

THE GLOBAL RISE OF RODENTS

Rodents are on the rise globally due to the following factors:

1. Increased human populations (creating denser communities) and increased discarded waste/harborage areas.
2. Insufficient rodent control programs.
 - Successful programs may take months.
 - Property maintenance changes may be required in order to reduce rodent populations through proper sanitation and exclusion.
3. Repeated mild winters.
 - Mild weather increases the number of rodent reproductive cycles leading to increased populations.
4. Aging building foundations and infrastructures (sewers, roads, etc.).
 - Be sure to check your property's foundation for potential entry points!



HEALTH EFFECTS OF RODENTS

Rodents are not known carriers of rabies. They are carriers of fleas, which are associated with illness. As a result, when cleaning up rodent carcasses or rodent droppings wear gloves and a facemask. Rodent carcasses can be disposed by double-bagging the carcasses and throwing them away in your regular trash. Use a solution of bleach and water (1 part bleach to 10 parts water) to clean rodent urine and droppings.

More information can be found at the following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website: <https://www.cdc.gov/rodents/>



Town of Arlington
Department of Health and Human Services
Office of the Board of Health

Managing a Rodent Problem



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"Sanitation is pest control. Pest exclusion is pest prevention. Pest prevention is public health."
-Bobby Corrigan, Rodentologist

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

An **Integrated Pest Management** (IPM) plan is an environmentally friendly, common sense approach to controlling pests. IPM plans focus on pest prevention through **sanitation** and **exclusion**; only using pesticides as needed to eliminate pest populations. The Health Department recommends an IPM approach to reducing rodent activity across Town. Since 2015, Arlington, similar to surrounding communities, has seen an increase in rodent activity. The following are tips for residents to do their part in preventing rodent activity in Arlington!

RODENT ACTIVITY SIGNS

It is important to check your property for:

- Rodent droppings (3/4 inch capsules)
- Gnaw marks around structures and on trash barrels
- Paths or runways with flattened vegetation
- Rub marks or streaks from rats consistently moving alongside a structure
- Burrows

Rats shelter in **burrows** that appear as small holes or cavities in the ground. The openings are smooth, circular, free of loose dirt/leaves, and relatively unnatural in nature. The burrows will have at least 2 openings, an entrance and an escape route. Rats commonly burrow under foundations, in firewood, in stone retaining walls, under the roots of shrubs and bushes, and in mulch beds.

RODENT PROOFING YOUR HOME

1. **Sanitation:** Remove attractants such as food, water, and harborage areas from your property.
 - Remove bird feeders.
 - Rodent-proof compost bins and gardens.
 - Store sealed garbage bags in durable trash receptacles with tight-fitting lids.
 - Only put trash out after 6pm the day before your scheduled pick-up.
 - Do not leave pet food or water dishes outside. Clean up pet waste frequently.
 - Remove clutter (gardening supplies, building supplies, etc.) and trim overgrown vegetation to eliminate harborage areas.
 - Keep items away from foundations as they may provide protected runways for rodents.
2. **Exclusion:** Inspect your foundation to ensure it is free of holes and other rodent entry points. Seal all cracks and openings.
 - Coarse steel wool, wire screen, and sheet metal are effective exclusion materials.
 - Plastic, wood, caulking, and other less sturdy materials will likely be gnawed through.
3. **Elimination:** Hire a licensed Pest Control Operator to safely and effectively reduce rodent populations.
 - Discuss the use of an IPM plan with your licensed Pest Control Operator.
 - Consider hiring one company with your neighbors to treat your neighborhood as a whole and to cut costs.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE BROWN RAT (NORWAY RAT)

The following are characteristics of the Norway rat, which inhabits the northeastern portion of the United States:

1. Fur color ranges from light brown to almost black.
2. Lifespan is approximately 1 year.
3. Depending on environmental conditions, may reproduce monthly with litter sizes up to 14.
4. Require roughly 1 oz. of food and a ½ oz. of water per day and prefer to feed habitually on familiar food.
5. Frequently live within 150 ft. of a consistent food and water source.
6. Prefer to travel along known pathways and runways repeatedly.
7. Most active at night, but may also appear during the day.
8. Commonly burrow under foundations, in stacks of firewood, in stone retaining walls, under the roots of shrubs and bushes, and in mulch beds.



Pictured Above: Rat Burrows