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Rats and Mice Control

Michigan State University Extension-Oakland County



Rodent Control

Source of Rats & Mice

Rodents can commonly be found in your yard, sheds, straw and wood piles, trash piles, barns, fencerows, dumpster, etc.

Entering the Home

Rodents will enter homes through open or un-screened doors, windows, ventilators and spaces around basement windows. They will also enter under shallow foundations of the house, and through cracks and breaks in the foundation or door frame. Holes around electrical inlets or pipes also provide entrance ways. Also, check holes in the floor around piping (water, etc.) for openings around door frames.

Excluding Rats & Mice From the Home:

Repair or replace screens on windows and doors. Use 1/4" hardware cloth on door bottom panels or basement windows. Keep doors closed when not in use. Use a good spring to make sure doors close and a spring lock to make sure they stay closed. Close unnecessary openings with concrete or sheet metal. Fit pieces of sheet metal around pipes to make a collar through which rodents cannot gnaw. Use a du-

rable silicone caulk around door frames, windows and smaller cracks in the foundation and upper portions of the house. Make sure that sacks of garden produce do not sit out in the garage overnight before they are brought into the cellar; a curious mouse may get in. Examine food before bringing it into the house or basement for storage.

Discourage Rats & Mice

Inside the Home:



Have concrete basement floors and solid walls. Store materials in the basement on stands about 10 to 12 inches

above the floor. Do not allow litter to accumulate on the floor behind the sink, stove or cabinets. Set them flush against the wall or far enough away so that the space can be easily cleaned.

Outside the home:

Do not pile any materials (fireplace wood, etc.) near or against walls. Keep leaf litter and weeds from accumulating around the base of your home.

Steps leading into the house should be concrete or masonry. If wood, the space beneath should be open and kept clean. Keep stored materials (boxes, lumber, pipes, etc.) off the ground; have a space of 12-18 inches beneath.

Killing Rats & Mice

Traps (Wooden-base snap traps)

For rats, enlarge the trigger with wire screening or cardboard and place trap behind boxes along walls so that rats must pass over the trigger. Use several traps. Have 10 or 12 on hand.

For mice, tie bacon, raisin, cotton, or a gumdrop on trigger or smear trigger with peanut butter. Use several traps.

Poisons

Don't use poisons inside the house unless rats or mice are very numerous. In baiting outside, don't miss the wood piles, straw piles, trash piles, fencerows, etc. **KEEP CHILDREN AND PETS AWAY FROM THESE POISONS.**

Prepared Available Poisons:

Warfarin, Pivalyn, PMP Tracking Powder, Red Squill

Warfarin (one commercially available form is D-Con), Pivalyn (a water poison for farm use), PMP Tracking Powder (for dusting of rodent high-traffic areas), and Red Squill are all effective rodent poisons. Follow the product label directions. Place bait in a location not accessible to children, pets, domestic animals or wild-life. Do not place bait in areas where there is a possibility of contaminating food or surfaces that come in direct contact with food. Warfarin and PMP are anticoagulant poisons and come prepared or can be mixed with cereals. Freshly ground corn meal is a good choice. The bait must remain in place for several weeks without spoiling. Put out under bait boxes or other cover. No pre-baiting is necessary, but the bait supply must be continually checked and replenished to kill all the rats on the premises.

To poison mice, use anticoagulant poisons as described above, but with smaller and more closely spaced placements. Red Squill is not effective for mice. Red squill is effective on rats, causing paralysis and death in a short period.

Miscellaneous

Cats are good mousers, but not good ratters. Small dogs are good ratters.

REMEMBER! READ ALL LABELS AND FOLLOW ALL DIRECTIONS WHEN USING POISONS!

Know you local poison control center phone number in case of an emergency.



Would you like additional information?

Additional information is available on-line. Please see [MSU Extension-Oakland County's publications](#) as well as the [MSU Extension Bookstore](#) on campus.

Please contact our office (248/858-0880) for assistance.

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