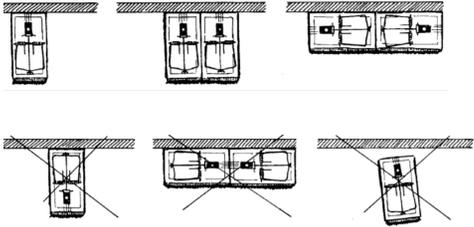


## Rat Control

Exclusion and trapping are the best control methods in homes where signs of rats are identified. **Poison methods are not recommended.** Snap traps are inexpensive and come in two sizes. The larger size is for rats and the smaller size is for mice.

Foods such as peanut butter, nuts, bacon, oatmeal, apple pieces, and candy make great baits since rats are highly attracted to them.

Place traps where rats are likely to visit such as near droppings, gnawing damages, and along walls ensuring trap trigger is facing the wall. Do not place traps outside, as they might trap non-targeted wildlife. It is essential to conduct exclusion work before setting any traps out.



## How can Vector Control help?

Trained technicians are available to conduct a home inspection at no cost and provide advice to homeowners on appropriate baiting and trapping procedures, locate possible entry points, and provide guidance on repair. To schedule an inspection, please call the District office at (408) 918-4770, or submit a service request online at SCCVector.org.

**Need help identifying if those are rodent rub marks, feces, or gnaw marks? Photos can be emailed to [vectorinfo@cep.sccgov.org](mailto:vectorinfo@cep.sccgov.org) for identification.**



Roof rats are also known to carry mites, and although they may not transmit disease, mites readily bite humans and leave itchy welts.



## Roof Rats

### Resources

**California Department of Public Health**  
(916) 558-1784  
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/>

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**  
(800) 232-4636  
<https://www.cdc.gov/>  
<https://www.cdc.gov/rodents/cleaning/>

**Environmental Protection Agency**  
(415) 947-8000  
<https://www.epa.gov/>

### Vector Control District County of Santa Clara

1580 Berger Drive  
San Jose, CA 95112  
M-F 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

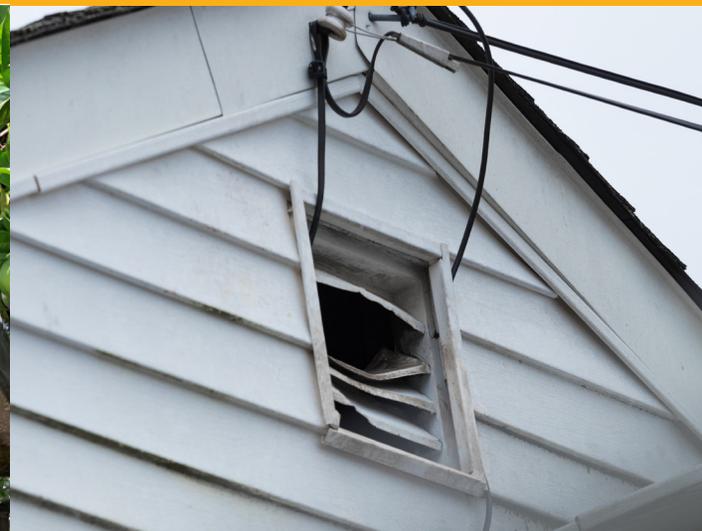
Office: (408) 918-4770  
Fax: (408) 298-6356

[vectorinfo@cep.sccgov.org](mailto:vectorinfo@cep.sccgov.org)  
[www.sccvector.org](http://www.sccvector.org)



[www.sccvector.org](http://www.sccvector.org)

(408) 918-4770



## About Roof Rats

- Roof rats (*Rattus rattus*) are some of the most troublesome rodents found in Santa Clara County.
- Their agility allows them to invade buildings and homes by using fences and utility lines as runways, and are able to climb walls and wood sidings.
- They fit through holes the size of a quarter.
- Their tail is longer than head and body combined.
- They are slender with large ears and eyes, and have a pointed nose.
- Can cause allergens and carry ectoparasites.

## Signs of Rat Activity

- Partially eaten fruit or nuts (especially walnuts, oranges, lemons and avocados).
- Pile of empty snail shells around the home.
- Gnaw marks or teeth marks on plastic, wood, or rubber.
- Greasy rub marks on wooden or painted surfaces.
- Presence of rat droppings: slightly curved, dark in color, and about 1/2 inch long.
- Sounds at night (gnawing and running) coming from attic, crawl spaces, and wall spaces.

## Stop the Invasion

- Remove food sources like overripe/fallen fruit, and harvest nuts and vegetables.
- Remove clutter/garbage and keep garbage cans tightly covered.
- Don't leave pet food and water outside, and clean up bird feeders.
- Block entrances to your home by replacing missing or broken vent screens.
- Seal holes or gaps between roof tiles and around pipe entrances with **metal, concrete, or 1/4 inch galvanized hardware cloth**.
- Cut trees, bushes, and vines 3-5 feet from roof.

## Diseases

- Bubonic plague: high rat populations increases risk of outbreaks.
- Leptospirosis: spreads through water and food contaminated with infected rat urine.
- Salmonellosis: transmitted when rodents contaminate foods.

## Roof Rat Habitat and Food

- Dense bushes, hedges, ivy, and shrubs.
- Sheds, garages, attics, basements, and crawl spaces.
- Piles of wood, lumber, and under decks.
- Pet food, fallen bird seeds, grass seeds, snails, vegetables, fruits, and compost piles.

## Yard Maintenance

- Thin dense vegetation and ivy.
- Keep sheds and storage areas closed off and neat, and firewood 18 inches off ground and 12 inches away from walls.
- Fix leaky spigots and broken irrigation to eliminate water sources.