

RODENT CONTROL



What you need to know. What you need to do.

Rats behave predictably. They like to live where people live and they can thrive on just one ounce of food and water per day.

Rodent control in Royal Oak is everyone's responsibility. Good house keeping practices, which eliminate food supply and destroy shelter needed by rats to survive, are the best defense when it comes to rat-proofing our neighborhoods.

Winning the war on rats in Royal Oak

There is no magic to rodent prevention and control. Residents can win the war against rodents by using a variety of common sense techniques.

HOW TO DISCOURAGE RATS FROM YOUR PROPERTY:

- Use rodent-proof garbage cans with tight fitting lids to eliminate food supply.
- Don't leave pet food out overnight.
- Clean up pet droppings daily.
- Don't feed wildlife. If you have a birdfeeder, it must be 48-inches above ground level. It should be kept clean and tidy and never be overfilled.
- Remove junk trash and tall vegetation that rats use for shelter. Trim weeds and brush and keep grass short (3-inches or less) to minimize cover and food sources.
- All building materials, lumber, boxes, firewood and similar items should be stored either on rat-proof paved areas or stacked 18-inches above the ground.
- Screen dumpster drainage holes with hardware cloth.

How to detect the presence of rats

LOOK FOR THESE COMMON PHYSICAL SIGNS OF RODENT INVESTATION:

- **Runways:** Rodents memorize their territory through physical memory and use the same paths again and again. They prefer to move along objects. Following a run may lead may trace to a rat's shelter.
- **Droppings:** Rat droppings are thin, black and less than 3/4-inch in length.
- **Sightings:** Because rodents are primarily nocturnal, daytime rodent sightings may indicate a significant population.
- **Urine/Odor:** A distinctive, musky odor may be present. Look for urine stains.
- **Gnaw Marks:** Fresh gnaw marks are light and will darken over time.
- **Rub Marks:** Rodents leave rub marks from body oil, grease and dirt along the walls they travel. New rub marks will smear. Old rub marks are darker and may flake off.
- **Tracks:** Footprints and tail drags may be seen in dusty locations. To view difficult-to-see tracks, shine a strong flashlight at a low angle across the dust. A non-toxic tracking powder placed on a suspected rodent trail, and re-inspected the following day, also may assist in identifying tracks.
- **Upset Pets:** House pets, such as cats and dogs may become agitated when they hear rodents gnawing, digging, running and fighting.

What you can do to rid your neighborhood of rats

Encourage your neighbors to join forces in the war on rats. The city has material on its website that contains information and illustrations on rat burrows, the inspection process, sanitation, trapping, baiting, rodenticides and more. You can view, share and print document titled 'Rodent Information' at:

http://romi.gov/webfm_send/1875

Residents are also encouraged to report junk, debris and tall grass to Royal Oak Code Enforcement at 248-246-3238. Keep in mind staff may need permission to enter your property to confirm a violation that cannot be seen from the street.


If rat burrows are found on your property, you must promptly exterminate at *your expense*. After extermination, proper precautions shall be taken to prevent reinfestation.

Facts about rats

- A pair of rats are able produce as many as 2,000 descendants in a year.
- Rats have very hard teeth and can gnaw through wood, plaster and plastic.
- Rats can crawl through holes the size of a quarter.
- The risk of passing disease from rats to humans is very real.


Even one yard with a food source or hiding place can cause rat problems for an entire neighborhood. It takes everyone's cooperation.

DOMESTIC RODENTS
Some General Tips on Rodent Control




NORWAY RAT *Rattus norvegicus*

TAIL — Shorter than head & body
BODY — Heavy, thick
EARS — Small
EYES — Small
NOSE — Blunt
(After Brown & White, Seven Sinner, Comstock)



ROOF RAT *Rattus rattus*


TAIL — Longer than head & body
BODY — Slender
EARS — Large
EYES — Large
NOSE — Pointed
(After Brown & White, Allen, Faust, Galt, Goff)




HOUSE MOUSE *Mus musculus*

TAIL — Small
HEAD — Small


Droppings



Blunt
Average Length: 24"
(shown actual size)



Pointed
Average Length: 12"
(shown actual size)



Pointed
Average Length: 18"
(shown actual size)

| Name | Average Weight | Body | Tail | Ears | Color | Food Items | Common poison per day | Droppings per day | Litter per day | Habits |
|---|----------------|--|--|--------------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|--|
| Norway Rat <i>Rattus norvegicus</i> | 10-17 ounces | Heavy, stocky, 7"-10" long, stout | 8"-8 1/2" long, lighter color on underside | Avg. close to body | Brown to black on back and sides, gray underneath | Mainly grains, fruits, vegetables Eats most any human food | 3/4 - 1oz. Food 1/2 - 1oz. water | 3-7 feces per year | 18-200 | Usually nests in basements & lower portions of buildings. Burrows in soil extensively. Active primarily at night. Fear corner, good swimmer. |
| Roof Rat <i>Rattus rattus</i> <i>Alstonomus</i> | 6 - 12 ounces | Slender body, 8"-10" long, uniform color, tip pointed muzzle | 7.5"-10" long, color top & bottom | Large, prominent | Tawny body, grayish underparts | Cereals, fruits, grains, nuts, eggs, etc. | 1/2 - 1oz. Food 1/2 - 1oz. water | 3-7 feces per year | 30-100 | Usually enters and nests in upper portions of buildings. May nest inside of trees (esp. palms, ivy, etc.) Burrows very little. Excellent climber. Active at night. |
| House Mouse <i>Mus musculus</i> | Less than 1oz | Avg. body 2.5" long | 3"-4" | Large, prominent | Dusky gray on back, lighter gray on belly | Meats, grains, cereals, fruits, eggs, etc. Most any type human food | 1/10 oz. Food 1/2 oz. water | 12 young in litter | 50 | May nest in any portion of a building near food. Has an average range of 50ft. from nest. Active mainly at night. Noises and burrows of food frequently, rather than nesting large masses. |

'Rodent Information' is a document filled with data and illustrations on rat prevention and control. It is available at http://romi.gov/webfm_send/1875



If rats can't feed, they can't breed.