

RAT FACTS:



Norway rats are found in Indiana

Rats and mice are so closely linked to humans that they are called “domestic rodents”. Man supplies their three basic needs: food, shelter, and water. This pamphlet is designed to give you an understanding of rats and how to overcome them.

- Rats are very destructive pests that can **spread disease**, contaminate food, food storage and food preparation areas, and cause expensive structural damage. They can even cause fires by chewing on electrical wires.
- Indiana code says that **property owners are responsible for ridding their property of rats.** (IC 16-41-34-5)
- When one dwelling is infested, it's likely the immediate neighborhood is, too. **Rodents are a community problem.** For effective control, **all homeowners in a community must work together** to eliminate sources of food, shelter, and water. Denied food, rats will turn to killing and eating each other, further reducing the infestation.

KEEP RATS OUT OF YOUR HOME

Rats cannot live without food, water, or shelter. You can get rid of rats by following these simple steps.

STEP 1 – Rodent-proof your home and storage buildings!

- Check the outside of your home for holes or gaps the size of a quarter or larger
- Repair all openings using rodent-proof materials: steel wool, plaster, ¼ inch 18-22 gauge wire hardware cloth
- Check for holes leading into the house from pipes or cables. Seal with caulk or cement
- Install metal weather-stripping under doors to fill gaps



STEP 2 – Remove food sources from your property!

- Keep garbage cans covered at all times
- Pick fruit, nuts and vegetables as they ripen
- Throw away or compost fruit that has fallen to the ground
- Feed pets during daylight hours only and remove uneaten food right away
- Birdhouses & feed should be on poles & in trays rats can't get
- Avoid storing pet or bird food in garages and storage sheds unless it is in rat-proof covered metal containers



STEP 3 – INSIDE your home, use traps, not poison bait!

- Use snap traps when rats are inside your home
- Place traps at entry points or where you have seen rat droppings
- Bait traps with peanut butter or the food the rats have been eating
- Bait the trap for 3 days before setting the trigger. Rats are very cautious.
- Tie down traps to prevent injured rats from dragging the traps away and dying inside your walls
- Poisoned rats may die inside walls or attics, creating odors and attracting flies
- Check traps at least twice a week
- Use **CAUTION** when placing traps around children or pets.

Indoor Rat Trap Boxes:
Keep children and pets away from traps!

This home-made three chambered box contains a rat snap trap. Drill a one inch hole at each end of the box and place the trap in the middle chamber. Cover with plywood and lock to protect children and pets.

Dimensions:
18" long
10" wide
6" high

Covered and locked home-made rat trap Box

- Be sure a rat trap box is tall enough to allow the mechanism to snap inside the box.

STEP 4 – OUTSIDE your home use poison bait!

- Rodent-proof your home BEFORE using poison bait
- *Always read the label and follow directions when using poisons!*
- Multi-dose, anti-coagulant poisons are the most effective. Rats may need to feed on the bait for several days for it to be effective.
- Place poison bait in an enclosed bait station where rats and their droppings have been seen.
- Place bait in a protected area such as under woodpiles or in thick vegetation where rats may be hiding
- Check bait stations twice a week and add bait when necessary
- Place dead rats in sealed plastic bags and put them in the trash
- Move to STEP 5 when rats stop eating the bait
- *Keep bait away from children and pets!*

STEP 5 – Get rid of rat habitat!

- Remove all trash and debris, old cars or appliances on your property
- Stack woodpiles, lumber and household items at least 18 inches above the ground and 12 inches away from fences and walls
- Trim trees, bushes and vines at least 4 feet away from the roof
- Remove large rocks from the garden and heavy vegetation such as ivy, away from buildings and fences
- Thin vegetation to allow daylight in and remove rat hiding places
- Fix holes leading into outbuildings

SIGNS OF RAT ACTIVITY:

Droppings are the most obvious sign. Look for them in attics, garages, and storage sheds.

Norway Rat

Average Length 3/4 inch



Other signs of rat activity include:

- Rub marks caused by rat's greasy fur
- Damaged food and containers
- Signs of gnawing
- Sounds in the attic, floors, or walls
- Stripped bark from plants and trees
- Piles of cut snail shells hidden under plants or wood piles.

For more helpful information visit these terrific websites:

www.in.gov/isdh/23256.htm

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/living/rats.html>

www.SDVector.com

Information from County of San Diego Vector Control Program and Indiana State Department of Health

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RATS!



Rat Prevention and Control



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