



Basic Rodent Control after a Storm

After a storm, many rodents are displaced from their natural habitat. As a result, these animals seek areas which provide food and shelter. Unfortunately, many of the new rodent havens are in houses, sheds, barns and other buildings. Structures damaged by the storm are particularly attractive and provide easy access to rodents. The unwelcome pests can cause property damage, and in extreme cases can pose a potential health problem.

Rats and Mice



- Remove as soon as possible all debris around houses and buildings that could provide protective cover for rodents.
- Keep lawn and field vegetation mowed at a low height to eliminate protective cover for rodents.
- Remove any potential food source such as household trash, waste grain, or other foods that might attract mice and rats.
- Close openings into buildings around water pipes, electrical wires, vents and doors with $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch mesh hardware cloth and/or sheet metal.
- Try registered toxicant baits with zinc phosphide or anticoagulants for mouse and rat control.
- Set snap traps to capture nuisance rats and mice. Successful trap baits for the trigger mechanism include whole kernel corn, peanut butter and oatmeal, and oatmeal paste. Traps should be checked each day.

Cornell Cooperative Extension
P.O. Box 184
Hamden, NY 13782
607-865-6531

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Squirrels

- Prevent squirrels from climbing onto roofs by encircling trees and poles with 2-foot-wide metal collars 6 feet off the ground.
- Attach metal sheets using encircling wires held together with springs to allow for tree growth.
- Trim trees to prevent squirrels from jumping onto roofs.



- Prevent squirrels from traveling on wires to houses and buildings by installing 2-foot sections of lightweight 2- or 3-inch diameter plastic pipe. Split pipe lengthwise, spread open, and place over wire.
- The pipe will rotate on the wire and cause traveling squirrels to fall.
- Close openings to attics and eaves of houses and buildings with heavy ½-inch wire mesh or sheet metal.
- Treat ledges and eaves with a repellent called "4-The Squirrels;" this has varying degrees of success.
- Try naphthalene (moth balls), methyl-nonyl-ketone crystals or paradichlorobenzene (moth crystals) in closed attics for a temporary repellent. Use 1-2 pounds spread evenly throughout the attic.
- Use traps to catch squirrels, including No. 0 or 1 leghold traps, the "Better Squirrel and Rat Trap," box traps and cage traps. Regular rat-size snap traps will catch flying squirrels. Good baits are slices of orange and apple, walnuts and pecans removed from the shell, peanut butter and sunflower seeds.
- Check with the local law enforcement officials and wildlife conservation officers in your area to determine if firearms are permitted for shooting squirrels.