

At this time of year, there is often a growing concern regarding evidence of rodents in our area. Northwest Bergen Regional Health Commission (NWBRC), which serves as the Health Department for Midland Park, would like to assist residents with the prevention and control of rodents in the community.

In an effort to do so, please find below the following guidance. Since time is of the essence, please be sure to survey your property. Take into consideration any unnatural burrows, holes or unusual gnawing marks. Please report ANY identified burrows to us immediately. Be advised that if rat burrows are found on your property, the homeowner is responsible for treatment.

### **Where do rats live outside the home?**

- Under wood piles or lumber that is not being used often
- Under bushes, vines and in tall grasses that are not trimmed or cut back
- Under rocks in the garden
- In cars, appliances and furniture that has been put outside and is no longer being used
- In and around trash and garbage that has been left on the ground
- In holes under buildings

### **Where do rats live inside the home?**

- In the insulation of walls or ceilings
- Inside the crawl spaces
- Behind or under cupboards, counters, bathtubs and shower stalls
- Near hot water heaters and furnaces
- In basements, attics and wherever things are stored in boxes, paper or cloth

### **What foods bring rats into my yard and neighborhood?**

- Garbage that rats can get into, like garbage cans with loose lids, plastic or paper bags, and litter.
- Food for pets and birds that has not been eaten. Birdseed on the ground, pet food in pet dishes, bread crumbs, etc.

- Fruits and berries that have fallen to the ground.
- Compost pile or worm bin that isn't taken care of the right way (do not put meat, fish, poultry, or dairy in the compost)
- Dog droppings

## **What do rats eat when they get inside the house?**

### **THE SAME FOODS WE DO!**

- Foods, fats, oils that have been spilled and left on counters, floors, appliances and tables
- Grains, like cereal, oats, rice and vegetables like potatoes and carrots that are in cardboard boxes and plastic bags
- Pet food in boxes or bags
- Any garbage that is not in a can with a tight lid

## **Keep rats away from your home!**

### **The time to act is before the signs (droppings) of a rat or mouse appear.**

- Stack fire wood 18 inches off the ground and away from all buildings.
- Birdhouses and seed should be on poles and in trays rats can't get.
- Keep garbage can lids closed tightly.
- Plant bushes so they will stay at least 3 feet from your house.
- Keep yards and alleys clean. Take junk to the dump!
- If you feed them, they will stay. Pick up fruit and vegetables in your yard.
- Do not compost any animal products (fish, meat, chicken, cheese, butter). Keep lids tight.
- Use only rodent resistant composters.
- In basements keep any food in closed containers that rats can't chew through.
- Cover all openings to your house. Rats can get into very small places.
- Do not leave your pet food outside. If your pet doesn't eat it, the rats will.

The success of a rodent control program is dependent upon the cooperation of EVERY community member. Since rats move from one place to another, it is essential that we all correct physical conditions contributing to rodent problems and be alert for signs of their occurrence. The rodent knows no boundary lines and only you and your neighbor can control their presence in the community.

Again, please reach out to us at 201-445-7217, ext 0, with questions or any findings. Thank you!

Northwest Bergen Regional Health Commission