

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EDITOR CONTACT:
Linda Barlow, Kapnek Communications
215-830-9890 / Linda@kapnek.com

COMPANY CONTACT:
Jill Gilmer, Zep Inc.
404-605-8614

1 in 10 Americans Touched by Bed Bug Problem

Survey Finds 40 Percent of People Are Altering Their Actions to Avoid an Infestation

ATLANTA (November 16, 2010) – Despite media reports that make it seem like the country has been overrun by bed bugs, most Americans seem to be taking this latest scare in stride, with about one in ten respondents in a nationwide survey saying they or someone they know has had a bed bug problem. That number was higher (nearly 2 out of 10) among survey respondents from the Northeast, where cities like New York City have been particularly hard-hit with bed bug infestations.

Regional differences aside, the country was fairly evenly split in terms of their bed bug concerns. Just under half said they were concerned about picking up bed bugs, while half were not, according to the survey conducted by Infogroup/ORC on behalf of Enforcer[®] Brand pest control products.

“Bed bugs can be a problem anywhere – from big cities to small towns, from coast to coast, and in a variety of settings,” says Mari Hayes, VP, Product Development & Marketing, Zep Retail (manufacturer of Enforcer brand products), noting that 25 percent of survey respondents are only afraid of picking up bed bugs when staying at a hotel and nine percent think bed bugs are only a real problem in big cities like New York City. “Fortunately, there are things you can do to avoid them from the start and to eliminate them if you get them.”

What People are Doing to Avoid Bed Bugs

Many survey respondents admit to altering their behavior in and outside the home in response to recent reports about bed bug infestations:

- 22 percent have started checking their beds, furniture, clothes and rugs for evidence of bed bugs on a regular basis.
- 21 percent have started washing their clothes and bed linens in extremely hot water and drying them on super-high heat in an attempt to kill bugs that may or may not be there.
- 16 percent are avoiding establishments because they're afraid of picking up bed bugs and bringing them home.
- 13 percent have stopped traveling to hotels or cities with known bed bug problems.
- 12 percent are avoiding people they know who have had a bed bug problem.

"Clearly, people are getting concerned about potential bed bug infestations," comments Hayes. "As we enter the holiday travel, shopping and entertainment season, it will be interesting to see how hotels, stores, theaters and other establishments are coping with a potential downturn in business."

Extreme Measures Considered

While 11 percent of those surveyed said bed bugs are "almost impossible to get rid of," many of the respondents said they would be likely to try a variety of methods – some more extreme than others – to stave off an infestation:

- 52 percent would buy mattress wraps that protect against bed bugs.
- 35 percent would hire a professional to take care of the problem, no matter what the cost.
- 27 percent would blast their home with super-high heat to kill any bed bugs that might be lurking.
- 18 percent would cover all their upholstered furniture with plastic slip covers.
- 13 percent would even go so far as to get a bed bug-sniffing dog to warn them at the first sign of infestation.

"Although some of these measures may seem extreme, they are all effective when used as part of a comprehensive bed bug elimination program," says Hayes. "In fact, there are a number of steps people need to take to eradicate bed bugs from their homes, and it appears as if the people surveyed are aware of many of them."

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, those necessary bed bug elimination steps include:

- Inspecting infested areas, plus surrounding living spaces.
- Checking for bed bugs on luggage and clothes when returning home from a trip.
- Looking for bed bugs or signs of infestation on secondhand items before bringing the items home.
- Correctly identifying the pest.
- Keeping records – including dates when and locations where pests are found.
- Cleaning all items within a bed bug infested living area.
- Reducing clutter where bed bugs can hide.
- Eliminating bed bug habitats.
- Physically removing bed bugs through cleaning.
- Using pesticides carefully according to the label directions.
- Following up inspections and possible treatments.
- Raising awareness through education on prevention of bed bugs.
- Washing and drying bedding and clothing at high temperatures to kill bed bugs.
- Heat infested articles and/or areas through to at least 113 °F (45 °C) for 1 hour. The higher the temperature, the shorter the time needed to kill bed bugs at all life stages.
- Cold treatments (below 0 °F (-19 °C) for at least 4 days) can eliminate some infestations. Again, the cooler the temperature, the less time needed to kill bed bugs.
- Use mattress, box spring, and pillow encasements to trap bed bugs and help detect infestations.

Bed Bugs: Myths vs. Facts

The survey found that some people are operating under a number of misconceptions when it comes to bed bugs:

- 37 percent believe that bed bugs spread disease. Actually, while bed bugs may bite, causing small welts, there is no indication they spread disease.
- 34 percent believe bed bugs are resistant to pesticides. In fact, there are still several pesticides on the market that kill not only bed bugs, but also their eggs.

- 29 percent believe that bed bugs are caused by a general lack of cleanliness and hygiene. Unfortunately, bed bugs can be a problem no matter how fastidious a person is about staying clean.
- 62 percent would dispose of bed bug-infested mattresses and 29 percent would dispose of infected carpeting. These extreme measures are not needed if the proper bed bug elimination strategy is pursued.

“Some of these misconceptions may be why there’s such a stigma attached to having a bed bug problem,” suggests Hayes, noting that a quarter of those surveyed said they would be “too embarrassed” to tell friends or acquaintances if they had a bed bug problem in their home.

Indeed, the thought of a bed bug infestation is so worrisome that 30 percent of those surveyed said they would rather have a root canal than deal with bed bugs.

Survey Methodology

The survey of 1,005 adults nationwide was conducted by telephone from October 21-24, 2010 by Infogroup/ORC on behalf of the Enforcer® Brand. The margin of error is plus or minus three percentage points. For additional survey results, visit www.enforcer.com.

About Enforcer® Brand

Enforcer Brand products include more than 400 items in five categories: insecticides, herbicides, rodenticides, plumbing, and lawn and garden. The products are sold through the nation’s leading hardware, home center, grocery and mass retailers under the corporate name of Enforcer® Products. Enforcer is currently owned by Zep Inc. For more information, visit www.enforcer.com.

About Zep Inc.

Zep Inc. (NYSE: ZEP), with fiscal year 2010 net sales of almost \$570 million, is a leading producer, marketer, and service provider of a wide range of cleaning and maintenance solutions for commercial, industrial, institutional, and consumer end-markets. Zep Inc.’s product portfolio includes anti-bacterial and industrial hand care products, cleaners, degreasers, deodorizers, disinfectants, floor finishes, sanitizers, and pest and weed control products, as well as high performance products and professional grade chemical products for the automotive, fleet maintenance, industrial/MRO supply, institutional supply and motorcycle markets. The Company markets these products and services under well recognized and established brand names, such as Zep®, Zep Commercial®, Zep Professional™, Enforcer®, National Chemical® Selig™, Misty®, Next Dimension™, Petro®, i-Chem®, TimeMist®, TimeWick, MicrobeMax™, Country Vet®, Niagara National™ and a number of private labeled brands. Some of Zep’s brands have been in existence for more

than 100 years. Zep Inc.'s headquarters are in Atlanta, Georgia. Visit the company's website at www.zepinc.com.

###