

## HOW DO RATS AND MICE GET INTO THE HOME?

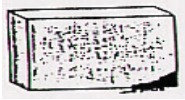
1. Through open or unscreened doors, windows or ventilators.
2. Under shallow foundations of the house.
3. Through cracks and breaks in the foundation.
4. Through holes around electrical inlets or pipes that enter the home.

## HOW TO INSPECT FOR RATS.

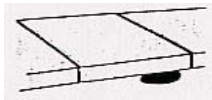
Some ways to detect rats are . . .

**Live Rats:** Switch on lights in a dark room and look and listen for scampering rats. Move long stored merchandise to uncover harborage.

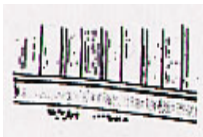
**Gnawings:** Look for signs of chewing around doors, windows, utility lines, and packaged goods, especially food packages.



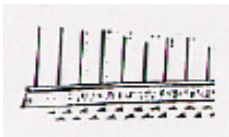
**Burrows:** Holes and fresh diggings around or under foundations, floors, sidewalks, platforms, embankments – all may mean rats.



**Droppings:** Fresh droppings are a sure sign. Look behind objects near walls and in places seldom cleaned or disturbed.



**Tracks:** Examine dusty places for rat tracks. If not visible, dust flour lightly along suspected runways and observe for a few days. Flour needs to be cleaned up so it doesn't attract insects.



**Smears:** Look for darkened areas along walls adjacent to pipes, beams, and openings where rats travel.



**Test Baiting:** Place food out overnight where rats can find it and observe results.



## HOW TO KEEP RATS AND MICE OUT OF THE HOME.

There are four essentials for good rat control:

1. Eliminate sources of food.
2. Remove shelter.
3. Ratproof.
4. Kill rats.



**Starve them out:** Keep garbage and refuse in tightly covered containers. Store food in rat-proof buildings, rooms, or containers. Do not leave pet food out. Clean up pet manure.

*Note: Removing the food supply is probably the most important part of rat control. Rats will not be attracted to or stay in an area if they have no food to eat.*

### Remove their shelter:

*Inside the home* – Store materials in the basement on stands about 10 to 12 inches above the floor. Do not allow material to accumulate on the floor behind sink, stove or cabinets. Set items flush against the wall or far enough away so that the space can be easily cleaned.

*Outside the home* – Do not pile wood or other materials (boxes, lumber, pipe, etc.) near or against walls. Steps leading into the house should be concrete or masonry. If wood, the space beneath should be open and clean. Keep stored material 12 to 18

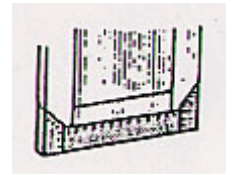


inches off the ground.

**Build them out:** Close necessary openings such as windows, doors and ventilators with 1/4 inch wire mesh (hardware cloth).



Keep doors closed when not in use. Use a good spring to make sure doors close and a spring lock to make sure they stay closed. Cover all edges subject to gnawing with sheet metal or hardware cloth.



Close unnecessary openings with concrete or sheet metal. Fit pieces of sheet metal around pipes to make a collar through which rodents cannot gnaw.

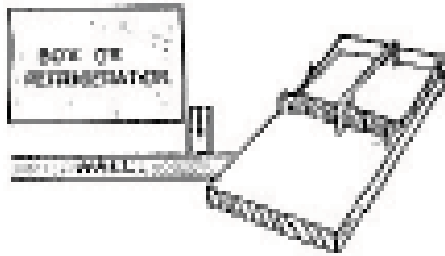


Keep floor drains tightly fastened to stop entry from sewers.

## HOW TO KILL RATS AND MICE

**Traps** (wooden-base snap traps): Experience has proven that spring snap traps are the best and cheapest. Use plenty of traps so that the rats may be trapped before they begin recognizing and avoiding them. Place them in areas traveled by rats (along baseboards, corners, etc). The traps should snap towards the wall.

If baits are to be used on the regular trigger, use peanut butter with uncooked oatmeal or tie small pieces of bacon, cotton, raisins, or gumdrops to the trigger.



**Poisons:** Don't use poisons inside the house unless rats or mice are very numerous. In baiting outside, don't miss wood piles, fence rows, or other areas where rat activity or burrows are noted. Many effective baits (poisons) are available at hardware or farm and feed stores. Follow directions on the label.

Since some baits must be fed to rats for long periods, protective covers or "bait stations" are recommended to protect it from the weather and other animals. This also increases the bait's attractiveness as rats prefer to eat in secure places. Keep pets away from rats that have been poisoned.



## CAUTION

*Rodents can carry disease. Before cleaning up rodent droppings, carcasses or nests, wet them and the area with a solution made of 1 cup of bleach and 10 cups water, or use another disinfectant solution. Wear rubber gloves. Place carcass and other waste in a plastic bag and dispose of in the garbage. Wash your hands.*

### Commercial Products and Services

Rodent control supplies can usually be obtained at local stores. Rodent poisons are sold under various trade names, with the active ingredient given on the label.

The pest control industry offers professional service in rat control. Elimination, rat-proofing, and advice on sanitation can be obtained from your local pest-control operator or exterminator.

## COMMUNITY ACTION

Since rats move from one place to another, rat control is everyone's responsibility.

Community action by governmental agencies and neighborhood groups reduces rat populations. Temporary campaigns help, but long term neighborhood actions that include food protection, shelter removal, rat-proofing, and killing rats when necessary, are best. Please call the Snohomish Health District if you have any questions or need assistance controlling rats in your neighborhood.

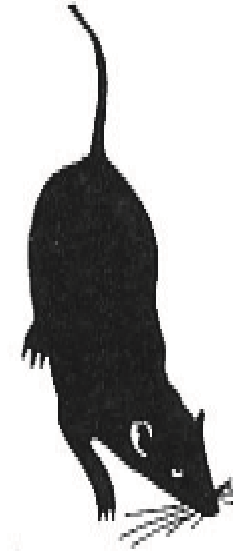
### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIVISION

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# RATS

Let's Get Rid of Them



## WHY WE HAVE RATS.

*Rats are attracted by trash piles, open garbage cans, pet food and pet manure.*



**SNOHOMISH  
HEALTH  
DISTRICT**

*Healthy Lifestyles, Healthy Communities*