

# Rodents in Urban Environments



FEBRUARY 2022

## Managing Rats and Mice

Rats and mice are common pests in the urban environment. Their presence can be determined by a number of signs including: droppings and urine, tracks (including foot prints or tail marks), burrows, damaged food packages, chewing noises and other sounds. Pest management is important to prevent property damage and disease transmission.

There are many kinds of rodents in B.C., but only three species typically cause problems. Knowing what species is causing the problem will make it easier for you to come up with an effective plan for their removal.

### The Norway Rat

- › Brown colour
- › Measures 30-45 cm (12-18 inches) long
- › Blunt nose, large ears and short tail relative to its body
- › Commonly found in crawl spaces and building perimeters



### Roof Rat

- › Black colour
- › Measures 33-43 cm (13-17 inches) long
- › Pointed nose, large ears and a tail longer than its body
- › Great climbers and can be found in ceilings and attics



### House Mouse

- › Grey/taupe in colour
- › Measures 15-17 cm (6-7 inches) long
- › Large ears and a hairless tail equal to the length of its body
- › Builds nests in enclosed spaces using shredded paper, insulation and other soft materials



## Vacant Buildings

Vacant buildings can provide shelter and nesting opportunities for rodents and may also contain food attractants. The City requires property owners of buildings scheduled for demolition to hire a qualified Pest Control company to certify that all buildings and structures have been inspected for pest infestation, specifically rats, and that if any were to be found, measures have been taken to remove them. Demolition Permits will not be granted until the buildings are found to be free of rodents. For details. Visit [coquitlam.ca/vacantbuildings](http://coquitlam.ca/vacantbuildings) for details.

## Be a Good Neighbour

Rodents don't know boundaries. Be proactive in your community and encourage your neighbours to take preventative steps to keep rodent problems from spreading. Help neighbours who need assistance and share rodent prevention techniques.

Prevention

Prevention is the most effective solution for rodent control.

Take away the places they like to hide, sleep and nest by:

- > Removing clutter and rubbish from your yard and garage
- > Keeping your grass trimmed, don't let vegetation overgrow.
- > Keeping bushes and trees away from your house
- > Storing firewood and lumber 30 cm (1 ft) off the ground and away from buildings

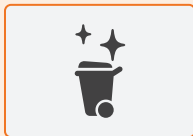
Rodent-proof your home by:

- > Locating any points of entry that rodents can access - mice can squeeze through holes the size of a dime, while rats can fit through holes the size of a quarter
- > Sealing all holes and cracks larger than 6 mm (1/4 inch), which eliminates access to the inside of buildings on your property
- > Regularly inspecting your home and actively making repairs

Take away their food and water by:



Storing garbage and food waste in a secure, indoor location until collection day



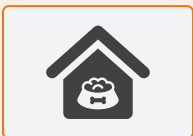
Keeping Garbage and Green Carts clean



Composting responsibly. Use a rodent resistant compost bin or use your Green Cart for all food scraps



Removing bird feeders or only bird feeding responsibly



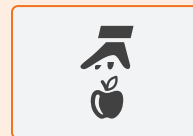
Not feeding stray animals and keeping all pet food inside



Feeding pets indoors and cleaning up leftover food when your pet is finished eating



Harvesting your garden promptly and not leaving produce over the winter



Removing fallen fruits or nuts from your yard



Removing any containers from your yard that might hold water and repairing leaky pipes or taps - cover pools and hot tubs when not in use



Keeping your barbecue clean



Avoid situations like this and place bird feeders in an area inaccessible to rodents.

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### Rodent Control

If you have a rodent problem, you will need to combine control and prevention methods to get rid of the rodents and keep them out. To hire a humane pest control professional in your area, visit [animalkind.ca](http://animalkind.ca).

### Traps

Traps are the most effective way to get rid of rats and mice. Identify which rodent you are trapping as rat traps and mouse traps are different sizes. Snap traps are the most recommended method as they will kill rodents humanely and quickly. They should be placed in locked and secured boxes that are inaccessible to pets, other wildlife and children. Glue traps are not recommended as they can cause stress and suffering to the animals caught. Pets and other wildlife can also get caught in glue traps.

Food like peanut butter, cheese and Nutella can be used as bait. If the traps aren't catching any rodents, move to an alternate location. Continue using traps every 2-3 weeks until you don't catch any more.

### Rodenticides (rodent poisons)

Rodenticides should only be considered as a last resort. These highly toxic pesticides are considered inhumane, causing slow and painful deaths to rodents, and pose a significant risk to people, children and pets. Rodenticides can also indirectly poison wildlife including birds such as hawks and owls if they prey on a rodent that has ingested rodenticides.



Targeted rodent eats poison



Rodent becomes lethargic or dies with poison in their body



Predators feed on poisoned rodents



Non-targeted animals become sick or die

If you choose to use rodenticides, choose a non-anticoagulant pesticide like corn cellulose. Always read and follow the label directions. Use tamper-proof bait stations and place them in an area that is inaccessible to children, pets and other animals. Do not scatter the bait over the ground and ensure you properly dispose of any leftover bait.



The sale and use of second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) that contain the active ingredients **brodifacoum**, **bromadiolone** or **difethialone** have been banned in B.C. (as of July 2021) except for services deemed essential by the province and only when applied by a licensed pest control company.

### Disposal

To dispose of dead rodents, use gloves to pick up the animal and seal in a plastic bag. Place in a second plastic bag that can be sealed and then put in your garbage cart. Disinfect the area where the rodent was caught.



### Fine

Residents can be fined \$150 for attracting vectors to their property. It is a resident's responsibility to ensure their property does not provide food, shelter or breeding conditions for vectors (as outlined in the Wildlife and Vector Control Bylaw No. 4284, 2012).