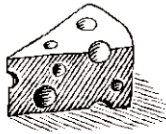


# Rats



Rats like to live where people live and they can thrive on just an ounce of food and water a day. They'll eat meat, fish, vegetables, fruit and certain grains. Tall weeds and grass, tires, garbage, wood piles and abandon cars, furniture and appliances can provide rats with the shelter they need to protect them from predators, including humans.



## Infestation

### Rats (and mice) gain entry into homes and public buildings:

- Through breaks, cracks and tiny openings, smaller than a dime, in foundations or siding.
- Through open or unscreened windows, doors, ventilators, sidewalk gratings and basement vents.
- By burrowing under shallow house foundations.
- By passing through openings around pipes or conduits entering the foundation or inside the house.
- Through floor drains, transoms, letter drops and fan opening.
- Inside bulk packages of food or merchandise.



## Prevention



### You can take the following measures to reduce the risk of a rat infestation:

- Cover all garbage cans with tight fitting lids.
- Remove uneaten pet food and store food in rat proof containers.
- Remove sources of water.
- Keep yards trash free and clean areas behind wooden steps, under decks or any other sites that provide shelter.
- Clean up pet droppings on and around your property daily.
- Pile wood and other storage materials away from walls and at least 18" above the ground.
- Make sure windows and doors close tightly and place heavy screening on all basement windows.
- Seal any holes in your home's foundation.
- Fasten floor drains to keep rats from entering through sewers.
- During a rodent infestation, eliminate bird feeding. Rat proof bird feeders and do not place bird and duck food on the ground.

## Elimination

Baiting to rid rats must be done by a licensed professional. The Erie County Department of Health has a baiting program. Anticoagulant bait preparations are the most effective rat poisons for home use, but continuous feedings are required for three (3) to seven (7) days.

It is important to make sure pets and children do not have access to the poison.

### **Do not try to bait yourself!**

***Remember, if you eliminate a rat's food source and shelter, you will eliminate the root of the problem.***



# Phone Numbers



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**Call the Erie County Department of Health Vector Control Program:**

Erie County - City of Buffalo  
Central District Office:

**961-6800**

Website: **www.erie.gov/health**

## **Working together we can successfully control the rat problem...**

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Rat control is everyone's responsibility. Without continuing sanitation and good housekeeping practices, the results of a rat extermination program will only be temporary.

A neighborhood's best defense is the use of rodent proof garbage cans with tightfitting covers, or garbage totes provided by your municipality, to eliminate the rat's food supply, and the removal of assorted junk, to destroy the shelter needed by rats to survive. Also, rat proofing of all buildings and homes in a neighborhood will prevent infestation.



EH-93 (Rev. 10.08) ECHD

Erie County Health Department  
**Vector Control Program**  
462 Grider Street • Building BB  
Buffalo, New York 14215

# RATS

## FOOD AND SHELTER

*are what they need from you!*

CHRIS COLLINS  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
VECTOR CONTROL PROGRAM

ANTHONY J. BILLITTIER IV, M.D., FACEP  
COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH