



**MULTNOMAH COUNTY OREGON**

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**Hang “No Vacancy” sign for rodents this winter**  
*Cold weather brings rats and mice indoors*

Winter weather has pest rodents on the move. Rats and mice may seek food and shelter indoors in your home or place of business, causing damage and spreading disease. According to Chris Wirth, Manager of Multnomah County Vector Control, “Rodents can carry a variety of infectious diseases and are a health hazard. In this part of Oregon, rodents have been identified with Hanta virus and Salmonella.”

Multnomah County Vector Control reminds the public of these **Rodent Action Tips** to prevent rodents from setting up a permanent residence and to reduce the risk of disease:

**1) SEAL UP**

Seal up any openings or cracks large enough to squeeze a pencil through to keep rodents out. Steel wool and caulk are good for blocking small holes. Sheet or lath metal, hardware cloth or concrete can cover larger holes.

**2) TRAP OUT**

If rodents have already moved in use “green” methods such as snap traps or glue boards when appropriate. Traps can be baited with peanut butter and placed in areas where rodent droppings are found.

**3) CLEAN UP**

Minimize places for rodents to live by removing trash and debris from inside and outside the home. Eliminate potential rodent food sources by cleaning dirty dishes, spilled food, and keeping tight lids on food storage containers and garbage cans. Pet food should be kept in metal containers with tight lids and should not be left out in a food bowl for more than an hour.

Do not sweep, dust, or vacuum rodent-contaminated areas, as this can stir-up rodent droppings and infect people with disease. Instead, wet down surfaces and floors with a disinfectant. Remember to use rubber gloves and a dust mask while cleaning. Droppings, urine, nests and dead rodents should be sprayed with a disinfectant or a solution of one part bleach to nine parts water before cleaning up and being thrown away.

After cleaning be sure to wash rubber gloves in disinfectant and then with soap and water before taking them off. Immediately wash hands and arms with soap and water after removing the gloves and launder clothing.

If a rodent infestation is severe, or can’t be handled on your own, call a pest control professional. For more information see the Multnomah County Vector Control web page: <http://www.mchealth.org/vector/rats.htm> or call 503-988-3464.

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