

SIGNS OF RAT ACTIVITY

Burrows:



Look for entrance holes near foundations, bushes, and gardens. Not all holes are rat burrows; some could be from other animals like chipmunks or skunks.

Droppings and Urine:



Droppings may appear along their routes and nesting areas, often combined with a strong odor.

Chew Marks:



Found on materials like wood, plastic, and wires, which can lead to fire hazards.

Grease Trails:



Rats follow the same paths repeatedly, leaving dark grease marks along walls and floors.

COMBAT THE RAT

A COMMUNITY EFFORT

Rats are a community problem that requires a united response. By educating ourselves and working together, we can make a real impact. The City can provide guidance, but we need everyone's help to make our neighborhoods rat-free. Talk to your neighbors, share prevention tips, and commit to these steps for a cleaner, safer community.

Learn more:

Laura Mikulski's Presentation at City Council



Laura Mikulski's Presentation Slide Deck



Ferndale Rat Patrol Facebook Page:



Madison Heights

KEEPING RATS OUT! A GUIDE TO PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITY

A brochure about protecting our community from rat infestations with easy, effective prevention steps. Learn how to spot signs of rats, prevent them from invading, and safely eliminate them from your property.



ALL ABOUT RATS

Habits

Rats are active mainly at night, but subordinate rats may be seen during the day if food is scarce.

Range

Rats travel 50-300 feet from their nests to find food and water, often within homes, parks, and alleyways.

Physical Abilities:

- Jump 3 feet vertically and 4 feet horizontally.
- Swim over a mile and tread water for days.
- Climb easily on brick, trees, poles, and fences.

Damage Potential:

Constant chewing is necessary for rats due to their ever-growing teeth. They can gnaw through wood, aluminum, and even lead pipes, damaging homes, cars, and infrastructure.

HOW TO PREVENT RATS

- **Don't Feed Them:** Use sealed trash cans, remove outdoor food sources, and clean up pet waste and fallen fruit.
- **Don't Provide Shelter:** Seal openings, raise woodpiles, trim vegetation, and secure compost bins.

HOW TO REPEL RATS

Effective Repellents

- **Peppermint Oil:** Apply fresh oil every few days to areas where rats are present.
- **Predator Urine:** Rats may avoid areas where they detect the scent of natural predators.
- **FreshCab:** Plant-based repellent shown to be 76% effective after 30 days.
- **Mothballs:** While effective, they also contain pesticides and are not always the safest option.

Ineffective Repellents

- Human hair
- Ammonia
- Sound machines
- Mint plants, garlic
- Irish Spring/Soap



HOW TO ELIMINATE RATS

1. Destroy Burrows

Use smoke bombs or dry ice in burrows to remove entire colonies. Moist soil enhances the smoke's effectiveness, while dry ice works well near flammable areas.



2. Set Snap Traps

Effective and targeted, snap traps should be set at dusk and covered with a milk crate to protect other animals. Use strong-smelling bait like peanut butter to attract rats.



3. Support Natural Predators

Owls, hawks, opossums, and foxes naturally control rat populations. Our city is also home to an eagle that benefits from a safe, toxin-free hunting ground.



WHY AVOID POISON?

Risks to Pets and Wildlife:

Poison is a danger to animals who might consume it directly or eat a poisoned rat.

Delayed Effect:

Poison takes up to two weeks to work, during which rats may contaminate more areas.

Resistance:

Many rats have developed immunity, making poison less effective and prolonging the problem.