

The District Program

San Mateo County Mosquito and Vector Control is an independent, special district funded by a property tax voted in by individual cities.

We provide the following services for district residents:

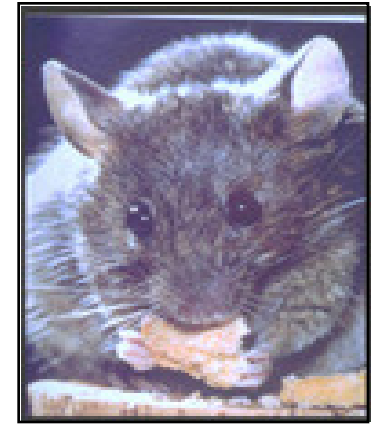
- Mosquito Control
- Yellow jacket Control
- Rodent Inspection
- Insect and Tick Identification
- Vector-borne Disease Surveillance
- Community Education

Remember . . .

Rats and mice will seek out environments where **food, water and shelter** are found. A successful control program seeks to **eliminate or control these factors!**

www.smcmad.org

Rat and Mouse Trapping Guidelines in Residential Areas



San Mateo County Mosquito and Vector Control

"An Independent Special District Working for You!"

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Control of Rats and Mice

The purpose of this brochure is to provide trapping information. For additional information on rat biology, refer to *Rat and Mouse: Prevention and Control* brochure.

1. Confirm Rat Activity

The first step in control is determining where rodents are entering structures or where activity is occurring.

Signs of activity:

- Droppings (runways)
- Rub and grease marks (Refer to Fig 1.)
- Live or dead rats
- Gnawing damage
- Rat sounds (attic, walls)
- Rat odors

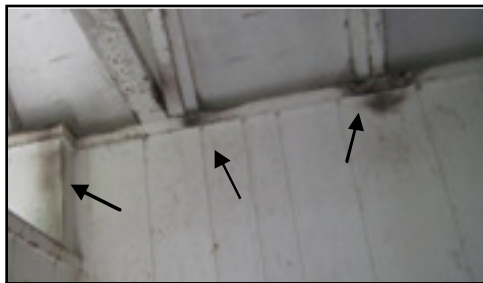


Fig 1. Rats leave rub marks along routes of travel (runways)

2. Seal - up Holes and Gaps

Once rat activity is seen, it is important to seal up all building gaps and openings larger than 1/4 inch. 1/4 inch hardware cloth, cement fill, sheet metal are all good materials to use. Complete this step **before** extensive trapping.

3. Pre - baiting Traps

Rats tend to avoid new objects. Pre-baiting involves placing baited traps **without setting them**. This step allows rats and mice to become familiar with the traps. Place pre-baited traps in areas of activity for a few days.

Suitable baits include peanut butter with oatmeal, nuts, bacon or apple.

Do not allow kids or pets near traps!

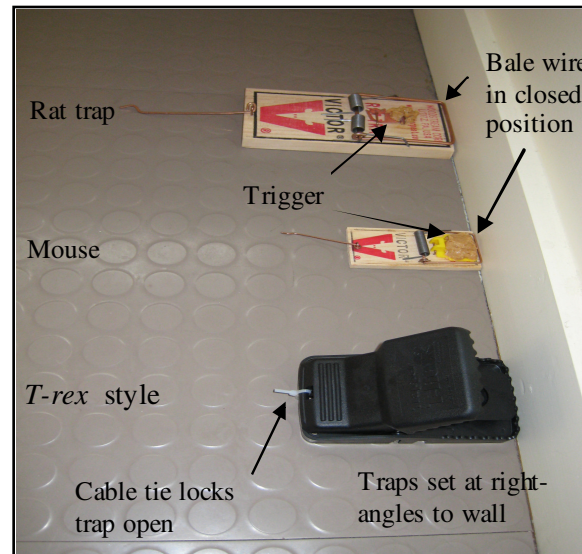


Fig 2. Setup of pre-baited traps. Correct placement is key for all types of snap traps. Note that triggers are not set, and *T-rex* trap is locked in an open position with a cable tie. The mouse trap uses a larger trigger.

4. Baited and Set Traps

After a few days, set baited traps at right angles to active rat runways where droppings are seen. For wire snap and *T-rex* type traps, always follow manufacturer's label instructions.

Securely attach bait to the trigger.

5. Change Trap Location

When the number of animals captured per day declines, check for fresh droppings. If droppings are still observed, the rodents may be avoiding the traps. Change trap location to new area of rat activity.

Repeat the cycle of pre-baiting and trapping until no new signs of rat activity are seen.

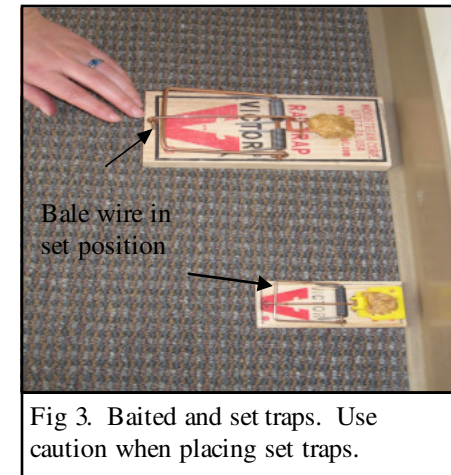


Fig 3. Baited and set traps. Use caution when placing set traps.

6. Proper Disposal and Clean Up

Some rodents can carry Hantavirus or other diseases. Therefore, when cleaning rat-infested areas, do not stir up dust by sweeping and vacuuming droppings, urine, or nesting material.

Using rubber or latex gloves, apply a disinfectant or a 10% bleach solution onto dead rodents and droppings. Clean up with paper towels. Double-bag and dispose of waste in a garbage can with a tight-fitting lid. Afterward, thoroughly wash hands with soap and water.

Information about rodents and disease can be obtained from the district laboratory at (650) 344 - 8592.