

Pest Tip of the Month



Rats



Risk

Rats eat and contaminate food and damage and destroy materials by gnawing. They are also a human health concern as disease carriers or vectors.

Rats are primarily nocturnal in habit and they are cautious. Although they constantly explore their surroundings, they shy away from new objects and changes. Outdoors, Norway rats prefer to nest in burrows in the soil along railroad embankments, stream or riverbanks, piles of rubbish, under concrete slabs, etc.



Indoors, Norway rats usually nest in basements and lower portions of buildings in piles of debris or merchandise as long as it is not disturbed. Although Norway rats prefer the ground or lower levels of buildings and sewers, occasionally they may be found in attics, on roofs, and in other high places.



Roof rats may live near the ground, but usually they frequent the attics, rafters, and crossbeams of the buildings. They make typical runways along pipes, beams or wires, up and down the studding, or along the horizontal ceiling joists, often leaving a dark-colored layer of grease and dirt to mark their travelways. If all of their needs are met they need not touch the ground, making them difficult to eradicate.

Interesting Facts

- The most common way rats transmit disease organisms is by contaminating food with their droppings and urine.
- Rats are able to enter a structure through a hole the size of a nickel.

Prevention

- Keep doors and receiving areas closed when possible.
- Seal cracks, holes and gaps in building walls. Inspect incoming shipments for signs of rodent activity before allowing them into our facilities.
- Clean spills such as bird seed, pet food, rice and other potential food sources as soon as possible.
- Watch for droppings and chew marks! Detecting rodents early is critical before they reproduce.
- Make sure rodent traps are left undisturbed to do their job of capturing rodents.

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