

POISONS AND TRAPS

- Several rodenticides or traps are available from home supply stores and garden centres. Please use these according to the label instructions and place them in areas **inaccessible** to children, pets and wildlife.
- Snap traps are recommended for control of rats where the use of poisons would be dangerous or where odours from dead rodents would be a problem.
- Place tamper resistant bait stations under decks, by compost bins, or along fence lines. If you place bait stations above ground level, take care that they are securely fastened where children or pets can't find them. It may take several days for the rats to enter and feed in bait stations. Remember to remove and properly dispose of all uneaten bait at the end of a control program. Rat bait stations are available in hardware stores and garden centres and it is important that they are anchored to the ground or fastened to something.

DISPOSAL

- Don't touch rodents with your bare hands, and wash thoroughly after handling traps.
- Use disposable gloves to handle dead rodents.
- Dispose of dead rats by burying them or placing them in a sealed plastic bag and putting them in the trash.

VALUABLE INFORMATION ON
RAT CONTROL AND
PREVENTION CAN BE FOUND
ON VARIOUS WEBSITES.

NOTES

- *A neighbourhood rat control program can ONLY be effective with the cooperation of ALL PROPERTY OWNERS.*
- *It is YOUR responsibility and in your best interest to keep rats from gaining a foothold in your neighbourhood.*
- *Keep all food and all garbage tightly covered.*
- *Rat-proof your property.*
- *Bird or pet food should be removed immediately after feeding.*
- *Elevate stored materials.*
- *Get rid of trash.*
- *Organize a community meeting to collectively agree on measures to take as suggested in this pamphlet.*

WHEN PROBLEMS ARISE

If you have persistent pest problems you should consider the services of a professional pest control company. Consult the local telephone listings or the web.

If you have questions regarding an unsightly premise where rats have been spotted, please contact Bylaw Services at (250) 746-6126.



RAT CONTROL AND PREVENTION



The following information is intended to make owners and occupiers of property aware of conditions that facilitate the presence and spread of rodents so that preventative measures can be taken.

CITY OF DUNCAN
200 Craig Street
Duncan, BC V9L 1W3
CITY HALL PHONE: 250-746-6126
PUBLIC WORKS PHONE: 250-746-5321

*Additional copies may be obtained from
City Hall or the Public Works Yard*

WHY THE CONCERN?

DISEASE

Rats are known to be able to transmit a number of diseases directly (through bites) or indirectly through the bites of parasites found on the rat or by the contamination of food with urine or feces).

DAMAGE

Rats continually gnaw and dig as part of their nature. They damage wood, wiring, plasterboard and insulation. They undermine sheds and sidewalks.

DO I HAVE A RAT PROBLEM?

When determining whether rats have infested your property check for the following:

Rat Droppings

Rats leave 30 to 180 droppings per day. These will range from one half to three quarters of an inch in length and are cylindrical in shape.

Burrows

Rat burrows (holes) are 5 to 8 inches in diameter with worn paths; check near junk piles, sheds, foundations, composts, etc. Norway Rats are known to burrow extensively while Roof Rats prefer to nest in locations off the ground and rarely dig burrows for living quarters if off-the-ground sites exist.

Runways

Rats constantly explore and learn, memorizing the locations of pathways, obstacles, food and water, shelter, and features of their environment. They can quickly detect and tend to avoid new objects and novel foods. Thus, they often avoid traps and baits for several days or more following their initial placement. Roof rats have an excellent sense of balance and use their long tails to steady themselves along overhead utility lines or fence tops.

Gnaw Marks

This is a sure sign of rats; the front teeth of rats are continually growing, so rats must constantly gnaw to reduce the size of their teeth. Check around pipes, doorways, crawlspace vents, etc.

Listen for GNAWING SOUNDS or the sound of rats running in attics, crawlspace and walls.

