

Prevent Disease Eliminate Rodent Nuisance Residential Management Companies

Rodent Problems in Residential Areas

In residential premises, improper treatment of household refuse provides ample food sources for rodents, while communal areas such as the refuse rooms, storerooms, the void under staircases, the surrounding flowerbeds and retaining walls are potential rodent harbourages. If there are no regular inspections and rodent-proofing measures, the premises and their surroundings will be highly susceptible to rodent infestation.

Types and Characteristics of Rodents

Rodents are social animals living in family groups or colonies. They have good senses of smell, touch and hearing, and are good at swimming and climbing. A rodent can locate itself and direct movement by its strong memory. Their reproductive rate is very high: an adult female rodent can give birth to about 50 young rodents in a year. Common types of rodents include *Rattus norvegicus* (sewer rat), *Rattus rattus* (black rat) and *Mus musculus* (house mouse).

Hazards caused by Rodents

1. Transmission of Diseases

The biggest problem caused by rodents is public health hazards. Rodents can directly or indirectly transmit to humans diseases such as plague, scrub typhus, urban typhus, hantaviral infection and leptospirosis. Rodents, living in dirty environment, are prone to carry pathogens. Ingestion of food and water contaminated by rodents may cause food poisoning and other infectious diseases.

2. Loss of Property

Rodents cause financial loss by gnawing building fittings and household furniture. They may even bite electric wires or cables, causing fire due to short-circuiting. Besides, they may gnaw and damage telephone wires and computer cables.

3. Biting People

Rodents may bite people of low mobility, such as babies, the aged, the invalid, the disabled or people who are asleep.

Signs of Rodent Infestation

Apart from finding rodents around the premises, other signs of rodent infestation include rodent droppings, rat holes, runways, gnawing marks, footmarks and smears.

Rodent-Proofing Measures in Residential Premises

To prevent rodent infestation, management companies should cleanse the premises

and the surroundings frequently and keep the areas clean by:

- inspecting all flowerbeds and pavements regularly for rodent infestation;
- trimming the scrub for easier detection of rat infestation;
- avoiding any accumulation of articles;
- clearing the household refuse from the premises at least once a day;
- tying up the refuse bags before disposal of in a refuse collection box with cover;
- cleansing the used dustbins;
- clearing the refuse in the communal areas as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, the following rodent-proofing measures should be adopted:

1. Install gratings with apertures not more than 6 mm or plug barbed wire balls at the openings of pipes. Any defective gratings must be replaced as soon as possible.
2. Use cement or metal plates to properly seal all the openings left in the walls, floors or roofs after the installation of pipes, wires or split-type air conditioners.
3. Repair all defective pavements and walls with cement.
4. Lower the threshold clearance of doors to not more than 6 mm and affix metal kicking plates of at least 30 cm high to the lower edges of doors and door frames.
5. Install wire meshes with apertures not larger than 6 mm to screen exhaust fans and ventilation louvers.
6. Install rat guards around the pipes on external walls.
7. Place a refuse collection bin with a well-fitted cover on each floor to collect household refuse.
8. Appoint a pest control company to disinfest the premises if there is rodent infestation. Do not try to catch rodents yourselves to avoid contracting rodent-borne diseases.

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>

Published by the Administration and Development Branch,
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Printed by the Government Logistics Department (06/2012)