

**THINGS YOU
SHOULD KNOW
TO GET RID OF**

RATS

Many houses and neighborhoods in New York City are breeding grounds for rats or are actually overrun with rats at the present time. You may live in one of these houses.

If you do, you have probably tried different ways to get rid of rats—maybe without much success. Rats are dirty and dangerous—but there are things that you, yourself, can do to get rats out of your own apartment and to *keep them out!*

FACTS ABOUT RATS

Rats are attracted by the smell of food.

Rats need water to drink.

Rats need dark and protected places in which to raise their young.

Rats raise many young ones a year—poisoning a few rats will not reduce the rat population for long.

Rats can squeeze through openings as small as $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.

Rats can chew through wood, masonite and plaster.

RATS CANNOT CHEW THROUGH METAL OR CONCRETE.

Rats may enter your apartment through openings around the pipes, cracks in the walls, or openings in the ceiling.

Rats may enter your apartment through openings between the door and wall, through openings between the door and floor, or even between the door and its frame.

Rats may get in through holes in the door or holes in the wall gnawed by them and usually found in dark corners, behind the stove, the refrigerator, your kitchen cabinets, or other closed-in spaces.

FIRST STEPS—WHAT YOU CAN DO TO KEEP RATS OUT OF YOUR APARTMENT

Do not allow the smell of food to attract rats to your apartment. *Always* wash dishes *immediately* after a meal.

GARBAGE AND GARBAGE CANS

Put all garbage into *metal* cans with a tight-fitting cover.

The average family should have a *five-gallon* garbage can (this is 20 quarts).

Put your garbage into a paper bag before throwing it into the can; it is also a good idea to line your can with newspaper.

Don't throw liquids into the garbage can (empty them into the sink).

Scrub the inside of your garbage can with soap and water after you empty it.

Be sure you know what time garbage is collected in your apartment house and have yours ready for collection at that time. Try *not* to keep it overnight in the apartment.

FOOD

Food such as rice, sugar, flour, cereal, dried fruit, etc. should be kept in tightly-covered jars or cans.

Perishable food like milk, meat and butter should be kept in the refrigerator.

Keep raw potatoes and onions on a shelf in a covered container.

Keep your stove clean, inside and out. Scrub it hard once a week with a brush, soap and warm water.

Sweep the kitchen floor every night after your family has finished supper and the dishes have been washed; *wash* the kitchen floor two or three times a week as needed.

REMEMBER: rats are most active at night. Make sure there are no food smells to attract them at night.

Your baby will smell of milk all night long, if you put him to sleep with his bottle. Many babies have been bitten by rats—always at night, very often in the face. Some have died as a result. If it is inconvenient for you to feed the baby his last bottle before putting him in the crib, be *sure* to take the bottle away after he is finished, rinse it, and wash baby's face and hands (even if it wakes him up)—a clean baby in a clean crib will not be attacked by rats.

WHAT YOUR LANDLORD MUST DO

The law requires your landlord to keep every part of the building free of rats. In addition to killing the rats and keeping the building clean, he must repair the places where rats can get into your apartment. You can help him and yourself.

Help keep the building clean: don't throw anything into the yard or hall; stop anyone else from doing this.

HOLES

Make sure you find the holes that must be closed. Tell the landlord about them. Make sure they are closed properly. Holes should be closed with metal or concrete.

DOORS

The frames of windows and doors should be tight-fitting so that there is no free edge for gnawing.

PLASTER

Plaster may not stay in place where there is an opening between the ceiling and the hot water or steam pipe. A heavy metal collar must be fitted over such openings. This collar comes in two pieces and can be purchased in most hardware stores for less than fifty cents (50c).

HELPFUL HINTS

If you want to stop up small holes yourself, take some steel wool, dip it into a mixture of plaster of paris, and stuff it into these holes. It will harden and keep rats out.

Appoint one older child in the family as rodent control "inspector". Once a week he should look for holes, (large and small), uncovered food and leaky plumbing.

REMEMBER: rats need food, water, and a place to stay. You can get rid of rats. Always keep your food in covered jars or cans, keep your garbage pail tightly covered and do not throw garbage into the yard, hallway or dumbwaiter shaft.

If you feel that the condition of your building or apartment is attracting rats, *first* inform your superintendent or landlord.

If the condition continues, call the Health Department in your borough.

Manhattan	WO 4-3800
Brooklyn	TR 5-9400
Bronx	LU 3-5500
Queens	OL 8-6600
Richmond	SA 7-6000



Department of Health • The City of New York
125 Worth Street, New York 13, N. Y.

