



MOUSE CONTROL IN & AROUND BUILDINGS

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Many who have lived through mouse plagues say that the stress of living with mice in their homes and workplaces for months on end is the worst aspect. During a plague everyone suffers a decline in quality of life, but there are steps that can be taken to reduce the social impacts of mice.



Photo by L. Staples

REDUCE THEIR IMPACT BY THE FOLLOWING:

No Food

- Remove or protect all sources of food, both inside and outside buildings
- Keep garbage and water in containers with tight lids
- Empty garbage regularly
- Hand feed poultry and aviary birds daily – avoid feeders and mouse proof cages where possible

No shelter

- Clear rubbish and debris from around the house
- Mow the grass short
- Don't keep timber or boxes under the house or sheds
- Keep timber stacks away from walls and off the ground

No Entry

Consider mouse proofing buildings. It is a fiddly job but can be done.

MOUSE PROOFING YOUR HOUSE & OTHER BUILDINGS

If your house is one which lends itself to mouseproofing, here are some ideas on how to do it.

Walls

- Fill holes in external walls and gaps around pipes or wiring with steel wool or other such material
- Check the fit of architraves in timber houses
- Check corners of outside walls for gaps
- Check for gaps around windows
- Take away underfloor netting or other 'ladders' mice can use
- A 150 mm-wide band of high-gloss paint will stop mice climbing walls
- In brick houses, keep mice out of wall cavities by sealing access doors to underfloor areas and covering ventilators with metal flywire
- On a concrete slab, plug drainholes at the bottom of exterior walls with steel wool

MICE PLAGUES and MOUSE CONTROL

Doors and windows

- Install door closers
- Reduce all gaps to less than 6mm – nailed flat-iron is good for this
- Build up or renew worn thresholds in doorways
- Make sure screen doors are close fitting
- Fit heavy metal flywire screens to windows

Roof and eaves

- Fit sheetmetal cowls to rainwater pipes, electrical conduits and water pipes on outside walls (cowls should be at least 300 mm wide and should have a downward sloping lip about 50mm wide)
- Cut off overhanging tree branches
- Fit eaves with heavy gauge wire mesh – not bird wire
- Fit mesh over ends of rainwater pipes which open onto a roof
- Check ridge capping and roofing for snug fit
- Fit cowls to the legs of tank stands

TRAPPERS GUIDE

The old-fashioned mousetrap is still effective when numbers are small. Here are some tips

- Use several traps in each room
- Set traps at right angles to the wall with the trigger next to the wall
- Leave a clear 50 mm run along the wall to make sure that mice run along the traps
- Use fresh bait every day – bread crust, bacon rind, raisins and peanut butter are all good
- Cardboard soaked in canola or other oil also makes a good bait
- Cornmeal or wheat germ dropped from 100 mm above the set traps will attract mice to unbaited traps
- If mice become trap-shy, repeat trapping after 30 days
- Dispose of live mice humanely

BAIT WITH CARE

Baiting around buildings is an option if trapping fails, but needs to be done carefully. Use only baits that have been approved by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority and apply baits strictly according to the label. Take great caution to avoid accidental poisoning of children and pets. Note also that a downside of baiting is nasty smells from decomposing carcasses.

A range of registered anti-coagulant baits are available from retailers. Do not use baits inside the house. They can encourage mice to come inside. Bait the perimeter of buildings but cover bait stations to protect children, cats and dogs.

Baits containing strychnine are permitted for use in and around rural buildings, but not in the domestic situation including houses. Baits are best in bait stations less than 10 metres apart. Each should contain between 50 and 150 grams. Remember to store poisons where children, domestic animals and wildlife cannot reach them.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

<http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/>

http://www.grdc.com.au/uploads/documents/GRDC_Mice_FS.pdf