



# Rat Control

**Rats are widespread throughout the Metropolitan area and in our community. It is almost impossible to completely eradicate them. This does not mean that we should just accept rats as there are certain things that householders can do to reduce the problem.**

**Below are some helpful hints to reduce the opportunities for rats to harbour in our community.**

## How to Remove Rats from Your Property

Trapping and poisoning will kill rats on your premises, but this is only a temporary measure as rats will return if favourable conditions for existence persist. For complete extermination and protection against reinfestation, rats must be deprived of food and shelter.

## Eating Habits

Rats eat practically all food. They also eat excreta, thus becoming a carrier of dysentery, diarrhoea and gastro-enteritis. Rats forage mostly at night, but if seen during daylight hours, this is usually because of over population or because food is readily available.

## Breeding Habits

The average number of rats per litter is 10 and under varying conditions, 3 to 12 litters may be produced by one female in a year. The young develop rapidly and at three or four years, with a reproductive potential so great, almost 250,000 rats can be produced from a pair and their off spring in just three years!

## Detecting Rats

The presence of rats may be detected by 'droppings', 'rat runs', 'eaten foods' or damage to food containers.

- 'Droppings' are black, thin and about 10mm in length.
- 'Rat runs' are formed because the rodents prefer to run alongside a wall or fence and over time, a distinct 'path' is worn in the dust or grass. By

following this run, the rat may be traced to its shelter.

- 'Eaten food' is usually placed in a protected area against the fencelines and could include eaten snail shells, almonds and fruit seeds.

## How to Deny Rats Shelter

- Clear house and land of all rubbish and timber, or stack it at least 300mm above the ground.
- Keep all grass cut short around your property.
- Quickly repair any damage to wall linings to overcome entry of vermin.

## How to Deny Rats Food

- Place all food scraps in a container with a close fitting lid. If compost bins are used, keep the base of the bin clear of any vegetation and don't throw meat or dog faeces into the compost bin.
- Keep fowl yards clear of all waste products.
- Keep poultry and animal food in metal bins with tight fitting lids.
- Where there are fruit and nut trees, regularly clean up any fallen fruit or nuts.

## Baiting

The use of rat bait can be an effective strategy to reduce the prevalence of rats. Bait can be purchased at a supermarket or hardware store.

It is important to note that it will take rats up to a week to die after consuming bait.

**For Further Information**

If you have any further queries or wish to use this service please contact Council's ***Environmental Health Department on 8408 1111*** .