



Have you seen rats or mice in your home or food premises?

The most common types of rats found in Australia are:

Black or Roof Rat (*rattus rattus*)

Fur colour grey, brown or black and may be white underneath with a small body and large tail

Brown or Norway Rat (*rattus norvegicus*)

Fur colour dark brown to black with a large body and small tail

Rats and mice are generally active at night and are more commonly seen in late summer and early autumn.

Rats and mice are common in all urban areas. They will live in a variety of places such as stormwater drains and under buildings. They feed on almost anything, including rubbish, pet food, food scraps, fruit, vegetables and nuts in gardens and pet faeces and can travel up to several blocks to find food and water.

FACT: A rat can last longer without water than a camel.

How can you discourage rats and mice from entering your property

- Ensure rubbish bins, recycling bins and compost bins have tight fitting lids, regularly emptied and are not overflowing
- Store dry foods (flour, rice, nuts, sugar) in vermin proof containers with close-fitting lids
- Keep stacked materials (wood, bricks etc) at least 300mm above the ground
- Keep all grass areas cut short on your property, remove unwanted undergrowth bushes and creepers
- Regularly clean out storage sheds, garages and subsurface storage areas and dispose of unwanted items
- Inspect and repair any cracks, crevices or holes in your building to prevent vermin access into your premise
- Use materials that will resist rodent gnawing, for example concrete, hard setting filler, steel wool, galvanised sheet metal and heavy-gauge hardware cloth
- Cover rainwater tank openings and floor vents with rodent resistant materials
- Leave out only enough pet food for your pets to eat soon after it is placed or remove left over pet food
- Block access points to cupboards containing food and food preparation utensils

Detecting rats and mice on your property

Rats are usually only seen during the day if they are very hungry and present in large numbers.

The presence of rats may be detected by:



- droppings that are black, thin, oblong shape (10mm - 18mm)
- partially eaten fruit and vegetables
- greasy rub marks
- burrow holes around buildings
- gnawing damage in a range of materials including wood, soft metals, plastic food containers, conduits and cables
- nests hidden in buildings/sheds made from rags, paper, cardboard, straw and other materials
- squeaking, gnawing or movement noises in the walls, cupboards, ceiling or sub floor areas.

Rodent control methods

- Rat poisons or rodenticides containing an anti-coagulant can be purchased from hardware stores or supermarkets
- Extreme care should be taken when using rat poisons (always read instructions carefully) to prevent the danger of children or pets at home being accidentally poisoned
- Contact a licensed pest controller to assist in controlling vermin in your home or food premise



- There are two different types of traps—the old fashioned snap back and a plastic capture box
- Use bait traps with foods that have a strong odour such as bacon, chocolate and peanut butter
- If baiting is to occur outside your property, baits should be set to the location the rats enter your premise. This is to prevent native animals from ingesting the bait.

REMEMBER: Never set traps above food or food preparation surfaces to avoid contamination by urine, droppings or blood.

Dead rats or mice must be removed immediately by wrapping them in plastic or newspaper and placed in the domestic rubbish bin. Gloves should be worn when handling rats or mice.

REMEMBER: Always wash your hands with warm water and anti-bacterial liquid soap immediately after handling rats, mice or their droppings.

For more information please contact the Environmental Health Officers at:

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