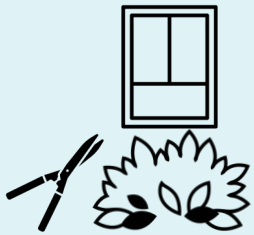


# Rats and Mice



Rats and mice are common in urban areas. People can get sick from handling rats/mice, contact with their feces, urine, or saliva, or from bites. Diseases spread by rats and mice include leptospirosis, rat bite fever, lymphocytic choriomeningitis, and hantavirus (spread only by deer mice in western Washington).

## PREVENT RAT AND MICE INFESTATIONS



**Keep rats/mice away from your house** by removing places they can hide. In your yard, keep bushes and trees trimmed back from your house, mow your lawn, take junk to the dump, and avoid stacking firewood on the ground.



**Remove food sources that attract them**, such as birdseed, food for wildlife, pet food, fallen fruits and berries on the ground, open compost piles, grease (e.g., an outdoor grill), and garbage.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE RATS OR MICE IN YOUR HOME

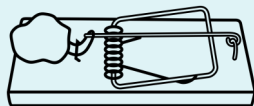
Fill holes this  
size and larger:



If you see rats/mice or signs of them (feces, chew marks, bedding, a dead rat/mouse), **SEAL UP, TRAP UP, and CLEAN UP!**

### SEAL UP!

Check inside and outside for gaps or holes where rodents can enter. Also check garages and sheds. Rats can squeeze through holes the size of a quarter and mice through holes the size of a dime. Fill holes with steel wool or cover with  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch hardware cloth, metal, concrete, or wood.



### TRAP UP!

If rodents have entered your home, garage, shed, vehicle, or other spaces, use a wooden "snap trap." Do not use glue traps or live traps because rats/mice in glue or live traps may urinate or bite. For rats outside, use pet-safe bait stations (lockable boxes that contain rat/mouse poison). Always secure poison in bait stations to protect children, pets or wild animals.

## CLEAN UP!



### Take precautions when cleaning rat/mice infested areas:

- **Air out the space** by opening the doors/windows for at least 30 minutes before cleaning. This reduces your risk of breathing in germs from dried urine or droppings.
- **Wear disposable gloves.**
- **Never touch a rat or mouse** with your bare hands.
- **Never sweep, vacuum or stir up dry dust** in places where rats/mice have been. This prevents breathing in germs.



### How to safely clean up feces, urine, bedding, and dead rodents:

- **Spray a disinfectant** (e.g., a commercial spray that “kills germs” according to the label) or make a solution with ¼ cup bleach and 2¼ cups cool water.
- **Let it sit for 5 minutes.**
- **Wipe up** with a paper towel or rag.
- **Double-bag and throw away** the rodent and waste in an outside garbage can.
- **Clean and disinfectant the whole area** – mop floors, clean counter-tops, wash bedding .
- **Remove the gloves and wash your hands** with soap and warm water.

For more information on the SEAL UP! TRAP UP! CLEAN UP! steps, visit

[https://www.cdc.gov/rodents/prevent\\_infestations](https://www.cdc.gov/rodents/prevent_infestations)

## WHEN TO GET MEDICAL CARE



If you have been bitten by a rat/mouse, see a healthcare provider. If you have had other contact with a rat/mouse or an infested area and develop any illness, see a healthcare provider and tell them about your possible rat/mouse exposure.

**For more information: [www.kingcounty.gov/rats](http://www.kingcounty.gov/rats)**

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