



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Mahoning County
District Board of Health**
50 Westchester Drive • Youngstown, Ohio 44515
(330) 270-2855 • (800) 873-6243



From: Mahoning County District Board of Health
Environmental Division

ATTENTION NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS:

The Mahoning County District Board of Health has been made aware that residents have sighted rodents in this residential area. Wild animals and rodents, such as rats, must have food, water and shelter to remain at any location. While some of these animals may be attractive, they can also be destructive, and may carry diseases such as rabies.

IN ORDER TO ELIMNATE SHELTER:

- Do not stack debris on the ground or against buildings.
- Store items such as lawn furniture, building lumber, firewood, bicycles, cooking grills, and boxes elevated off the ground by at least eighteen inches (18”).
- Store items eighteen inches (18”) away from all walls.

ELIMINATE FOOD SOURCES:

- Do not accidentally feed rodents. When you put bread or grains, such as sunflower seeds, peanuts, millet, milo, thistle seed or buckwheat out for the birds or squirrels, you may attract rodents too.
- If you wish to feed the birds, place all feeds in a suitable, covered, elevated, bird feeder. The bird feeder should be at least five feet (5') above ground level and placed in an open area so rodents cannot jump onto it from surrounding objects.
- Feed will spill onto the ground at the base of bird feeders and cleanup is strongly recommended.
- Never put bread or bird feed directly on the ground or you may attract rodents or other vermin.
- Rats prefer foods such as meat, fish, insects, pet food, nuts and grain.
- Household garbage is ideal food for rats and you should always keep lids secure on trash cans.
- Do not leave dog, cat or animal food or water out at night.
- Dog and cat feces left in the yard at night provide a food source. **Clean up after your pets each day to help reduce possible food sources.**

ELIMINATE WATER SOURCES:

- Moisture is essential for rodent harborage.
- Rats must have one-half (1/2) to one (1) ounce of water every twenty-four (24) hours.
- Do not leave pet bowls, children's toys, old tires, or even bird baths that are located on the ground so water can collect in them.

OTHER INFO FOR CONTROL AND ELIMINATION:

- Plastic drain lines should be screened to prevent rodent entry.
- Bait boxes, when used for preventing rodents should be carefully placed in out-of-the-way spots around the outside of your houses and buildings.
- Bait boxes are made to stay secured from other pets and children since they will contain rodenticide (a poison).
- Rodenticides should never be placed directly on the ground. Colorful, strong smelling baits in open areas can attract children or pets. This is why a bait box is used.
- The lids of some bait boxes have screw locks and locking prongs that aid in making them child tamper-proof and should be used.
- The less the bait boxes are handled, the greater the likelihood rodents will be attracted to them.

The Mahoning County District Board of Health provides services for your health and safety. However, to effectively bait and prevent rodents causing a nuisance in your area, the residents need to assist in the efforts. You, as responsible residents, are asked to do your part in rodent control. **Do not provide food, shelter or water for rodents.** If your Health Department can be of further assistance to you, please contact the Environmental Division at 330-270-2855 Ext. 105 or visit our website at www.mahoninghealth.org for more information on rodent control.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Elimination

The Mahoning County District Board of Health provides services for your health and safety. For us to effectively bait and prevent rats from causing a nuisance, residents need to assist in the efforts. We ask that you do your part in rat control. Do not provide food, water, or shelter for rats.

Rat traps and baits can be purchased in most hardware, discount, or grocery stores. The poison in the baits can potentially be harmful to pets and children. Be sure to follow directions on the label and do not place baits within easy reach of pets and children.

An exterminator can also be hired if you do not wish to handle traps or baits yourself.

Traps and baits will kill rats. However, it is only a temporary measure. Rats will return if conditions are favorable to their needs. Cleanliness is the major key to prevent and control rats.



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Toll-free in Mahoning County
1-800-873-MCHD (6243)

www.mahoninghealth.org

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HOW TO PREVENT RATS

INFORMATION ON CONTROL AND ELIMINATION



Mahoning County District
Board of Health

Prevention and Control

Trash provides food and shelter for rats.



Rats live and thrive in a wide variety of environments and are often found around homes and other buildings, on farms, and in gardens and open fields. Rats can be very destructive. They also may carry diseases such as plague, typhus, food poisoning, and many others.

To prevent and control rats from living on your property, you must remove the 3 things that they need to survive; **food, water, and shelter.**



CONTROL SOURCES OF SHELTER

- Do not pile trash/debris or unused outside appliances and furniture on the ground or against buildings.
- Place items such as building lumber, firewood, pipes, boxes, and other stored materials at least 18 inches off the ground.
- Store outside items 18 inches away from all walls.
- Cut back weeds, bushes, and vines to expose rat burrows and openings.

Rats repeatedly use the same pathways between the shelter and food source.



A rat can gain entrance for shelter through a hole as small as a quarter.



Rats can eat off of feed and bird seed that is on the ground.

CONTROL SOURCES OF FOOD

- Do not accidentally feed rats. Bird feeders should be covered and elevated at least 5 feet above the ground and placed in an open area so the rats cannot jump onto it from surrounding objects. Feed and seed that has spilled onto the ground should be cleaned up.
- Make sure all outside trashcans have tight-fitting lids and all trash is inside the trashcans, and not just near them.
- Do not leave dog, cat, or animal food and water out at night.
- Clean up after pets each day as rats can feed off of dog and cat feces in the yard.

CONTROL SOURCES OF WATER

- Do not leave pet bowls, children's toys, old tires, or bird baths, for example, on the ground or allow water to collect in them.