



# Alaska REAL ESTATE BY DAVE WINDSOR

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## Bug Snug In Bed Not Rug

The old saying needs to be updated. "Snug as a Bug in a Rug" should be "Snug as a Bug in a Bed" - - - and maybe yours!

Bed bugs are now not just a nuisance but almost an epidemic. Pest control expert Randy Beuter, owner of Eagle Pest Control, believes that up to 5% of Anchorage homes may be affected.

Hotels and Apartment buildings are the most at risk. Go to the online "bedbugregistry.com/location/ak" and see where complaints are being lodged in Alaska. The biggest problem with these little red critters is that they like to travel - in your suitcase. With the escalation in air travel, they are enjoying free migration alongside paying passengers.

When staying at any hotel or other lodgings you should look, not under the rug where bugs are no longer snug, but under the mattress and, especially, behind the headboard of your accommodation host.

Bed bugs, easily visible, like to live near their next meal, and that's where you come in. Couches and beds are a favorite motel for these guys because that's where they can find you and keep their appetite satisfied. They bite like a mosquito and will leave itchy red welts on the skin.

All humor aside, bed bugs are a serious problem, and aspiring homebuyers might want to add pest control inspection to their contract 'to-do' list. Just include it alongside your other home inspector options.

Bed bugs can be eliminated but, according to my research, and according to Eagle Pest Control, there is only one sure-fire method to eliminate them.

While chemicals have been used in bug infested residences, they are not recommended for several reasons. First, they are not guaranteed. Often, this just drives the bugs to migrate to their bunkers behind walls, or even relocate to a neighboring apartment that shares the wall.

Furthermore, repeat treatments, over several weeks, have been shown to remain unsuccessful at times. And this does not even cover the hazards of the chemicals to human health. For a full discussion of bed bug chemical treatments, go online. The war on bed bugs is well documented.

**What to do?** There is only one way to deal permanently with bed bugs - Cook them!

Yes, you can call someone, like Randy of Eagle Pest Control, to heat up your infected room to 135 degrees Fahrenheit, and these little blighters will be dead, even in the wall.

First, ask Randy to bring along Crime Dog "Rudolph", a specially trained Beagle from Florida, to sniff out whether you have a bed bug in your house. This will cost \$100 to \$150 for the expert quadruped to diagnose any problem. Randy's split on the money with Rudolph is a closely guarded secret.

Next, if the little guys are snuggling up in your home, Randy will roll in to your driveway his 60 kilowatt generators and heat the infected room to 135 degrees. (Some folks really enjoy this treat in January).

The process takes one day only. You can leave for work in the morning, even if a little itchy, and come home that evening to the best night's sleep you've had in a long time, a night without unwanted guests. Mothers-in-law are easier than bed bugs.

Some precautions are necessary, such as the removal of heat sensitive items - e.g. candles, chocolate, oil products, aerosol cans, but this is a small inconvenience for one day that can change your life.

Treatment cost starts at \$1100 (1 bedroom apartment), \$1200 for 2 bedrooms, \$1300 for 3 bedrooms, and a Single Family Home, if the whole house is infested, could be \$2000 to \$2500. This includes the crew to handle some adjustment to furniture, especially partial bed dismantle. You might wonder about 135 degrees on your furniture. Real Estate clients I recently visited, and Eagle Pest Control, reported very minimal furniture impact. The glue line in a laminated piece of furniture could be affected, but collateral furniture damage was almost zero in my client's home.

Hotel and Apartment owners ought to perform regular bed bug inspections as a courtesy to guests. You should always check mattresses and headboards yourself. Renters should be especially alert before signing a lease.

This column is not meant to scare you. It's meant to scare the bed bugs! You, Crime Dog Rudolph, and a skilled Pest Controller can easily overcome this enemy. Let's wipe them out!



**Crime Dog Rudolph**

### Some Things you might want to Know:-

- 1) Although troop losses may reduce military personnel to 9000 by year's end, this is the same level of troops as in 1995. The numbers just kept increasing to the 2010 peak of 12,500 troops.
- 2) The price of Oil may only be in the low \$40's range, but 20 years ago the price was \$20 bbl. Employees at Prudhoe Bay reached a record 12,000 this year, the highest ever (In 2004, only 6000 workers on the Slope).
- 3) Tourism in Alaska will bust the 2 million mark this year, for the first time ever.
- 4) Market Time for my Listings sold in 2015 was less than 30 days (29.57 days to be precise), compared to the market average of 51 days. List with me and I'll be right on it!

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Wilson

