

Keep Your Cabin Free of Rodents



Can rodents affect my health?

Yes. These animals can carry fleas, ticks, viruses or other organisms on their skin or in their droppings or urine. These can cause diseases in humans, especially when you breathe in the dust from their droppings or nesting sites.

How can I protect myself?

Avoid close contact with rodent urine, droppings, nesting materials or any food or surfaces contaminated with them. Always wear rubber gloves, protective goggles and a protective mask when handling dead rodents, or when cleaning traps, droppings, nesting sites or other areas that rodents may have visited. The use of a "High-Efficiency Particulate Air" (HEPA) filter mask is recommended.

Note: If you develop a skin rash, fever, or breathing problems, or if you are scratched or bitten while cleaning up after rodents, please see your family doctor.

How to prevent rodents from getting into your cabin

- Cover or screen all openings in your cabin that are large enough for a rodent to enter. Mice can get into an opening of 6 mm (1/4 inch) or greater.
- Store all human and animal food in rodent-proof metal or thick plastic containers with tight fitting lids and with no holes or open seams. Do not leave pet food in feeding dishes overnight.
- Wash dishes and cooking utensils immediately after use. Remove all spilled food from counters and floors.
- Store household garbage inside the cabin, in rodent proof containers.

- Remove all garbage and other possible food sources from the grounds outside the cabin area.
- Cut all grass, brush and dense shrubbery within 30 m (100') of the cabin.
- Place woodpiles at least 30 m (100') from the cabin, and at least 30 cm (12 inches) off the ground.
- Remove outdoor trash and litter, abandoned vehicles, discarded tires, or other items that may serve as rodent nesting sites.

Removing rodents from your cabin

- Use traps that are commonly available from home and garden stores. Use traps according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Set the traps in areas where you believe rodents are nesting, and in pathways where they are likely to be moving around inside your cabin.
- Examine the traps regularly and empty as needed.

Note: If you decide to use rodent poisons, follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully. **Do not** place poisons where children or pets can get at them. **Do not** place poisons near food, clothing or bedding.



Cleaning your cabin

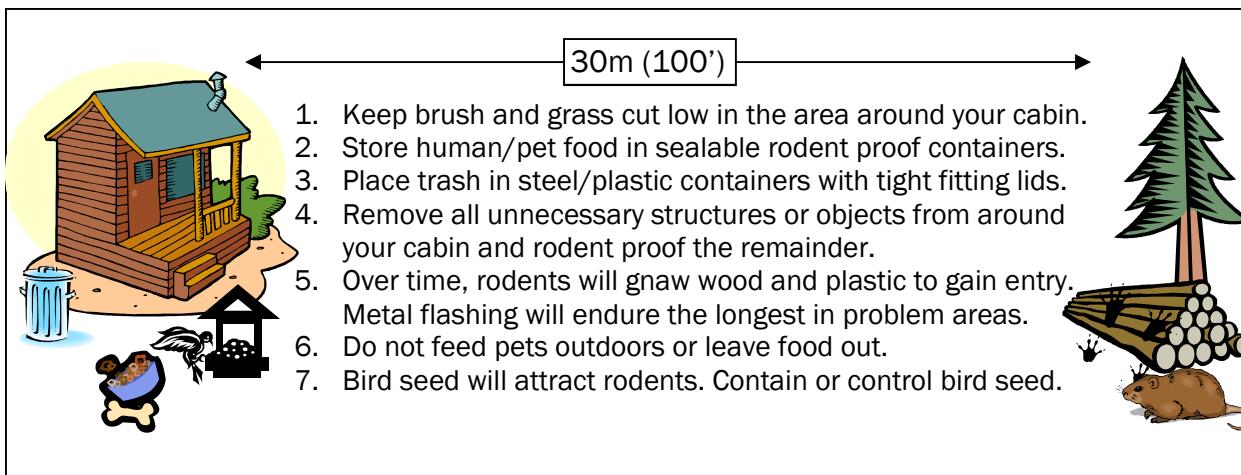
Check your cabin for rodents every time you enter it and after it has been closed up for extended periods. Open screened doors and windows for at least 30 minutes to let the air circulate before you begin to check the cabin. While this is happening, leave the cabin and go outside.

If you find dead rodents, nests, droppings or urine inside, clean the area as follows:

1. Make a bleach solution by mixing 125 mL (½ cup) of household bleach with 1.25 L (5 cups) of water, and pour some into an empty spray bottle.
2. Soak rodent droppings, urine or nesting sites and surrounding areas with the bleach solution. **Wait 10 to 15 minutes.** (On carpets or other materials that may be damaged by bleach, you can use other kinds of cleaners.)
3. Pick up dead rodents, droppings, and other rodent materials and place them in a plastic bag. Place all of this into a second plastic bag.
4. Throw away the rubber gloves, or wash them with the bleach solution and then with soap and water. If you have used any other cleaning utensils, clean them in the same way.
5. Dispose of the bag with the dead rodents, droppings and other materials, at an approved waste disposal site.

Once you have removed dead rodents, and related materials from your cabin, clean and disinfect the cabin as follows:

- Mop floors with the bleach solution. **Do not dry sweep floors. Avoid any other activity that will stir up dust.**
- You may wish to steam clean or shampoo carpets and furniture. Clean countertops, cabinets, drawers, and other similar areas by washing them with the bleach solution.
- Wash soiled bedding and clothing from the cabin with hot water and detergent. Machine dry on a high heat setting or hang outdoors to air dry. (Double bag any laundry that you are taking home to clean, using regular plastic garbage bags. Do not reuse the plastic garbage bags.)



Department of Health and Community Services
Department of Government Services
Regional Health Authorities
Revised January 2011

Environmental Health Awareness