

# Green Retrofit Initiative

## Spotlight on Integrated Pest Management



Beacon Communities

### Key Elements

- Proactive inspections to identify pest issues
- Pest specific protocols to minimize pest entry and infestations
- Targeted use of pesticides
- Engagement of maintenance staff and residents to help prevent and solve problems

### The Benefits

- Fewer pest problems
- Greater management knowledge of pest issues and responses
- Reduced costs due to bed bug outbreaks

### Our Commitment

Beacon Communities follows Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices throughout its predominately affordable housing portfolio of 12,000 apartments, 8,000 of which are in Massachusetts. Adoption of IPM practices began over a decade ago, as Beacon recognized the benefits of preventing pest problems through regular inspections for early detection; engagement of maintenance staff, resident services coordinators, and residents in solutions; and holistic responses that address building conditions and operations.

“Ten years ago our maintenance department did not see themselves as part of the solution — now they are a critical piece of the puzzle,” explained Tom Stokes, Beacon’s Vice President of Resident Services. Today maintenance staff accompany pest professionals on inspections and if they see a repair need, it is logged via a handheld tablet as a work order request. The staff love the new technology because they no longer have to write down the repair need and enter it back at an office computer.

About seven years ago, Beacon took steps to ensure consistent IPM practices by selecting one IPM vendor — Ecologic Entomology — to service all its Massachusetts properties. The result is clear protocols, support to help residents prepare their apartments for treatment, and consistent training for maintenance staff and residents. Beacon’s senior management receives reports from all developments tracking pest issues and meets with Ecologic at least every six months to review pest issues across the portfolio and discuss future plans.

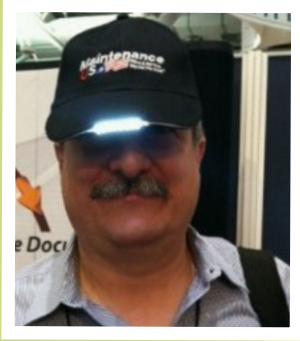
### Clear Bed Bug Protocols Work

Bed bug problems have posed some of the greatest challenges in recent years. At one property, bed bug problems resulted in over \$100,000 of pest

“If you are not doing regular inspections, you don’t know what pest problems exist.”

*Tom Stokes, Vice President Resident Services, Beacon Communities*





“IPM is a more effective and healthier approach for our residents and staff.”

*Frank Alvarez, Senior Vice President Operations, Beacon Communities*



“IPM is a holistic approach that considers the building operations, structure, and environment to help prevent and solve problems.”

*Jonathan Boyer, Ecologic Entomology*



expenses. Working in collaboration with its pest professional, Beacon developed a six step process to prevent and control bed bugs. After implementing the new IPM protocols, bed bug problems were brought under control at a lower cost. What's different:

- Beacon inspects units adjoining the apartment with reported bed bugs to effectively treat the problem.
- Pre-treatment inspections are required to avoid wasting money arriving at a unit that is not prepped for treatment, and Resident Service Coordinators assist those needing help to prepare their units.
- Faster response times in response to resident reports.
- Resident engagement and an educational session at each property.
- Trained maintenance staff help to identify problems.
- Mattress covers are provided in serious cases to avoid re-infestation.

In one Boston former HOPE IV property slated for renovation, Beacon adopted an aggressive bed bug prevention protocol before residents moved back in. Off-site resident apartments were inspected for bed bugs and units with issues were treated. Ten apartments required bed bug treatments. Beacon believes the strategy reduced the risks of bringing bed bugs into this newly renovated development.

Finally, Beacon has used its IPM knowledge and lessons learned to inform renovation and new construction projects by including pest proofing strategies.

## Boston Partners

[Local Initiatives Support Corporation \(LISC\) Boston](#), the [Boston Public Health Commission](#), and the [Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#) provide resources to assist affordable housing owners in adopting green and healthy property management practices that reduce operating expenses and create healthier and more comfortable living environments for residents and staff.

## Massachusetts Green Retrofit Initiative

The [Massachusetts Green Retrofit Initiative](#) is a program designed to help affordable housing owners navigate our state's utility and clean energy programs. In partnership with building science expert [New Ecology, Inc.](#) and [Tohn Environmental Strategies](#), LISC Boston has worked with 50 owners statewide to implement energy efficiency, renewable technologies, water conservation, smoke-free housing, integrated pest management, and green cleaning. For more information, contact Mike Davis at [mdavis@lisc.org](mailto:mdavis@lisc.org) (617-410-4334) or go to [bit.ly/liscgreen](http://bit.ly/liscgreen).

Prepared by [Tohn Environmental Strategies, LLC](#)

Local Initiatives Support Corporation, 75 Kneeland St #1102, Boston, MA 02111 | [liscboston.org](http://liscboston.org)