

Unwelcome Visitors Rats and Mice

Rats and mice can be found throughout most scrub areas and bush, and they like to hang around compost heaps.

Here are some tips for rodent-proofing your property to prevent them from moving in:

- Store opened food or rubbish in metal, glass or heavy plastic containers with tight lids.
- Sweep up food remains, litter and rubbish inside and outside your home.
- Do not throw food outside or leave extra pet food out.
- Put rubbish bags out just before collection time, not overnight.
- Remove sources of water like leaking pipes, old tyres and pots.
- Make sure doors and windows fit tightly.
- Seal cracks and holes in your house with mortar, repair broken windows and holes in wall-cladding.
- Screen windows, inspection points and air vents with fine mesh.
- Seal holes around pipes into buildings and caps under or around doors.
- Keep outside doors closed and install metal trim to prevent rodents from gnawing and gaining entry underneath.
- Store materials such as firewood on a rack with a clean, open area underneath.
- Get rid of all unused material.
- Clean up inside, get rid of junk and clean up warm areas like the hot water cupboard or behind bulky appliances like fridges, freezers and ovens.



- Trees overhanging eaves can provide access to ceiling and attic spaces.
- Gaps around sink and washing machine drains are common points of entry.

Rats and mice are social animals who live in family groups or colonies.

They are generally nocturnal, have a good sense of smell, touch and hearing, are good swimmers and climbers and can squeeze through very small spaces.

They have a very high reproductive rate. An adult female can give birth to about 50 young each year.

Mice tend to seek shelter and form nests inside buildings where it is warm and dry.

They rarely stray more than a few metres from their nest sites and prefer to feed on grains, cereals and other dry goods.

Rats generally nest outside under buildings or piles of debris.

Safety first! Always place and store poison out of reach of children and pets.

Please turn over

The Council can offer you advice on how to control these rodents, but it is the property owner's responsibility to get rid of them, or bring in a pest control company to do the job.

Traps generally work well with mice. However rats are more cunning and tend to avoid them.

Simple traps are sold in most hardware stores and supermarkets. Set triggers lightly and use fresh bait, such as peanut butter and cheese, for best results. Bait the trap but wait a few days before setting, so the mice get used to it. Poison is an effective way to control rats.

You can buy rat poison at garden shops and hardware stores. Read the instructions carefully and wear gloves when you handle poison. **Always place and store poisons out of reach of children and pets.**

Place traps or poison in known rodent haunts like kitchens, ceilings and wall cavities. Check daily and reset or replace as required.

Poison needs to stay down at least two weeks after the rats or mice appear to have gone.

Always wear rubber gloves when disposing of dead rodents.

If you do not want to deal with a rodent problem on your property yourself, contact a Pest Control Company.

You will find contact details under Pest Control in the Yellow Pages of the phone book or in the classified or trades section of the local papers.

The experts can provide tips on prevention. If you believe vermin are originating from a neighbouring property as a result of accumulated rubbish, an overgrown section or poor food storage at a food premises, then contact us.

We will investigate, may give advice, and if appropriate talk to the property owner concerned.

Call us too, if you have reason to believe there is a rodent problem on Council property, including in the sewer.

Telltale signs of an infestation

- gnawing on plastic, wood or rubber materials
- greasy rub marks or fur on painted surfaces or wooden beams
- droppings near sources of food or warmth
- burrows or tracks in the ground, or next to sewer lines
- sounds of activity in walls or ceiling cavities.

Find out more at waimakariri.govt.nz, or contact Customer Services on 0800 965 468.