

HOW TO GET RID OF RATS

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For years people have had the misconception that rats are confined solely to slum-like areas. After receiving numerous reports of rats, we at the Platte County Health Department feel it is important to clear up some of these misconceptions. Several practices have been observed which contribute to the presence of rats in residential areas; however, with a small amount of effort and care, these conditions can be eradicated and the problems with rats minimized.

Rats require food, harborage (shelter) and water. Although their water supply is difficult to control, the availability of food and shelter can be reduced.

The practice of open burning of trash is not acceptable, since the fire does not become hot enough to completely consume the food scraps. Trash and garbage should be disposed of in a commercial landfill or at the county landfill .

Since **pet food** is an ideal food for rodents, it should be stored in a rat-proof container. Scraps of pet food left by dogs will be picked up by rats. Dogs penned in a run should be on concrete to facilitate cleaning and to prevent burrowing under the doghouse.

Boards, trash, junk, lawn trimmings, fireplace wood, and similar materials provide excellent harborage. These materials should be stored on racks at least eighteen (18) inches off the ground or should be disposed of to prevent the rats from using them in this way.

The services of an exterminator may be utilized to eliminate established rat colonies.



RAT-PROOF BUILDINGS:

- Make repairs to keep rats out of your house and other buildings.
- Doors should be no more than 3/8 inch from the frame; gnawed through or rotted doors should be rat-proofed with metal channels or flashing.
- Basement windows should fit tight and have no broken panes.
- Openings in foundation walls 1/2 inch or larger in diameter and up to 30 inches from the ground should be rat-stopped with metal or filled with masonry.

Close up spaces under porches, staircases, etc. so rats won't have a place to hide and to raise their families--they like dark, enclosed spots.

KILL THE RATS:

TRAP RATS:

- Attach a piece of cardboard to the trap to make it more effective. Bacon, walnuts, raisin bread or fish make good trap bait.
- Set the trap against the wall and make a tunnel which will lead the rat right to the trap.
- Wearing gloves, wrap dead rats in paper and put in covered garbage can or burn them.

EXTERMINATE RATS:

A poison containing an anticoagulant such as warfarin, coumafuryl, pindone, diphacinone, valone or chlorophacinone are baits recommended for use by the general public to exterminate rats on the premises.

PROPER HANDLING OF RAT BAIT:

Bait stations should be placed in an active runway and should be checked daily to make sure that there is sufficient bait and that it is in good condition. Rats can't eat bait which is in poor condition. Be liberal in baiting.

Therefore, observe the following instructions:

- Protect animals other than the rodents you are attempting to eliminate and shield baits from the weather under shelter or with bait boxes, boards, pipes, or cans.
- Note locations of all bait containers so that inspections can be made and the bait that has been consumed can be replaced.
- Daily inspections should be made for the first few days after regular feeding begins.
- At each inspection, smooth the surface of the bait so that new signs of feeding will show readily.
- Replace moldy, wet caked, or insect infested bait with fresh ones.
- If bait remains undisturbed for several successive inspections, move it to an area showing fresh rodent signs.

If everyone works together, the rats can be eliminated along with the damage and disease which accompany them.