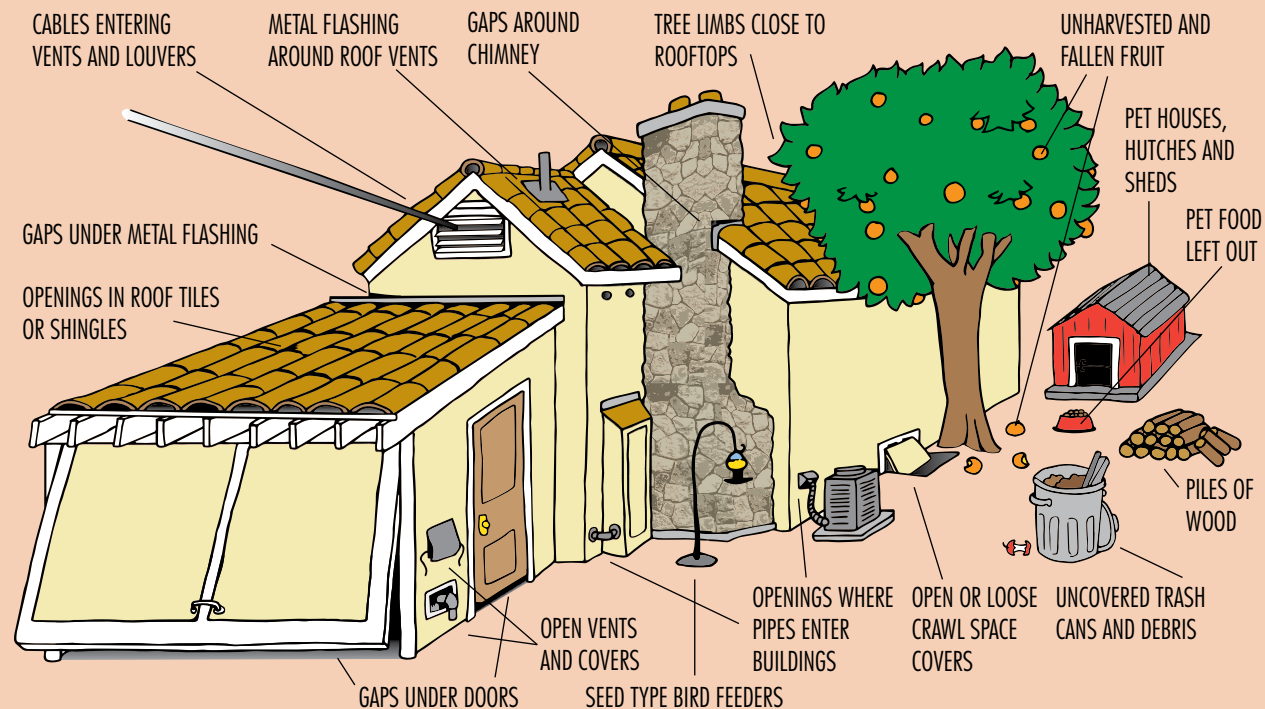


WHY ARE RODENTS A PROBLEM?

Domestic pest rodents and wild rodents cause economic and aesthetic damage by gnawing. They are also a public health problem in Placer County as vectors of diseases such as plague, hantavirus, and salmonella. Rodents can also cause health problems when their urine and feces contaminate food and water supplies.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE RATS?

Besides actually seeing the rats in or around your home, you will see droppings, gnawing damage, eaten and discarded fruits and nuts, or collections of empty snail shells. Other indications may be holes in bags of pet food, bird seed or grass seed. You might see structural damage due to gnawing, dark and greasy rub marks or even hear rats in your walls or attic.



