

Responsibility

On private property, the owner and occupier are responsible for rodent control and eradication including avoiding conditions which are likely to encourage these pests

Options

We are often asked for advice on rodent control and this brochure has some tips for controlling these animals, options include:

- **Employ a professional exterminator**- they are listed in the Yellow Pages under Pest Control
- **Bait** - Poisoned bait is available from garden or hardware shops, follow all instructions and warnings and always wash your hands thoroughly after handling it
- **Traps** - These are also available from garden or hardware stores

Positioning Baits and Traps

Always wear rubber gloves when using baits, traps or disposing of dead rodents.

- For best results, survey the infested area(s) thoroughly to find frequented activity and access points
- Place the bait where the rodents are active, such as in the ceiling cavity, under the floor, in the garage...
- Fix the bait block with a nail or wire in a bait station
- For mice, which only nibble at food, put down several lots of bait close together to make sure they eat enough of it
- Always put bait out of reach of children, pets, wildlife, water bodies or areas that could flood
- Leave the bait down for at least two weeks after the rodents seem to be gone, or bait and close off the hole permanently
- Repeat the inspection and baiting every 7 days
- Normally only three to four baiting rounds are required

Please note the Timaru District Council does not provide poison or bait.

Bait Stations For accessible areas make a bait box- put the bait under an upside down container with small holes cut in opposite sides for the rodents to gain entry, weight the top to stop it blowing away or being knocked over. A length of drainpipe can also make a simple bait box remember to secure the bait block with a nail or wire in your bait station.

Always dispose of any dead rodents in your red bin.

Rodents can normally be controlled by baiting or trapping. However to effectively control rodent problems you must also use prevention methods

Prevention

Check areas every 2 to 3 months for activity and repeat baiting if required. To effectively control rodent problems you must also deprive them of:

Entry

- Seal holes around pipes into buildings
- Seal gaps under and around doors
- Repair holes in walls or cladding
- Repair broken windows
- Cover air vents with fine wire mesh



Suitable materials for vermin proofing are light sheet iron or tin, including balled up tinfoil, rolled up chicken wire covered in mortar or cement. Bags of mortar (just add water) can be purchased from major hardware stores.

Food and water

- Ensure your property is clean and hygienic
- Remove food scraps and clean preparation surfaces
- Remove water sources such as leaking pipes, old tyres, items that collect rainwater
- Remove rubbish immediately or store in containers with secure lids
- Never leave uneaten human or pet food out overnight

Their nest

- Regularly check your property for potential nesting sites including in the ceiling, garage and under floors
- Discard unused newspapers and other junk or store it neatly at least half a metre off the ground
- Bury compost in the garden or dispose of in your green bin
- Clear overgrown parts of your section
- Keep vegetation against buildings and fence lines under control

General information about rats and mice

Rats and mice are a nuisance. They are known to damage food and property and are responsible for spreading disease either:

- Directly – by contaminating food and belongings with urine and droppings (eg Salmonellosis and Leptospirosis)
- Indirectly – by their fleas and mites (eg the Plague and Typhus)

They are mostly nocturnal animals and are rarely seen during the day. Gnawing, droppings, footprints, damage, burrows or tracks will alert you to their presence.

Mice

Mice tend to live inside where it is warm and dry and rarely stray more than a few meters from their nest. Unlike Rats they don't need to drink, making them more difficult to control. They prefer to feed on grains, cereals and other dry goods.

When surveying use a torch and pay particular attention to the interior of cupboards, around hot water cylinders and under fridges and ovens.

Rats

Rats generally nest outside under buildings, in piles of debris or in overgrown parts of the section.

They range further than mice and will feed on almost anything including meat, fish, rubbish and compost.

Rats are creatures of habit they will follow defined paths or tracks between feeding, drinking and living areas and they like to feed under cover to avoid predators.

Both rodents are incredibly agile and can climb most vertical surfaces, leap across wide spaces, swim very well and squeeze through very small gaps (only a few mm wide).

Further Information

For further advice or information regarding any of these issues, please contact the Timaru District Council.