

Watch out for bites. If you are scratched or bitten by a rat, wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water and call your health-care provider. Then call the Health Department at 311 to report the bite.

■ GANG UP ON THEM.

You need your **tenants' help** to get rid of rats. Maintaining clean and rat-free common spaces will help you gain the cooperation of your tenants. Also...

Respond quickly to tenants' complaints about rodents and rat-friendly conditions.

Inform tenants about what they can do by posting information in the building foyer, elevator, or laundry room.

Post notices in advance of the exterminator's visits. Arrange for access to apartments if tenants will not be home.

Enforce building rules and City law regarding pets and other animals.

Instruct superintendents in proper rat control methods.

■ OBEY THE LAW.

If an inspection of your property results in an order from the Health Department to correct a code violation, *you must do so immediately*.

About 5 business days after an order is issued, the Health Department will send another inspector. If you have not adequately exterminated the premises or fixed the problem, the Department will do it for you.

You will be billed. The cost of debris clean-up by the City is about \$1,000 a day, and the job may take as long as several weeks. Any unpaid charges will become a priority lien against the property, which will prevent you from selling it with a clean title.

Failure to comply with an order of the Commissioner is a misdemeanor and will subject you to criminal prosecution, a fine, and/or imprisonment, as well as additional civil penalties. The penalty for each rodent violation is \$200 to \$2,000.

■ BE INFORMED.

For more information, call 311.

RAT THEM OUT.

Report a rodent problem at nyc.gov/health
Or call 311.

Tenants, landlords, homeowners, shopkeepers, subway riders, sidewalk snackers, adults, kids – **all New Yorkers** – remind each other: Take responsibility.

Nobody should put up with rats!

RATS. LET'S STOP THEM!

It's good for your tenants.
Good for your property.
Good for the neighborhood.
And it's the law.

**Rat Control Guidelines for
Property Owners and
Superintendents**



Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor

Thomas R. Frieden, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

Rat control is not just the right thing to do. For landlords and other New York City building and property owners, it's the law!

Any portion of your property, in either public or private space, that is "conducive to feeding and habitation of rats" is a violation of the law. And each violation carries a penalty of \$200 to \$2,000.

Here's how you and the building superintendent can create a rat-hostile environment.

■ KNOW THE RATS.

Rats eat everything we eat, and lots more.

They are extraordinary climbers, jumpers, and swimmers.

They gnaw through plastic, wood, soft metals, wire (sometimes causing fires), and even cinderblock and brick.

Rats squeeze into the tiniest spaces, nest wherever it's dark and warm, and breed like crazy.

■ FIND THEM.

Rats make their presence known by leaving burrows, droppings, gnaw marks and rub marks, tracks, trails, nests, and hidden food stashes. Any of these active rat signs is a Health Code violation.

A live rat is also a violation, of course. If you or anyone in your building sees a rat, call an exterminator immediately.

■ STARVE THEM

Deprive them of food:

The law requires you to provide rodent-proof metal or high-grade plastic containers with tight-fitting lids for garbage and other refuse.

You may also use tightly tied, leak-proof plastic bags. However, since rats can easily chew through plastic, the Health Department strongly recommends placing plastic bags inside garbage cans.

You must have enough containers to store garbage on your premises for at least 3 days (Overflowing garbage is a violation).

Replace missing lids and containers that have holes or tears.

Put out garbage as close to pickup time as possible. Avoid leaving plastic bags outside overnight.

Wash garbage and recycling cans and the area around them regularly.

Ask tenants to use rodent-proof containers to store food and pet food, and to dispose of garbage. Even inside tenants' apartments, exposed food is a violation on your building and an invitation to rats.

Deprive them of water:

Repair leaks in boilers, water tanks, washing machines, hoses, and pipes (including sewer pipes on your property). Replace missing clean-out plugs.

Clear clogged drains.

Mop or squeegee floors where a lot of water is used in cleaning.

Discard tires, buckets, and other items in which water can collect.

Fill in areas where puddles and ponds form.

■ EVICT THEM

Inside the building:

Plug holes in floors and walls with wire mesh (copper, stainless steel, or aluminum). Cover the mesh with spackle, plaster, or hardening sealant.

Block the space between doors and the floor with kick plates.

Replace old or damaged wire. The building code requires that new wiring run through armored cable, which rats can't chew. This can prevent fires.

Keep stairwells, airshafts, basements, and storage areas clean and clutter-free.

Discard newspapers, old insulation, and cardboard boxes.

Outside the building:

You must close up actual or potential rodent entry holes in exterior walls that are within 4 feet of the ground. You must also seal broken or cracked sewer pipes or conduits that rats can enter.

Use sheet metal, wire mesh, knitted wire mesh, crumpled chicken wire, or hardening sealant, depending on the need for ventilation, flexibility, or

waterproofing. Finish the repair with a follow-up coating of sealant and/or paint.

Repair broken windows, doors, screens, and roofs. Tear down or fix dilapidated fences and outbuildings.

Use cement block or sheet metal to block up windows, doors, or large holes rather than wood or cinderblock, which rats can gnaw through.

Remove abandoned vehicles, appliances, construction debris, empty animal cages, and tires from yards and lots. Keeping them there is a violation.

Cut down grass and weeds that are 12 inches or taller and trim overgrown shrubbery.

■ EXTERMINATE THEM.

The best way is to hire a licensed exterminator (ask to see his or her New York State license). **If you do it yourself...**

Read the label first on snap traps, glue traps, or rodenticide (poison). Follow directions carefully. Lay traps in places rats frequent (look for gnaw marks, droppings, etc.). Place them no more than 20 feet apart, and for best results, use lots of them.

Never put traps or poison where children or pets can reach them.

When emptying or throwing away a trap, pick it up with a broom and dustpan – not your hands.