

City of Dearborn Rodent Abatement Program Risk / Benefit Information

Please take a few moments to thoroughly review this information to help you better understand rats, and the abatement service the City of Dearborn provides. The species of rat on your property is the Norway Rat (*Rattus Norvegicus*). The Norway Rat is the only pest species of rat found in Michigan. An Environmental Technician from the City will be using rodenticides and/or traps to abate the infestation, and will perform routine inspections until the infestation has been abated.

What is the balance between the risks and benefits of pesticides? By their very nature, most pesticides create some risk of harm - Pesticides can cause harm to humans, animals, or the environment because they are designed to kill or otherwise adversely affect living organisms. At the same time, pesticides are useful to society - Pesticides can kill potential disease-causing organisms and control insects, weeds, and other pests.

Environmental Fate of Pesticides. Exposure to light, heat and other agents in the environment cause pesticides to deteriorate. The amount of time that it takes to break down the pesticide depends on the temperature, humidity, light, moisture conditions, and other environmental factors. As a result, degradation times are highly variable depending on the compound and the environment in which it was applied. Generally, your Technician will select those pesticides that are the most effective and the least persistent. Any areas on your property that may be of specific concern should be brought to the attention of the Technician.

When used according to the label on the packaging, rodenticides pose no threat to the environment.

Why pesticides are used. Rodenticides are used to manage and control rodents. In this case, we are controlling rats, which are known to cause significant health risks, as well as economic and property damage worldwide. Some of the known health hazards associated with rat infestations are:

- * Oriental Rat Flea (Bubonic Plague, Murine Typhus)
- * Salmonellosis (Acute food poisoning)
- * Rat Bite Fever
- * Weils Disease
- * Leptospirosis.
- * Rats have also been shown to carry the organisms of Typhoid, Dysentery, and several other diseases.

Definitions

- Vector:** An organism that transmits an infectious disease.
- Vector Control:** Is any method to limit or eradicate the organisms which transmit disease pathogens.
- Pest:** Are living organisms that occur where they are not wanted or that cause damage to crops or humans or other animals.
- Pesticide:** Is any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest.
- Rodenticide:** An agent that kills, manages or controls rodents.

TYPES OF RODENTICIDES

The types of rodenticides most commonly used are classified as *Anticoagulant* and *Non-Anticoagulant*. The City of Dearborn Environmental Technicians may use either type depending on specific circumstances at or near the infestation site. The only risk of accidental exposure would be through ingesting (eating) the rodenticides. In the event that the rats displace rodenticides from a burrow, leaving it exposed, you can dispose of it by placing it in the trash and thoroughly washing your hands afterward.

Anticoagulant Rodenticides cause death by disrupting the normal blood clotting mechanisms, causing rodents to die from internal bleeding. Anticoagulants are classified as either *First* or *Second Generation* depending on their active ingredient.

Non-Anticoagulants Rodenticides are single-dose poisons that cause death in a variety of ways to include: disrupting energy production within the cells of the body, and/or releasing and mobilizing calcium from the bones into the bloodstream causing death by heart failure.

State and federal laws require that pesticides must be applied according to label directions. Labels direct users as to how, where, and at what rate the material must be applied. Upon request, your Technician will supply you with a copy of the label(s) for the product(s) applied.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

NEVER set out commercially purchased rat poison (rodenticides) after Vector Control has started abatement. Rats can become resistant to them, which can result in the rats becoming more difficult to eradicate. Additionally, improperly placed/used poisons are a danger to children, pets and non-target species. Rodenticides are best used by State of Michigan Certified Pest Management Professionals.

Pets. When pets are present on your property, you must take precautions to prevent them from coming into contact with rodenticides. These may include, but are not limited to, fencing off the treated area, taking your pet out on a leash to prevent access to the treated area, checking your yard prior to allowing pet access to ensure that rodenticides have not been moved by rats to places accessible to your pets. These precautions are important to keep your pets safe from accidental exposure to rodenticides.


In Case of an Emergency: In case of an emergency involving a pesticide product, you should contact: Dearborn Fire/Rescue; The National Poisoning Hotline at 1-800-222-1222; or The National Pesticide Information Center at 1-800-858-7378. Also have available the **EPA registration number** of the product involved. **This number can be found on the front of the Service Report in the Rodenticide Key provided to you at the time of service.**





Rodent Prevention and Elimination.

Rodents are a fact of life but we can reduce their numbers by working together. Dearborn is one of the only cities in Michigan with its own extensive rodent control program to combat rat populations. The success of our program is dependent upon your cooperation. You can help keep rodents away from your home by depriving them of shelter and food. Follow these simple guidelines:

Norway rat survival depends upon the existence of 3 basic environmental factors: (1) Food, (2) Water, and (3) Harborage.

 **Eliminate Food and Water:** Remove all potential sources of food from the premises, such as bird seed left out for birds. Routinely harvest ripe fruit and vegetables, and pick up all fruit that has fallen to the ground. Store pet food in metal containers with tight sealing lids and do not leave uneaten pet food outdoors. Avoid storing food in garages and storage sheds. Clean up pet feces daily. Keep trash and recycle carts closed at all times.

 **Eliminate Shelter & Harborage:** Close all openings larger than ½ inch to exclude rats. Repair or replace damaged vent screens. Remove all trash and debris. Stack woodpiles, lumber and household items at least 9 inches above the ground, and 12 inches away from fences and walls. Trim trees, bushes and vines at least 18 inches from the ground. Remove heavy vegetation away from building and fences. Thin vegetation to allow daylight in and remove rat hiding places.

 **Maintain a Rat Free Property:** After rats have been reduced, prevent reinfestation by keeping harborage and food sources to a minimum.

ALWAYS KEEP IN MIND that trapping and chemical control alone will NOT achieve long term, permanent rat control. If the rats can be controlled and conditions that allow them to reproduce are removed, then we have achieved a longer lasting control. After the harborage has been removed, your property should be maintained harborage free so that the rats will not find the property attractive for reinfestation. Most people are capable of controlling rat problems if given the proper direction.

The City is asking you to remove any conditions on your property that allow rat harborage. The continued maintenance and removal of harborage is recommended after the rats are controlled. At the same time, we are inspecting the neighborhood to find other properties with rat harborage.

The owner of the property on which rodent harborage is found is responsible for the abatement and control of the problems creating the harborage. For advice and more information on rodent prevention and control, contact the City of Dearborn Vector Control Program at 313-943-2099 or 313-943-2161.