

## Where do rats live outside?

- Under wood piles or lumber that is not being used often
- Under bushes, vines and in tall grasses that are not trimmed or cut back
- High grass or weeds sometimes provides a cozy and more private environment for rats to burrow. Maintain lawns at no more than 4 to 6 inches in height.
- Under rocks in the garden
- In cars, appliances and furniture that has been put outside and is no longer being used
- In and around trash and garbage that has been left on the ground
- In holes under buildings
- Rats travel. There may have been rats living in yards near you. When rats set up a home in an area, they may be seen in two or three yards, but a neighbor four, or five homes away would not know there are rats in the area. Having rats doesn't mean someone has a 'dirty' yard. Rats simply find a good source of food, look for shelter, and build their homes. Once rats are exterminated, if their food and shelter is removed, it is likely you will not see them and they move on

## Where do rats live inside the home?

- In the insulation of walls or ceilings
- Inside the crawl spaces
- Behind or under cupboards, counters, bathtubs and shower stalls
- Near hot water heaters and furnaces
- In basements, attics and wherever things are stored in boxes, paper or cloth

## What foods bring rats into my yard and neighborhood?

- Garbage that rats can get into, like garbage cans with loose lids, plastic or paper bags, and litter.
- Food for pets and birds that has not been eaten. Birdseed on the ground, pet food in pet dishes, bread crumbs, etc. Don't put food out for stray cats, birds or squirrels
- Bird feeders must be spill-resistant and elevated off the ground. Rats love bird seed! They will even raid sheds and garages for grass seed. Bird seed and grass seed should be stored in rodent proof containers.
- Fruits and berries that have fallen to the ground.
- Compost pile or worm bin that isn't taken care of the right way (do not put meat, fish, poultry, or dairy in the compost)
- Dog droppings
- Rats only need one ounce of food each day. Don't make your garbage their food.
- Bring garbage cans and bags to the curb as close to pickup time as possible. Leaving them out overnight invites rats.
- Make sure you have enough garbage cans to hold trash between pickups.

- Use hard plastic or metal cans with tight fitting lids.

### **What do rats eat when they get inside the house?**

- THE SAME FOODS WE DO!
- Foods, fats, oils that have been spilled and left on counters, floors, appliances and tables
- Grains, like cereal, oats, rice and vegetables like potatoes and carrots that are in cardboard boxes and plastic bags
- Pet food in boxes or bags
- Any garbage that is not in a can with a tight lid

### **Keep rats away from your home!**

- The time to act is before the signs (droppings) of a rat or mouse.
- Stack fire wood 18 inches off the ground and away from all buildings.
- Birdhouses and seed should be on poles and in trays rats can't get.
- Keep garbage can lids closed tightly.
- Plant bushes so they will stay at least 3 feet from your house.
- Keep yards and alleys clean. Take junk to the dump!
- If you feed them, they will stay. Pick up fruit and vegetables in your yard.
- Remember that rats love fresh vegetables. This usually becomes a problem when the local gardens begin producing. Keep a close watch at this time.
- Do not compost any animal products (fish, meat, chicken, cheese, butter). Keep lids tight.
- Use only rodent resistant composters.
- In basements keep any food in closed containers that rats can't chew through.
- Cover all openings to your house. Rats can get into very small places.
- Do not leave your pet food outside. If your pet doesn't eat it, the rats will.
- Roof rats get into your house from tree branches that hang over the roof. Keep trees cut back and cover any openings in the eaves.
- Close burrows in soil by filling with soil and tamping down with a shovel, or by stepping on them.
- Close burrows in cracked or broken sidewalks with cement or other filler.
- Remember that although a vacant lot or unoccupied house can provide harborage for rats, they still need the other two things to survive: food and water

### **Keep rats out of your sewer pipes!**

- Rats live in sewers and can follow the food in pipes up to your toilet.
- Keep your kitchen sink rinsed clean and use garbage disposals as little as possible.
  - Rinse out your kitchen sink once or twice a month.

- Use 1 cup of bleach (an alternative to using bleach, 1 cup of baking soda followed by 1 cup of vinegar) and rinse with boiling water.
- Never throw grease down the drain.
- Keep your toilet lid down when not in use.
- If you find a rat in your toilet, flush it! (hint: squirt a little dishwashing liquid under the lid into the bowl, wait a couple of minutes then flush)
- **Poisons are not recommended for rat control** inside buildings, since poisoned rats can die in hard to reach places causing a very bad smell. When poisons are used, they must be secured (such as in a bait station) so that they are not available to children, pets or non-target animals