

Rodents in and around your home

It is common to see mice or rats on your property or hear them in your roof, particularly during colder months, as they seek shelter in buildings and residential areas.

It is important that all residents take necessary measures to ensure that rodent populations are kept to a manageable level.

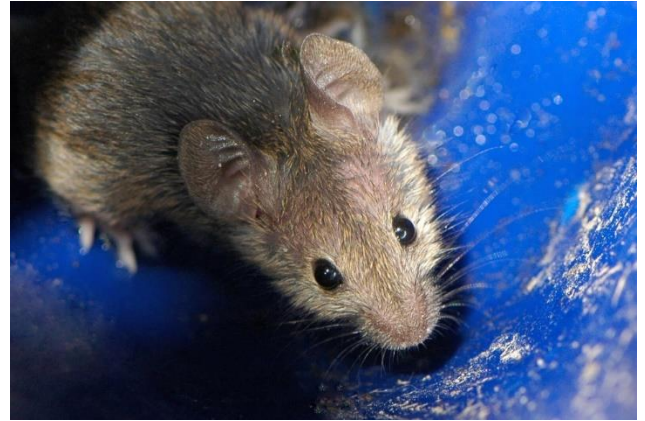
Rodents will never be eliminated, however there are many ways you can deter rodents or safely and effectively bait so that numbers can be controlled.

Please find below an outline of the control methods available to reduce rodent activity in and around the home.

Sanitation

Eliminate or reduce all shelter, food and water sources for rodents. This can be done by:

- Stacking materials around the property uniformly and separating it from the sides of sheds, fences and, where possible, off the ground. Avoid storing any disused material on your property.
- Trimming shrubs, hedges and undergrowth regularly and removing dead branches from trees, especially palm trees. Debris and clutter are safe havens for rodent pests.
- Removing fruits and nuts from trees and vines as soon as they are ripe and make sure compost isn't accessible.
- Storing pet food in sealed containers and regularly clean pet dishes, bird cages and other animal enclosures.
- Clean and sanitise rubbish bins and compost containers regularly and keep the lids tightly closed.
- Take advantage of the Town's Green Waste and Bulk Waste collections to assist in reducing disused materials and unwanted vegetation around the home.



Exclusion

The most successful and permanent form of rat control is to prevent them from gaining entry in the first place.

- Use physical barriers to prevent rodents from getting into buildings.
- Seal all openings and cracks in building foundations, sewer pipes, drain spouts and eaves. Placing chicken wire over any potential rodent pathways is a good option. This is a long-term solution and should be the first step in home rodent control.
- Use tight fitting screens on doors and windows to prevent entry.
- Remember that rats need to gnaw objects continuously to file their teeth down so plugging holes with plastic or timber is generally not going to work.
- Remember occupiers and owners of premises are required by law to prevent harbourage of rats and secure their destruction.

A rat is the world's most resilient animal.



Baiting

- Baiting can be effective to monitor pest activity and when control isn't being achieved using other methods.
- The Town of East Fremantle strongly encourages the use of first-generation rodenticides, as these pose less of a risk to non-target species such as birds, pets and other native species.
- Ensure that you read the instructions carefully before use - baits must be placed out of reach of children and pets. Bait boxes are a good idea for accessible spaces, these can be purchased from hardware stores (see Figure 1).
- Limit hand contact with baits as much as possible.
- Baits may be placed beside walls, in ceiling cavities, in dark safe places such as behind stoves and refrigerators and in sheds.
- Baits can take up to two weeks before they have any effect and they should be checked not more than once a week (rats are very wary of new objects and smells in their environment). Rats also feed at night so inspecting baits during the day is ideal.
- Baits should be replaced immediately once eaten. This ensures a higher poison ratio over food supply.
- In case of ingestion by children or pets please phone the Poisons Information Centre on the details below.



West Australian
Poisons Information Centre

13 11 26

24 hour • Australia Wide



Figure 1. Bait Box

Trapping

- Trapping is a very effective rodent reduction method as they do not pose a risk to native species and pets.
- There are many different traps available depending on your circumstances.
- Avoid open spaces as rodents rely on concealment for protection. If you are trapping outside, consider live traps so non-target species can be safely released.
- Use clean hands and reduce handling of trap as rodents have a strong sense of smell.
- Try different types of bait including bacon, fish, nuts, apple, sausage and pumpkin seeds.
- Initially, try leaving food on an unset trap to see if rodents are present and to identify the preferred bait. This will also help to reduce the chance of creating "trap-shy" rodents. Then you can set the traps as normal.
- Further information on bird-friendly rodent control is available in BirdLife Australia's brochure at https://birdlife.org.au/documents/BirdLife_Bird_friendly_rodent_control_final.pdf.

Should you have any further queries or concerns regarding rodent control please contact the Town's Environmental Health Officer on ph 9339 9315 or email admin@eastfremantle.wa.gov.au