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## Urban/Suburban Squirrel Control in Private Residences

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Gray squirrel (Sciurus carolinensis) damage to roofs is becoming a major concern to homeowners especially with the steadily increasing construction of houses with wood shingles. Besides causing roof damage (rain leaks), electrical wires are often gnawed. The gray squirrel is finding excellent nesting area' in attics and overhang voids.

Bird feeders and dog leash laws also contribute to squirrel population increasing almost unchecked. During the past 5 years, calls from homeowners have been increasing on squirrel damage to homes.

In an attempt to control squirrel damage, the following procedure has been developed. Some of the steps may be familiar to the average squirrel fighter, but the sequence of steps as well as the importance of each is the secret to success. To date, this method has been 100% successful when followed exactly as given:

- 1) Trap, or by some other means, remove all squirrels living in the house or attic. This is usually accomplished by trapping and removing squirrels until a 2 week inactive period is obtained. At that point, it can be assumed that all the persistent squirrels have been removed. Release the squirrels at least 5 miles (8 km) from the house.
- 2) Clean out the area where squirrels have been nesting. Vacuum or sweep up all nesting materials and droppings. Scatter Naphthalene crystals (moth balls) in the areas that squirrels inhabited. The objective is to remove all odors which will draw future problem squirrels.
- 3) Patch entry holes with heavy gage screen or sheet metal flashing and finish as desired.
- 4) Apply squirrel repellent around the hole and along areas where squirrels run. If the pests are gaining access to the roof by powerlines or phonelines, apply the repellent to these lines. If access is from a tree, apply repellent to the trunk of the tree, or preferrably trim branches back from the structure.

By following these steps, squirrel problems can be eliminated both now and for a long time in the future.