



# Rat Elimination and Control is the Responsibility of the Property Owner.

Complaints are received and investigated by the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, Licensure and Regulatory Services Vector Control Team.

Licensure and Regulatory Services Vector Control Team does not set out or provide poisons or traps to property owners.



## Why is Rat Control Important?

- Rats are known carriers of disease.
- In close proximity to humans, they are a public health concern.
- Rats cause destruction of food supply and property.
- They are suspected of causing electrical fires.



## Signs of Rats

- **Burrows:** Holes in the ground 2-4 inches in diameter.
- **Droppings:** Rounded to tapered shape on each end, 3/8 to 3/4 inches long, 1/4 inches across.
- **Runways:** Paths created by rats in vegetation, close to walls, fences, and walkways as a result of traveling from harborage site to food sources.
- **Tracks:** Rat footprints in mud, dust, fresh dirt, or snow. Approximately 1/2 inch across with 5 toe prints.

## Control Measures

- Eliminate food supply
- Store food, pet food, and seed in rodent proof containers
- Store garbage in garbage containers with tight fitting lids (*do not store garbage in plastic bags*).
- Reduce bird seed spillage by using the catch tray under the feeder.
- Eliminate points of entry.
- Elevate garbage cans and woodpiles at least 18 inches off the ground.
- Remove fallen fruits and unused vegetable gardens.
- Cut tall grass and weeds.



## Food Sources

- Improperly stored garbage, soiled recyclables
- Seed spillage from bird feeders
- Dog food and dog droppings
- Improperly stored food and seed
- Fruit trees, Mulberry, Chokecherry
- Garden vegetables, composting, food scraps

## Points of Entry

Rats need only 1/2 inch opening to gain entry into a home or other structure.

- Open or damaged windows and doors
- Openings around pipes or wires not sealed to the wall
- Dryer vents
- Defective grills to crawl spaces
- Spaces between foundation and floor
- Any homes in wall above or below grade
- Sewer lines

## Rat Harborage

- Close to food sources
- Poorly maintained garbage areas
- High weeds, ground covers
- Patios, decks, sidewalks, fences
- Cellars, Crawl spaces, false ceilings
- Compost bins, sheds, dog houses
- Woodpiles, debris piles
- Garages, storage rooms, kitchen cabinets