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KEEP YOUR CABIN FREE OF RODENTS

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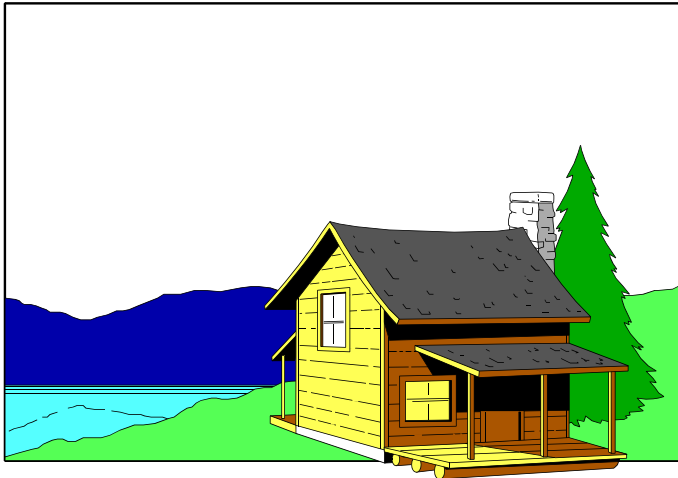


Public Health FACTSHEET

KEEP YOUR CABIN FREE OF RODENTS

Introduction

Cabins that have been closed for the winter can become nesting sites for mice, shrews and other rodents. These animals can carry fleas, ticks, viruses or other organisms on their skin, in their droppings or urine. These can cause diseases in humans, especially when you breathe in the dust from their droppings or nesting sites.



Avoid close contact with rodent urine, droppings, nesting materials or with any food or surfaces contaminated with them.

Always wear rubber gloves when handling dead rodents, or when cleaning traps, droppings, nesting sites or other areas that rodents may have visited.

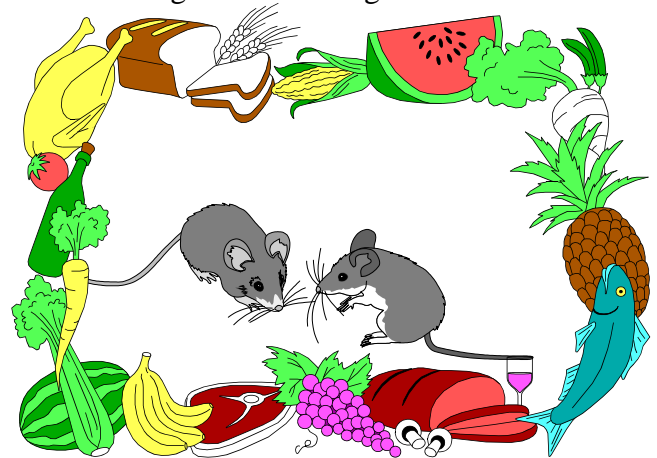
How to prevent rodents from getting into your cabin

✓Cover or screen all openings in your cabin that are large enough for a rodent to enter. Mice can get into an opening of 1/4 inch or greater.



The Deer Mouse

✓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.

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✓Cut all grass, brush and dense shrubbery within 100 feet of the cabin.

✓Place woodpiles at least 100 feet from the cabin, and at least 12 inches off the ground.

✓Remove outdoor trash and litter, abandoned vehicles, discarded tires, or other items that may serve as rodent nesting sites.

How to remove rodents from your cabin

✓Use approved traps according to 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 traps regularly and remove any animals.

*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.***

How to clean up dead rodents, nests or droppings

Check your cabin for rodents every time you enter it after it has been closed up for some time.

1. Open doors and windows for at least 30 minutes to let the air circulate before you begin to clean the cabin. While this is happening, leave the cabin and go outside.

2. If you find dead rodents, nests, droppings or urine inside, clean in the following way:

✓Make a bleach solution by mixing ½ cup of household bleach with 5 cups of water and pour some into an empty spray bottle.

✓Spray rodent droppings, urine or nesting sites and the surrounding areas with the bleach solution until it is soaked. Wait for 10 - 15 minutes. (On carpets or other materials that may be damaged by bleach, you can use other kinds of cleaners.)

✓Pick up dead rodents, droppings and other rodent materials and place them in a plastic bag. Place all this in a second plastic bag.

✓Dispose of the bag with the dead rodents, droppings

and other materials, either at an approved waste disposal or landfill site, by burying the material at least 2 feet deep, or by burning it.

3. Once you have removed dead rodents and related materials from your cabin, clean and disinfect the cabin in the following manner:

✓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.)

If you develop any skin rash or breathing problems, or if you are injured or bitten while cleaning up rodents, please see your family doctor.

More Information:

For more information contact your local Community Health Office. There is also a factsheet available called "*Hantavirus in Deer Mice*".

The Canadian Federation of Humane Societies has developed an excellent series of factsheets on humane ways of avoiding nuisance wildlife. These are available on the web at www.cfhs.ca/.

Produced by:

The Department of Health & Community Services and the Department of Natural Resources.