

HOW TO GET RID OF RODENTS

Step 1: Take Away Their Food. Rodents will eat anything. You must get rid of their food to get rid of them. Common food sources include:

- Bird food/feeders
- Pet food/chicken feed
- Garbage
- Pet waste
- Unprotected compost
- Fallen fruit from trees or unharvested produce from gardens



Step 2: Eliminate Them. Trapping and poisoning are two effective ways to eliminate rodents.

Trapping: Trapping is the preferred method for eliminating rodents indoors and outdoors. Snap traps are inexpensive and effective. Peanut butter usually works as bait. Set the trap in the area with the most rodent activity. Rodents tend to run along walls, so place traps next to a wall, fence line or foundation. Make sure children and pets do not have access to the traps.



Poisoning: Poisoning is not an ideal way to eliminate rodents, but is sometimes necessary. Poison is not recommended for indoor use, as rodents can die inside walls and produce odor. Rodent poisons (rodenticides) are also harmful to animals and pets, so use carefully. **Always use a secured bait station** to keep poisons away from children and pets.



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Step 3: Keep Them Out of Your House. Small openings in homes, buildings and sheds must be sealed to prevent rodents from entering.

- Check for openings where pipes or wires enter the building, under eaves, and around foundations, doors and windows. Use cement, 1/4 inch steel hardware cloth (wire mesh-pictured), or steel wool and spray foam to seal openings.
- Crawl spaces and attics must be sealed to prevent rodent access.
- Rodents often enter through open doors, windows, or through pet doors. Install thresholds to prevent access under doors.



Step 4: Keep Them Out of Your Yard.

Don't let your yard be a nesting zone for rodents. Rats will nest in:

- Outdoor piles of garbage and junk.
- Under wood piles or lumber. Stack wood piles 18 inches off the ground.
- Under blackberry bushes, shrubs, vines and tall grasses that are not trimmed or cut back.
- Holes under buildings that haven't been filled.

You may need to hire a professional if you have a bad infestation. Visit http://www.ipmnet.org/Tim/Choose_Pest_Cont_Co.pdf for help choosing a pest control operator.

You can also call Multnomah County Vector Control at (503) 988-3464 or e-mail vector.nuisance@multco.us if you think you may have a rodent problem.

CLEANING UP AFTER AN INFESTATION

Follow these clean-up procedures to reduce your risk of exposure:

Note that these are recommendations provided by the CDC. Remember that bleach can stain surfaces and that cleaning chemicals can be harmful if misused. **ALWAYS** follow labeled instructions.

NEVER dry sweep or vacuum a rodent infested area. **ALWAYS** use wet cleaning methods.

ALWAYS wear rubber gloves, long sleeves, protective eyewear and a dust mask when cleaning. This will help protect you from contamination, and from coming in contact with potentially harmful chemicals.

A 10 parts water to 1 part chlorine bleach solution or a household disinfectant can be used to clean up contaminated areas.



Dispose of dead rodents by disinfecting first. Use gloves to pick up the rodent, place it in a bag and seal it. Place the bag within another bag and seal it. Put the bag in a covered outdoor trash can that is regularly emptied.



Wash your hands thoroughly with warm water, soap and dry with paper towels when you are done cleaning. Launder your clothes normally.

RODENT FACTS

Rodents are a public health risk because they spread disease.

- **Rats eat everything!**
- **Rats climb, jump and swim.** If a squirrel can climb it, a rat can climb it.
- **Rats chew** through plastic, wood, soft metals, electrical wires (sometimes causing fires) and even cinder block and brick.
- **Rats squeeze into tiny spaces** and nest where it is dark and warm. They can produce a litter of pups (babies) every 3 to 4 weeks!

What activities increase my risk of exposure to diseases carried by rodents?



Entering or cleaning buildings that have been closed for a long period of time, such as hunting shacks, garages, storage sheds, or anywhere with rodent droppings.



You can get sick by breathing in dust that is contaminated with urine or droppings, by direct contact with an infected rodent, or by eating or drinking products contaminated with urine or feces.

How do you know if you have a rodent problem?

Droppings are typically the easiest way to identify a rodent problem.



CONTACT INFORMATION

If you live outside of Portland, there may be another local agency responsible for rodent control. Contact information for local municipalities is listed below for your convenience.

City of Fairview

Main Office
(503) 665-7929

City of Gresham

Code Compliance Office
(503) 618-2463

City of Wood Village

City Hall
(503) 667-6211

City of Troutdale

Code Compliance Office
(503) 491-4009

City of Maywood Park

Multnomah County Code Enforcement
(Call this number for rodent questions within unincorporated Multnomah County)
(503) 988-3464

Some of the content in this pamphlet was adapted from Public Health- Seattle & King County Environmental Health Services

**Multnomah County Health Department
Vector Control**

5235 N. Columbia Blvd.
Portland, OR 97203
Phone: (503) 988-3464

[HTTPS://MULTCO.US/HEALTH/STAYING-HEALTHY/PEST-
PREVENTION-AND-CONTROL/RATS](https://multco.us/health/staying-healthy/pest-prevention-and-control/rats)



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

RODENT PREVENTION AND CONTROL

