

Safe Yard Product Buying Guide

Pest Solution Fact Sheet

Rats



Washington is home to both native and non-native rats. The non-native Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*) nests underground, in rock walls, wood piles and in garden sheds. Roof rats (*Rattus rattus*) nest above ground in trees, brambles and ivy. Rats are nocturnal, shy creatures and don't like disturbance, noise or changes in the physical environment. The best way to rid yourself of a rat problem is to remove their access to food and shelter that you may be providing.

Outdoors, rats will leave trails through vegetation and dig or gnaw holes around buildings and foundations. Another tell-tail is that rats leave grease smudges when traveling close to a wall, around a beam or through a hole. Finally, fresh rat and mouse droppings which are moist and soft, are a very reliable sign of infestation.

The following products can help control rats without risking the health of your family, pets, or the environment.

Product/type	How to use
Mechanical	
Traps - Snap	Using bait boxes, place one or two traps every 15-20 feet, along a known rat trail. Wire them to a heavy or stationary object so they cannot be dragged off. Leave baited but unset until the bait is taken. You can use a wad of cotton for bait. Rats like it for nesting. When bait is taken readily, then set the trap and secure the bait to the trap.
Traps - Electrocutation	More humane than snap traps, they electrocute the rat, then the power shuts off until reset. The traps cannot get wet, so must be used indoors or under cover in rainy weather. Place along a rat run, and let the rats get used to it before turning on the current.
Traps - Live	If you are concerned about killing non-target animals, a live trap would be the best trap. Set up is same as above.
Ultrasonic Repellent	These products emit ultra high frequency sounds, beyond cats and dog's hearing. It takes a few days for the rats to leave.
Chemical	
Repellents	Repellent sprays containing essential oils and other nontoxic ingredients can repel rats from nesting in car engines, closets, and other enclosed spaces.
Corn Gluten Meal; RatX	RatX ingredients are corn gluten meal, corn cobs, maltodextrin, sorbitol, wheat flour, and wheat germ oil. It kills rodents only. No secondary kill, and nontoxic to dogs and cats.



Grow Smart, Grow Safe®

Learn about the hazards associated with specific pesticide products at GrowSmartGrowSafe.org.

Disclaimer: List does not include all products carried by store. Product ratings are based on Grow Smart, Grow Safe®. Responsibility for misrepresentation of any product as a result of customization will rest solely with the creator of the altered content. See www.growsmartgrowsafe.org for disclaimer and copyright information.

Try These Products

- Victor PestChaser Pro ultrasound repellent
- Critter Out spray repellent
- Blinbling Electronic Trap
- Havahart live trap 0745 size
- Victor Rat Trap Model M326 Pro
- RatX

Tips for pesticide application

Many pesticides pose a risk to people, pets, and the environment. Use the following guidelines to minimize these risks.

- Always follow instructions carefully.
- Use bait boxes to prevent non-target wildlife, pets and children from being trapped or zapped.
- If your pets seem bothered by the ultrasonic repellent, use another method.



Pest control that's safer for your kids, pets, and the environment!

Rats

Preventing Rats—your best defense!

<p>Remove Food Sources</p>	<p>Keep anything vaguely edible in a rodent-proof container of metal, glass, or heavy plastic with tight fitting lid: compost, bone meal, organic fertilizers, bird, dog, and cat food. Remove and clean pet dishes after they have eaten. Do not leave pet food outside, especially overnight. Norway rats will happily eat dog droppings, so these need to be picked up, as well as fallen fruit. Make bird feeders inaccessible to rodents. Raise tomatoes and other fruiting plants off the ground. Line compost bins with 1/4", 16-20 gauge, galvanized hardware cloth. Or use rodent proof composting systems like metal trash cans with small ventilation holes. Fix leaky hoses and pipes. Rats get thirsty too.</p>
<p>Seal Entrances and Remove Easy Access</p>	<p>Look for openings where rats may be getting inside buildings: where pipes go through a wall, foundations, roof lines, etc. Stuff openings with copper scouring pads or other non-rusting metal before sealing with expanding foam, so they can't chew their way back in. Cover floor drains with tight-fitting metal grate covers.</p>
<p>Remove Nesting Habitat</p>	<p>Norway rats like to nest in brush piles, and underneath piles of wood, building materials, rocks, etc. Raise these off the ground, the higher the better. Keep foliage low along the base of buildings. Remove sources of nesting material from access: shredded newspapers, cotton batting, sleeping bags, foam rubber, pillows, rag bags, insulation, even string.</p>
<p>Prune to Reduce Access</p>	<p>Prune limbs of trees and shrubs at least 3 feet away from buildings, including the roofs.</p>



Prune tree limbs away from the house. Image: King County

How pesticides work

RatX: RatX works by coating the rodent's digestive system, preventing it from feeling thirst. This leads to dehydration, kidney damage, blood thickening, coma, and ultimately death, after several days. It has this effect on rodents only, so other animals feeding on them will not be affected, nor is the product toxic to non-rodents which might eat it. Other food sources must be removed for it to work well, as it is not an especially attractive food source.

Other Pesticides

Other pesticides that are commonly used to control rats include bromethalin, diphenadione, warfarin, and zinc phosphide. Ingredients in these and many common rodenticides can pose a significant threat to people, pets, wildlife, and the environment. Understand the risks by visiting Grow Smart, Grow Safe®: www.GrowSmartGrowSafe.org

What to consider when using pesticides

Pesticides other than Rat X can also harm animals that prey on rats.

Be sure to choose a pest control product for rats that will not cause harm to people, pets, or other wildlife.

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