REGULATIONS ON BAIT

Products designed for sale to consumers are either first-generation anticoagulants or are not anticoagulants. Loose poison baits such as pellets are prohibited. **Each product must include a bait station.**

DISPOSING OF DEAD RODENTS

- Pick up with an inverted plastic bag
- Tie bag closed
- Dispose in garbage can
- Do not handle rodents with bare hands
- Do not handle sick or injured rodents
- Snap traps can be reused without cleaning

For tips on how to clean up after a rodent infestation, please see these guidelines from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov/rodents/cleaning

RODENT HABITATS ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Good environmental management is the most effective approach to controlling rodents. Homeowners can help control rodent populations by practicing the following:

- Remove or trim dense shrubbery.
- Trim climbing vegetation four feet from roof, walls, fences, utility poles and trees.
- Store wood and lumber piles at least 18 inches above the ground and 12 inches away from any structure.
- Harvest fruit and nuts as they ripen.
- Pick up fallen fruit and nuts on a daily basis.
- Feed pets amounts of food that will be totally consumed at each feeding.
- Keep shed doors closed at night.



PLACER
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DISTRICT

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ABOUT RODENTS IN PLACER COUNTY



Protecting Public Health since 2001

RODENT BIOLOGY

NORWAY RAT (*Rattus norvegicus*)



Tail is shorter than head and body
Eyes and ears are small, nose is blunt



approximate size droppings (blunt ends)

ROOF RAT (*Rattus rattus*)



Tail is longer than head and body
Eyes and ears are large, nose is pointed



approximate size droppings (pointed ends)

HOUSE MOUSE (*Mus musculus*)



Smaller overall size, head and feet are small
in proportion to body, tail is as long head
and body



approximate size droppings (pointed ends)

DEALING WITH RODENTS

Note that the ORDER in which these steps are taken is critical!

1. IDENTIFY THE TYPE OF RODENT

Use the graphic to help determine what kind of rodent you have. This may not be easy, and you may need to consult with a professional.

2. REMOVE FOOD SOURCES

Remove or eliminate the following:

- Pet food left out at night
- Unharvested fruit, nuts, vegetables
- Bird seed
- Uncovered garbage
- Grass or plant seeds
- Poorly maintained compost piles
- Dog droppings

3. EXCLUDE RODENTS FROM HOMES AND BUILDINGS

First, find out where they are entering your home. Basic tools are: the Rule of Thumb for measuring (if your thumb fits, a rat can fit and if your pinky finger fits, a mouse can fit) and a flashlight. Check any work that was done after the original construction for holes or gaps. To find entry points in attics or crawlspaces:

- Check during the day and turn off lights
- Inspect where you see daylight entering
- Check vents and where pipes or cables enter the house

Once you have determined entry points, use hardware cloth, rust-proof/stainless steel wool, metal flashing or plaster patching kits as appropriate to close off these areas.

4. ELIMINATE RODENTS

Trapping

Snap traps are recommended. Always use mouse traps for mice and rat traps for rats. Depending on the kind of rodent, you will have to select the right placement of traps and you might need to place food on the trap and not set the trap (also known as pre-baiting) for two to three nights in a row. Bait effectively with peanut butter and oats.

Baiting

To prevent rodents from dying in inaccessible places (wall voids, crawl spaces, etc.), never use bait indoors, and only use bait outside if you are certain that no rodents can get into the house! Baits are not very effective if other food sources remain. Make sure to carefully follow all label instructions on bait products, and use bait stations as required.

5. REMOVE HARBORAGE

This must be done as last step; otherwise rodents are driven to other hiding places, often into your home!

- Thin out dense vegetation
- Eliminate debris and junk piles
- Stack wood neatly and elevate wood-piles off the ground at least 12 inches and stack away from walls or fences

6. MAINTAIN GOOD HABITS

Keep your yard clean and debris-free, always pick up fallen fruits, berries, and nuts and keep dog droppings picked up and properly disposed of.

For more information, please visit
www.placermosquito.org/education/vectors-and-diseases/rodents

PREVENT RODENTS FROM BECOMING A PROBLEM ON YOUR PROPERTY

