POISONS AND TRAPS

Anti-coagulant type rat poisons are available from hardware stores and garden shops. Read and follow label instructions on the poison package to prevent access by children and pets.

Snap traps are recommended for control of rats where the use of poisons would be extremely dangerous or where odors from dead rodents would be a problem.

PREVENTION TIPS

• The Rat Rubout Program can ONLY be effective with the cooperation of ALL PROPERTY OWNERS.

• It is YOUR responsibility and in your best interest to keep rats from gaining a foothold in your neighborhood.

• Keep all food and all garbage tightly covered.

• Rat-proof your property.

• Bird or pet food should be removed immediately after feeding.

• Elevate stored materials.

• Organize a community meeting to collectively agree on measures to take as suggested in this pamphlet.

To request rat abatement please contact the City’s request line at 3-1-1.

For information on any outreach and educational rat abatement programs operated by Baltimore City Health Department, call 443-984-2626 or email at: RATRUBOUT@baltimorecity.gov.

BALTIMORE CITY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Office of Vector Control
210 Guilford Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21202
Phone: 443-984-2626
Email: RATRUBOUT@baltimorecity.gov

Visit us online at www.baltimorecity.gov
WHY THE CONCERN?

Disease
Rats transmit a number of diseases directly (through bites) or indirectly through the bites of parasites found on the rat or by the contamination of food with urine or feces.

Damage
Rats continually gnaw and dig as part of their nature. They damage wood, wiring, plasterboard and insulation. They undermine sheds and sidewalks.

DO I HAVE A RAT PROBLEM?

When determining whether rats have infested your property, check for the following:

Rat Droppings
1" long by ¼" diameter and cylindrical in shape.

Burrows
Rat burrows (holes) are 1-2" in diameter; check near junk piles, sheds, foundations, composts, etc.

Runways
Rats tend to use the same path and leave a noticeable track. Check behind bushes, along walls and ditch banks and in tall grass.

Gnaw Marks
Check around pipes, doorways, crawlspace vents, etc. Listen to gnawing sounds or the sound of rats running in attics, crawlspace and walls.

RATS IN BALTIMORE

The most common rat in Baltimore is the NORWAY RAT, also known as the Brown Rat. Adult Norway Rats have coarse brownish fur, and the young ones have soft gray fur.

Rats have reproductive peaks in spring and fall with an average of 4-7 litters per year. An average litter contains 8-12 offspring. Young rats reach sexual maturity in 12 weeks, but in good conditions they will reach maturity as early as 8 weeks.

Rats are carnivorous; they will eat nearly any type of food including pet food, garbage, food scraps and animal feces.

Rats can climb brick or stucco, jump vertically to 36" and horizontally 48", swim as far as ½ mile, enter through any opening larger than ½" square and gnaw through cinderblock, wood, aluminum and lead sheeting.

CONTROL OF RATS

Although an infestation of rats can be temporarily controlled with poisons or traps, permanent control can only be achieved if food and harborage are removed.

Eliminate Food Sources
Do not throw vegetable wastes or other food scraps into compost piles. Avoid leaving pet food outside overnight.

Eliminate Harborage
Remove unused piles of lumber and debris. Any form of harborage should be stacked on stands so there is 6-8" clearance below the pile and any wall. Cut weeds and ornamental shrubs so that they will not hang into ditches or provide hidden runways along fence lines.

Rat-Proof Buildings
Screen crawlspace and attic vents (metal screen only). Seal all gaps larger than ½" around all doorways and plumbing fixtures. Repair cracks in cement footings and foundations.

Rats will not establish themselves in an area where there is no food or harborage