

THE BED BUGS *CIMEX LECTULARIUS*: URBAN PROBLEM IN THE ANDEAN REGION OF COLOMBIA

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The most common species of bed bugs in the world is *Cimex lectularius* Linnaeus, 1758. This species prefers to feed on human blood and causes several health effects like skins rashes, psychological effects and allergic symptoms. In the developed world bed bugs were largely eradicated as pests in the early 1940s, however have increase in prevalence since about 1995 and the exact causes of this resurgence remain unclear. The bugs seem to find their preferred host, in this case the humans, detecting its heat and carbon dioxide. In conditions of scarcity, also feed on rodents, birds and bats. Although *C. lectularius* is very sensitive to the action of residual insecticides, currently, there are reports about of development of resistance to most insecticides used for its control. Recently, the infestations for the *C. lectularius* have registered a significant increase in several countries principally Australia, England, Spain, Denmark, The United States, Brazil and Venezuela. In Colombia, the incidence of *C. lectularis* turns out to be difficult to quantify since generally they are not identified as a problem of health, but the presence of the insect is consulted frequently in the Andean region, in the cities of Medellin (6°13 'N, 75°34 'W, 1538 m above sea level) in the Department of Antioquia and Cali (3°27'N, 76°32'W; 1000 m) in the Department of the Valle. Though in Venezuela his resurgence has been brought, there is had information of his presence neither in the frontier zone of Colombia, and the Caribbean region. According to the companies that offer services of pest control, the problem accents in houses and health centers belonging to the lowest social strata, which have also economic difficulties to support the high costs of insect control. In addition, since the sting of *C. lectularis* is not painful, the tolerance of the population to the problem is high; in spite of the fact that the majority of the persons (80 %) develops an allergic reaction to the saliva injected by the bed bug female, while it feeds, producing generally one swelling, but without the red point typical of the sting of other insects. This species though it has not been involved in the transmission of any disease, if appellant has brought as carrier of the causal organisms of the pest, fever, tularemia, fever Q and hepatitis B, which characterizes the bed bugs as a potential problem in public health.

Key Words Resurgence, pest control companies, control, houses, health centers