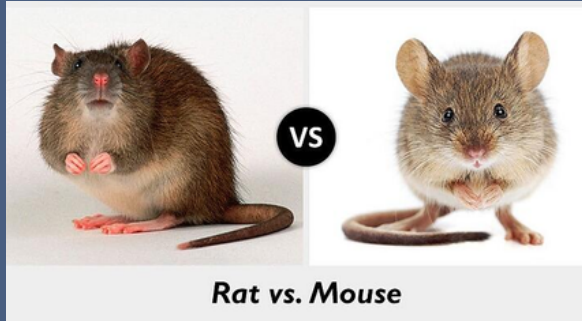


# Have You Seen a Rat Recently?



- Brown fur
- Heavy body structure
- Blunt noses
- Small ears & eyes
- Large feet
- Long, furless tail
- Approximately 9 inches long (much larger than typical mice)

## Rats are a Public Health Concern!

- Carry & spread disease
- Spread vectors, such as ticks & fleas
- Contribute to chronic diseases, such as asthma
- Damage infrastructure
- Contaminate food & supplies
- Cause general community nuisance

## When to Call the Health Division

- Evidence of activity or rodent sightings in or around local restaurants or other businesses
- Repeated evidence or sightings on or near your property - be sure to try our prevention methods first!

Needham Public Health Division  
**(781) 455-7940**



**Needham Public Health Division**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

## Other Methods for Immediate Action:

- Use prevention tips
- Contact a licensed pest management company that uses Integrated Pest Management (IPM) services
- **Renters:** Contact property owner/management if you occupy a dwelling with two or more units



# The Rodent Prevention Guide



## Use this guide to:

- Identify a rat's appearance & their signs of activity
- Learn effective prevention methods
- Know how to take action in the case of an infestation

# How Do I Know If Rats are Present?

- **Burrows:** Holes or tunnels (3-4 inches) typically found around building foundations or gardens. These are their nests.



- **Droppings:** Dark, oval shaped droppings about ¾ inch in size.



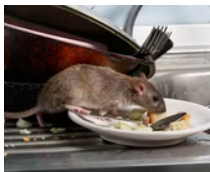
- **Chew Marks:** Evidence of gnawing on food packaging, wires, or other materials (3-4 mm).



- **Sebum Marks:** Greasy, dark marks along walls or surfaces where rats frequently travel.



- **Rat Sightings:** Regular sightings on or near your property can indicate there may be burrows 25-100 feet away.



# Prevention Strategies

## Manage Harborage Areas for Food & Water

- **Remove Water Sources:** Fix leaky faucets and remove standing water. Rats require an external source of water to survive.



- **Secure or Remove Compost:** Ensure compost bins are tightly sealed & chew proof to prevent rats from accessing food waste.



- **Yard Maintenance:** Trim bushes and lawns regularly to reduce potential shelter and nesting areas. Remove leaf litter.



- **Treats, Bird Feed, & More:** Avoid putting out excess food for animals/birds or allowing fruit from trees to sit on the ground for long periods of time.



- **Pet Waste:** Regularly clean pet waste in yard to avoid attracting other animals. Rats have been known to eat the undigested food in pet waste.



# Stopping Rats Before They Start

## Prioritize Sanitation First, Treatment Second

- **Clutter Removal:** Clear away wood, debris, and trash to eliminate potential hiding spots for rats. Cover all openings.



- **Outdoor Grills:** Clean outdoor grills thoroughly to remove food residues that might lure pests



- **Secure Trash Receptacles:** Ensure all trash containers & dumpsters are durable, always closed, and tightly sealed with an intact drain plug. Replace any containers compromised or that are heavily soiled.



- **Frequent Disposal:** Trash should be emptied regularly. It should never pile up or spill over the container.



- **Traps and Baiting:** Should be minimally used and only after all other prevention methods are exhausted. Remember to read the label and use per manufacturer's instructions.

