

How Well Do You Know Your Neighbor?



The average adult Norway rat is 16" long, including tail, and weighs about 1 lb.

Rats have thick bodies with grey or brown fur; small eyes and ears; blunt snout; hairless tail shorter than body.

Rats only need 1 oz of food per day to survive.

One female Norway rat may give birth to up to 20 young in a year.

Rats are skilled swimmers and have been known to travel through sewage systems and enter homes through drains and even toilets.

A rat's teeth never stop growing, so rats must always be gnawing to keep them maintained.

Rats are omnivores and will eat almost anything.

Average lifespan is 5 -12 months.

Rats are the second most successful mammals in the world, behind humans.

Nocturnal in nature, rats generally emerge at dusk to do most of their activity and feeding throughout the night.

Norway rats burrow for shelter, warmth, nesting and food storage. Burrows generally begin next to buildings, fence lines or other forms of cover.



SIGNS OF RATS INCLUDE

Holes or burrows about 2-3" in diameter in the ground.

Gnawed tooth marks on wooden baseboards, cabinets, windowpanes, doors, electrical wires, piping or insulation.

Grease "sebum" stains on walls, baseboards, basement sills, cabinets, doors, etc.

Feces, dark pellets with blunted ends, about 3/4" in length and 1/4" in diameter.

Tracks or footprints that are small with four toes on front feet, and five on the longer hind feet; claw marks and/or tail mark is also often visible.



HOW TO CONTROL RATS

To control rats, you have to remove everything they need to survive: food, water, shelter and ways to get around.

The most important thing you can do to prevent rats on your property is to limit access to food sources.

Trash barrels should be covered and taken to the curb as close to pick-up time as possible (7 a.m.). Plastic bags should never be left on the ground.

Make sure you have enough trash barrels with tight lids to hold trash in-between pickups.

Use hard plastic or metal trash barrels with tight fitting lids.

Don't put food out for cats, pigeons, or squirrels. Bird feeders are an often overlooked source of food for rats.

Avoid planting flowers or vegetables that seed or provide fruit attractive to rats.

Eliminate any unnecessary clutter or rubbish from your yard as rats will establish nests and colonies inside and beneath it.

Abandoned automobiles and storage bins provide harborage for rats. They should be removed from the property and taken to a suitable salvage yard.