

Rat Control

Why are rats a problem?

Rats are a major public health menace. They destroy property, spread disease, bite people, and contaminate food. It is estimated that rats are responsible for destroying one fifth of all the food produced in the world every year. The diseases they spread include typhoid, murine typhus, leptospirosis, rickettsial pox, salmonellosis, rat-bite fever, and plague.

How to tell if you have a rat problem

The most common ways to tell if you have a rat problem are by:

- Droppings – about $\frac{3}{4}$ " long
- Burrows – along outside walls, basements, embankments, under brush, etc.
- Sightings – rats are 7-10" long with tails 6-8" long (mice are much smaller)
- Gnawing – gnawed wood around walls
- Noises – squeaking or scratching between walls

How to prevent a rat infestation

Rats need food, water, and shelter to survive. To keep rats away, be sure to:

- Keep garbage in cans with tight-fitting lids
- Clean up litter in your yard
- Keep food stored in tightly sealed containers
- Repair leaking pipes
- Remove standing water
- Clean up debris around house and yard
- Keep grass and weeds short
- Store lumber at least 18" from the ground