

# Rats

(rätz) *n.* destructive pests that can contaminate food, spread diseases, damage structures and cause house fires by chewing on electrical wires

## Types of Rats

### Roof Rats (*Rattus rattus*)

- Most common species found in San Diego County
- 13 - 18 inches long, including tail
- Prefer fruits, nuts, and vegetables
- Nest above ground in trees, attics, etc.



### Norway Rats (*Rattus norvegicus*)

- Also known as "street" or "sewer" rats
- 16 - 20 inches long, including tail
- Omnivorous, will eat plants or meat
- Nest in damp environments below or at ground level



### Wood Rats (*Neotoma spp.*)

- Also known as "pack" rats
- 12 - 18 inches long, including tail
- Vegetarian diet
- Build nests with sticks and debris in places ranging from attics to vehicle engines



PREVENT • EXCLUDE • TRAP



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COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
Department of Environmental Health  
**Vector Control Program**  
5570 Overland Avenue, Suite 102  
San Diego, CA 92123  
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# Rats

A Guide to Ending the Rat Race



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
Department of Environmental Health  
**Vector Control Program**

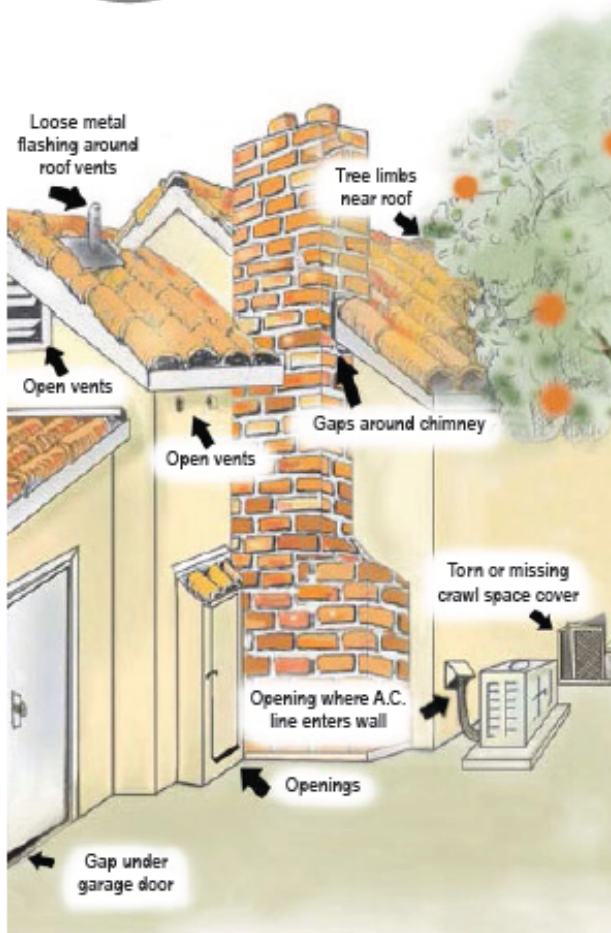


To control rats, remove attractants including food, water and shelter.

# Control Rats in 5 Steps



## 1 Identify Potential Entry Points



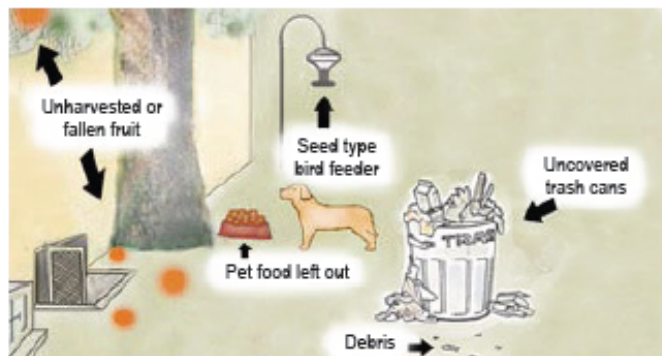
## 2 Identify Signs of Activity

- Rat droppings
- Holes and gnaw marks on fruit, cardboard, wood and plastic containers
- Greasy rub marks along walls, fences and entry points



## 3 Remove Attractants

- Pick ripe and fallen fruits, nuts and vegetables
- Cover garbage cans and compost bins
- Place food in covered, metal containers when storing in garages and sheds
- Remove uneaten pet food daily
- Spray droppings with a mild bleach solution (9 parts water to 1 part bleach) before cleaning



## 4 Remove Rat Habitat

- Repair openings using 1/4 inch 18-22 gauge wire mesh
- Close gaps under doors using metal door sweeps
- Raise wood piles 12 inches off of ground
- Keep heavy vegetation, such as bougainvillea and ivy, away from buildings and fences
- Clean backyard grill after each use
- Remove trash and debris



## 5 Trap

- Place traps where you see rat activity
- Tie down snap traps to prevent traps from being dragged away
- Place food bait on unset snap trap for three days before setting the trigger
- Avoid using poison baits inside the home because rats may die in walls, create foul odors and attract flies

## Call for a FREE educational rat inspection!

During a rat inspection, the technician will:



- Look for signs of rat activity and entry points
- Provide instructions for trapping and eliminating rat habitat
- Provide a rat prevention starter kit like the one shown.

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