

# HERNANDO COUNTY CODE ENFORCEMENT

## RODENT CONTROL

### PROTECT YOUR HOME AND WORKPLACE

Rodents are small gnawing mammals consisting of a large group that includes rats, mice, chipmunks, gophers, moles, squirrels, and prairie dogs.

Rats and mice are a public health concern since they are disease carriers. They may also cause damage by their gnawing activity and destructive nesting behavior.

Rodents may bite people and damage stored food. They may contaminate food by defecation.

Rodents may cause disease in houses, workplaces, camps, ships, trains, aircrafts, or any area where there is food, overcrowding, and/or poor sanitation practices.

The most important signs of rodent infestation are: gnawing marks on wood, plastic, metal, pipes, and foodstuffs, droppings, runways marked by grease stains from the rat's fur; tail prints and foot prints, rodents sightings, and nesting sites.

Environmental sanitation is the best method for rodent control. Rat-proofing a building and maintaining proper sanitation principles will eliminate the problem with rats and mice.

Since the rat population cannot be eradicated, it is necessary to take precautions to protect your family, home, and workplace.

#### SOME COMMON FLORIDA RODENTS

Roof or Fruit Rat (*Rattus rattus*)  
House Mouse (*Mus musculus*)  
House or Sewer Rat (*Rattus norvegicus*)

#### WHAT THEY NEED TO SURVIVE

FOOD, WATER,  
SHELTER, WARMTH



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### WAYS TO KEEP RODENTS UNDER CONTROL

Block all openings where they are likely to enter, such as:

Windows, ground floors, walls, roofs, and basements using wide band steel wool, cement, galvanized steel mesh, and/or hardware cloth.

Windows should fit tight and have no broken panes.

Doors should have no more than 3/8 inch gap from the frame.

Repair all broken, gnawed, and rotted structures. If repair is not possible, remove the structure.

Get rid of junk, trash, abandoned vehicles. Discard tires and appliances promptly.

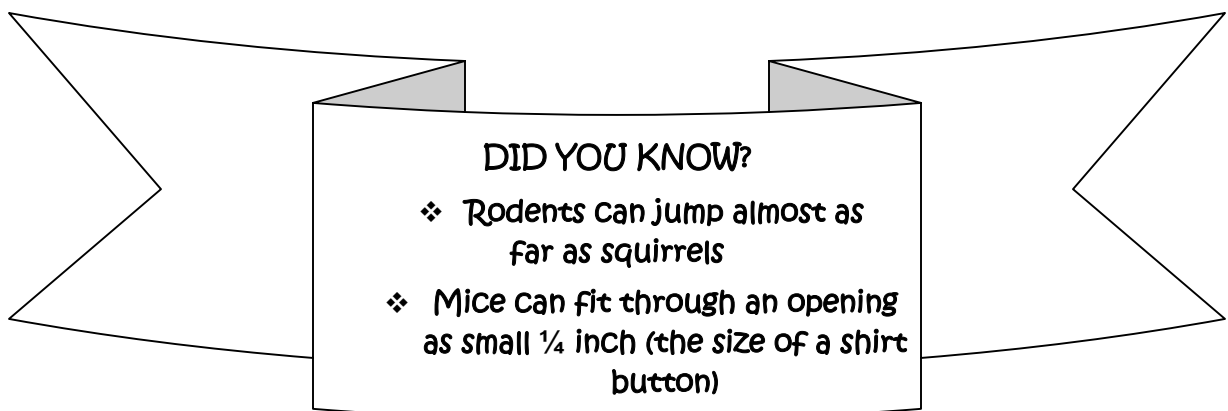
Keep woodpiles and other stored items 100 feet or more from the building, and raise them at least 12 inches off the ground.

Trim grass, brush, and thick bushes within 100 feet of the buildings.

Place spring-loaded traps and/or bait stations near spots where rats and mice are active.

Use only approved rat baits, and place them where pets, children, and other wildlife are not likely to find them.

Anticoagulant baits provide excellent control of roof rats.



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### **DON'T FEED THE RODENTS**

Store garbage in metal or thick plastic cans with tight fitting lids, and promptly clean up any spills.

Don't leave pet food and water out over night, because rats love pet food.

Feed your pets only what they will eat within 30 minutes, then remove any left overs until the next feeding.

Keep fruit and vegetables picked up off the ground.

Place bird and squirrel feeders where rats can't get to them.

Don't leave uneaten food on the ground.

### **ANY QUESTIONS??**

Code Enforcement  
Phone: 352-754-4056

Hernando County Health Department  
Phone: 352-540-6800, Option 4