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Pest Control Must Be A Collaborative Effort - Rodents

Remember, Pest Control takes a collaborative effort between Environmental Health Specialists and residents to keep the problem from getting out of hand.

The following information provides some steps residents can take to help keep their home and neighborhood free from infestation.

Clean Up!

Clean up rodent food sources and nesting sites
Prevent contact with rodents by cleaning up your home or workplace.
Eliminate rodent food sources

- Be sure to clean up any spilled bird seed.
- Never place any type of food on the ground.
Keep food in thick plastic or metal containers with tight lids.
- Clean up spilled food right away and wash dishes and cooking utensils soon after use.
- Keep outside cooking areas and grills clean.
- Always put pet food away after use and do not leave pet food or water bowls out overnight.
- Keep bird feeders away from the house and utilize squirrel guards to limit access to the feeder by squirrels and other rodents.
- Use a thick plastic or metal garbage can with a tight lid.
- Keep compost bins as far away from the house as possible (100 feet or more is best).

If storing trash and food waste inside the home, do so in rodent-proof containers and frequently clean the containers with soap and water. Dispose of trash and garbage on a frequent and regular basis and pick up or eliminate clutter.

Eliminate possible nesting sites outside the home. Elevate hay, woodpiles, and garbage cans at least 1 foot off the ground. Move woodpiles far away from the house (100 feet or more is best). Get rid of old trucks, cars, and old tires that mice and rats could use as homes. Keep grass cut short and shrubbery within 100 feet of the home well trimmed.

Seal Up!

Seal up holes inside and outside the home to prevent entry by rodents.
Rats can squeeze through a hole the size of a half dollar,

and mice can squeeze through a hole the size of a nickel!



Prevent rodents from entering the home by checking inside and outside the house for gaps or holes.

Where to look for gaps or holes inside your home

- Inside, under, and behind kitchen cabinets, refrigerators and stoves.
- Inside closets near the floor corners.
- Around the fireplace.
- Around doors.
- Around the pipes under sinks and washing machines.
- Around the pipes going to hot water heaters and furnaces.
- Around floor vents and dryer vents.
- Inside the attic.
- In the basement or crawl space.
- In the basement and laundry room floor drains.
- Between the floor and wall juncture.

Where to look for gaps or holes outside your home

- In the roof among the rafters, gables, and eaves.
- Around windows.
- Around doors.
- Around the foundation
- Attic vents and crawl space vents.
- Under doors.
- Around holes for electrical, plumbing, cable, and gas lines.

Fill small holes with steel wool. Put caulk around the steel wool to keep it in place. Use lath screen or lath metal, cement, hardware cloth, or metal sheeting to fix large holes. These materials can be found at your local hardware store. Fix gaps in trailer skirtings and use flashing around the base of the house. If you do not remember to seal up entry holes in your home, rodents will continue to get inside. Outbuildings and garages should also be sealed to prevent the entrance of rodents.

Trap Up!

Trap rodents around the home to help reduce the rodent population. Choose an appropriate snap trap. Traps for catching mice are different from those for catching rats. Carefully read the instructions before setting the trap.

When setting the trap, place a small amount of peanut butter (approximately the size of an average sweet pea) on the bait pan of the snap trap.



Position the bait end of the trap next to the wall so it forms a "T" with the wall. Rodents prefer to run next to walls or other objects for safety and do not like being out in the open.

In attics, basements, crawlspaces and other areas that do not have regular human traffic, set traps in any area where there is evidence of frequent rodent activity. Some rodents, particularly rats, are very cautious and several days may pass before they approach the traps. Other rodents, such as house mice and deer mice, are less cautious and may be trapped more quickly.

Do not use glue traps or live traps. These traps can scare mice that are caught live and cause them to urinate. Since their urine may contain germs, this may increase your risk of being exposed to diseases.

Also place traps in outbuildings and in areas that might likely serve as rodent shelters. Natural rodent predators, such as non-poisonous snakes, owls, and hawks, may also help control and reduce the number of rodents outside the home.