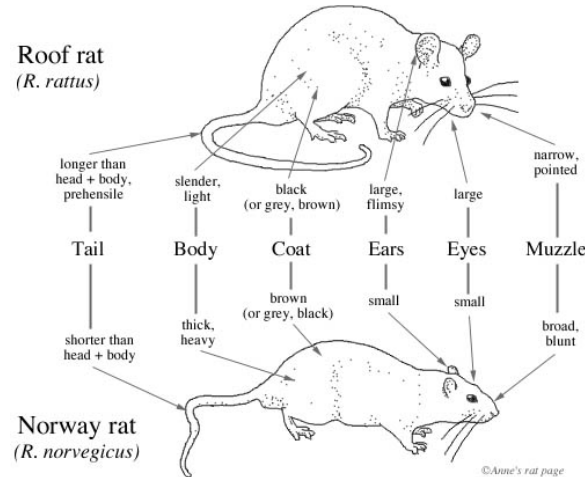
RATS IN THIS AREA

There are two species of rats found on Vancouver Island, the ROOF RAT sometimes referred to as a "Black Rat," and the NORWAY RAT sometimes known as the "Brown Rat".

Roof Rats will gladly live in close proximity to humans, particularly in attics, ceilings, or wall areas. Roof rats are carnivorous; they will eat nearly all types of food including pet food, garbage, food scraps in composts, fallen fruit and nuts, and bird seed. They are agile climbers and usually live and nest above ground in shrubs, trees, and dense vegetation such as ivy. In buildings, they are most often found in enclosed or elevated spaces such as attics, walls, false ceilings, and cabinets.

Characteristics of a Roof Rat:

Sexual Maturity: 2-3 months, Gestation Period: 22 days, Litter Size: 6-8 per litter, No. of Litters: 4-6 per year, Diet: Fruits, vegetables, grains and nuts, Length of Adult Life: 18 months, Nests: Trees, rooftops, attics; Up to 300 ft. from food & water.



Norway Rats live wherever humans live, particularly in urban areas. They are nocturnal and are very good swimmers, both on the surface and underwater. Brown rats dig well and often excavate extensive burrow systems. The Brown rat is an omnivore and will consume almost anything, but cereals form a substantial part of their diet. Brown rats live in large, hierarchical groups, either in burrows or subsurface places, such as sewers and cellars.

Characteristics of a Norway Rat:

Sexual Maturity: 5 weeks, Gestation Period: 21 days, Litter Size: 7 – 14 per litter, No. of Litters: 5 per year, Length of Adult Life: 1-3 years, Nests: Burrows adjacent to buildings or structures.

CONTROL OF RATS

Although an infestation of rats can be temporarily controlled with poisons or traps, permanent control can only be achieved if food and harbourage are removed.

RATS WILL NOT ESTABLISH THEMSELVES IN AN AREA WHERE THERE IS NO FOOD OR HARBOURAGE

ELIMINATE HARBOURAGE

Remove unused piles of lumber and debris. Lumber and firewood should be stacked on stands so there is 6 -8" clearance below the pile and between the pile and any wall. Cut weeds and ornamental shrubs so that they do not hang into ditches or provide hidden runways along fence lines.

ELIMINATE FOOD SOURCES

Ensure compost bins are secured. Avoid leaving pet food outside overnight. Garbage bags should not be used for waste food disposal; where their use is unavoidable, the bags should not be placed outside until garbage collection day; metal cans with tight fitting lids are the only truly rat-proof containers. Bird feeders should be equipped with trays to catch spillage; spilled feed should be cleaned up immediately. Remove fallen fruit and nuts. Clean out accumulated wastes and food from pet enclosures.

RAT-PROOF BUILDINGS

The most successful and long-lasting form of rat control in structures is exclusion, or "building them out". Screen crawlspace and attic vents (metal screen only). Seal all gaps/holes larger than 1/4" around all doorways and plumbing fixtures. Repair cracks in cement footings and foundations and any openings for water pipes, electric wires, sewer pipes, drain spouts, and vents.

For roof rats in particular, thinning dense vegetation will make the habitat less desirable. Climbing hedges and honeysuckle on fences or buildings are conducive to roof rat infestations and should be thinned or removed if possible, as should overhanging tree limbs within 3 feet of the roof. Separate the canopy of densely growing plants from one another and from buildings by a distance of 2 feet or more to make it more difficult for rats to move between them.