly worrisome urban pest.

"There has always been this perception and feedback from the pest-management industry that over-the-counter foggers are not effective against [bed bugs](#) and might make matters worse," said Susan Jones, an urban entomologist with the university's Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC) and a household and structural pest specialist with OSU Extension. "But up until now there has been no published data regarding the efficacy of foggers against [bedbugs](#)."

Jones and research associate Joshua Bryant evaluated three different fogger brands obtained from a nationwide retailer, and experiments were conducted on five different bedbug populations. Following application of the three foggers, Jones and Bryant found little, if any, adverse effects on the bed bugs.

Because a majority of bed bugs spend most of the time hiding in protected sites (under sheets and mattresses, in cracks and crevices, deep

inside carpets, etc.), Jones said it is very unlikely that they will be exposed to the [insecticide](#) mist from foggers. And even if they do come into contact with the mist, she added, many bed bug populations have varying degrees of resistance to the insecticides, so they will most likely survive the application.

"These foggers don't penetrate in cracks and crevices where most bed bugs are hiding, so most of them will survive," Jones said. "If you use these products, you will not get the infestation under control, you will waste your money, and you will delay effective treatment of your infestation. Bed bugs are among the most difficult and expensive urban pests to control. It typically takes a professional to do it right. Also, the ineffective use of these products can lead to further resistance in insects."

Provided by Entomological Society of America

Citation: Bug-bomb foggers are no match for bed bugs (2012, June 4) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-06-bug-bomb-foggers-bed-bugs.html>

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