

Prevention of Rodent-borne Diseases in Construction Sites and Disused/Vacant Lands

Rodent-borne diseases:

Some unattended construction sites and disused / vacant lands may be covered by overgrown grass. They may become playgrounds of stray dogs and breeding grounds of rodents. Mites and ticks that live on the bodies of these animals may carry pathogens capable of causing scrub typhus and tick-borne spotted fever. These arthropods usually cluster at tips of grasses for easy attachment to the bodies of animals (e.g. stray / guard dogs and rodents) and passers-by.

Scrub typhus

Scrub typhus is transmitted by bites of infective Trombiculid mite larvae. Trombiculid mites are small, only 1-2 millimetre in length, and red in colour. Some wild rodents may carry the larvae of the mites on their bodies. On man, the larvae congregate at areas where clothing is tight against the skin such as around the waist or the ankles.

Tick-borne spotted fever

Tick-borne spotted fever is transmitted by bites of infective ticks belonging to family Ixodidae and Argasidae. This disease could also be contracted through crushing of infective ticks or their faeces into abrasions or eyes.

Most larval ticks cluster at tips of grasses or leaves and seek for their preferred animals. Animals such as dogs and rodents may carry ticks on their bodies.

Advice to the owner / management – preventive measures

- Trim the grass on the land regularly to not higher than 30 centimetres;
- Remove the scrub / grass before starting work on the land;
- Fence off the land by installing strong wire meshes, preferably with apertures not greater than 6 millimetres in diameter for the part up to 1 metre from the ground, for preventing the intrusion of stray dogs and rodents;
- Examine guard dogs for ecto-parasites and disinfect them regularly;
- Conduct regular inspections for rodent signs and ensure that there is no accumulation of refuse, disused articles or food remnants;
- Store goods / construction materials properly for easy detection of rodent and stray dog problems;
- Appoint trained personnel or pest control company to handle rodent and pest problems; and

- Apply insect repellent such as insect repellent containing 10%-30% concentration of DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) on clothing or skin according to label instructions when entering the land.

Enquiries

For further information on prevention of diseases transmitted in construction sites and disused lands, please contact the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department on 2868 0000. To report rodent problems, please contact the Department's district environmental hygiene offices. Their addresses and telephone numbers are listed on the back page.

ENQUIRIES

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department Hotline: 2868 0000	
<p>Central/Western 10th Floor, Sheung Wan Municipal Services Building, 345 Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong Tel: 2545 0506</p>	<p>Islands 6th & 25th Floors, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong Tel: 2852 3215</p>
<p>Wan Chai 7th Floor, Lockhart Road Municipal Services Building, 225 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong Tel: 2507 3364</p>	<p>Kwai Tsing 9th Floor, Kwai Hing Government Offices Building, 166-174 Hing Fong Road, Kwai Chung, N.T. Tel: 2420 9204</p>
<p>Eastern 3rd Floor, Quarry Bay Municipal Services Building, 38 Quarry Bay Street, Hong Kong Tel: 2563 4340</p>	<p>Tsuen Wan 3rd Floor, Yeung Uk Road Municipal Services Building, 45 Yeung Uk Road, Tsuen Wan, N.T. Tel: 2212 9701</p>
<p>Southern 4th Floor, Aberdeen Municipal Services Building, 203 Aberdeen Main Road, Hong Kong Tel: 2552 8406</p>	<p>Tuen Mun 1st & 3rd Floors, Tuen Mun Government Offices Building, 1 Tuen Hi Road, Tuen Mun, N.T. Tel: 2146 8642</p>
<p>Kwun Tong Level 7, Shui Wo Street Municipal Services Building, 9 Shui Wo Street, Kwun Tong, Kowloon Tel: 3102 7388</p>	<p>Yuen Long 2nd – 5th Floors, Yuen Long Government Offices, 2 Kiu Lok Square, Yuen Long, N.T. Tel: 2475 3433</p>
<p>Wong Tai Sin 3rd Floor, Tai Shing Street Market Building, 121 Choi Hung Road, Wong Tai Sin, Kowloon Tel: 2328 6531</p>	<p>North 4th Floor, Shek Wu Hui Municipal Services Building, 13 Chi Cheong Road, Sheung Shui, N.T. Tel: 2679 2812</p>
<p>Kowloon City 3rd & 4th Floors, To Kwa Wan Market & Government Offices, 165 Ma Tau Wai Road, Kowloon Tel: 2711 2493</p>	<p>Tai Po 3rd Floor, Tai Po Complex, 8 Heung Sze Wui Street, Tai Po, N.T. Tel: 3183 9119</p>

<p>Yau Tsim 3rd & 4th Floors, Kwun Chung Municipal Services Building, 17 Bowring Street, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon Tel: 2302 1299</p>	<p>Sai Kung 8/F, Sai Kung Tseung Kwan O Government Complex, 38 Pui Shing Road, Tseung Kwan O, Sai Kung, N.T. Tel: 3740 5100</p>
<p>Mong Kok 6th & 7th Floors, Fa Yuen Street Municipal Services Building, 123A Fa Yuen Street, Mong Kok, Kowloon Tel: 2395 2727</p>	<p>Sha Tin Level 12, Tower 1, Grand Central Plaza, 138 Sha Tin Rural Committee Road, Sha Tin, N.T. Tel: 2634 0136</p>
<p>Sham Shui Po 8th – 10th Floors, Un Chau Street Municipal Services Building, 59-63 Un Chau Street, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon Tel: 2748 6959</p>	<p>Pest Control Advisory Section 6/F, Yung Fung Shee Memorial Centre, 79 Cha Kwo Ling Road, Lam Tin, Kowloon Tel: 3188 2064</p>

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