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Campus housing tries to kick out unwanted guests

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By Greta Myers
Staff Writer

While students were away during Spring Break, Sentinel Pest Control paid UIS a visit in hopes of evicting some unwelcome guests in campus housing: bed bugs. At the Student Government Association meeting on April 5, John Ringle, Director of Housing, addressed the "bed bug" problem in campus housing.



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


"We have been dealing with this, off and on, since October 2007," Ringle said. The bed bugs have been found in mattresses and bed linens in apartments on campus. The insects have especially targeted residents in Clover Court, though exterminators have also made visits to Larkspur and Sunflower courts.

The tiny, reddish-brown, oval insects with flattened bodies are brought inside by traveling in luggage or on clothes.

"Having bed bugs is irrespective of hygiene, ethnicity, and not how good a housekeeper you are," Ringle said.

The resilient insects are especially difficult to eradicate because they can live up to two years between feedings. Bed bugs live solely on the blood of animals and leave a rash that resembles a mosquito bite. On the plus side, they do not carry or transmit diseases.

Ringle encouraged students who suspect that they have been bitten by the bed bugs to visit Health Services, which is located in the Business Services Building on the east side of campus, for verification. Ideally, though, Ringle said, students should also bring the actual suspected bed bug (dead or alive) during their visit. If there is a positive identification by Health Services, a Benadryl spray will be given for the bite and Sentinel Pest Control will be contacted and will spray within the week. During the extermination, the occupants will be relocated. For more information, brochures on bed bugs are available at the entrance of the Housing Commons.

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