

# Rats and Mice

## Advice leaflet about Rats and Mice as Pests

Rats and Mice will invade buildings in search of food and shelter. In doing so they may be involved in the transmission of disease, soiling and destroying commodities and packaging, damaging equipment, buildings and installations and generally causing a serious nuisance

### Types of Rodents

The species of rodents of particular significance as domestic and commercial pests are :

<b>Common Names</b>	<b>House Mouse</b>	<b>Common, Brown or Sewer Rat</b>
<b>Scientific Name</b>	Mucus mucus	Rattus norvegicus
<b>Colour</b>	Brownish grey or grey	Brownish grey
<b>Length of Head and Body</b>	80-100mm (3-4in)	200-270mm (7-11in)
<b>Length of Tail</b>	80-100mm	165-205mm
<b>Weight</b>	14-20g	200-500g
<b>Build</b>	Slender and small	Large and thickset
<b>Shape of Nose</b>	Pointed	Blunt
<b>Ears</b>	Large hairy	Short-thick finely haired
<b>Colour of Feet</b>	Pink	Grey
<b>Shape of Droppings</b>	Small spindle shaped or irregular	Banana or sausage shaped

### Habits

Active at night feeding on a range of commodities particularly cereals and cereal products. They will eat about 10% of their own weight of food daily. Rats require a regular supply of water whereas mice do not.

### Evidence of Infestation

Rats and mice need to gnaw to keep their constantly growing incisor teeth worn down and they damage woodwork, plastic and lead pipes and will sometimes strip insulation from electrical cables. Holes made by mice tend to be 20mm in diameter in walls etc whereas rats tend to be 80mm. Rodents having established the best route from one place to another use it frequently and this "run" becomes soiled with grease and dirt and leaves a "smear". Footprints are sometimes apparent on dusty surfaces. Finally the faeces or droppings of rats and mice are a good indication of the cause, size and duration of the infestation.

## Control

Any sighting of rats should firstly be reported to the Environmental Health Department who can visit, advise and carry out appropriate treatment using rodenticides.

The cost of this service is **free to domestic customers** and at a competitive rate for commercial premises. Suitably trained Pest Control Operatives will carry out the treatment.

With all pest control operations much can be achieved without the use of pesticides. Removal of food, water and harbourages will deny rodents their main requirements for survival. Repair of damage caused by rodents or rodent proofing may be required but should not be attempted until the Pest Control Officer has visited and suitably treated. He will then advise on the necessary precautions to be taken to prevent the problem remaining.

In order to avoid bait shyness whereby if the first meal of poisonous bait makes the rodent feel ill they will not feed again, multiple dose poisons with delayed action are used. Invariably rats and mice return to their nests to die and if these nests are in warm areas of houses and buildings an offensive odour may become apparent which can last up to 14 days.