

Vermin such as rats and mice are common pests that are found in most urban communities. They like to live in close association with humans as they can have easy access to a food source and shelter. Rats and mice can transmit disease and may become a nuisance by causing damage to your property. While it is unlikely that rats and mice will be eradicated from your environment there are a number of steps that can be taken to reduce and control their numbers.

Signs of vermin activity

While you may not see rats or mice, if you suspect vermin activity at your home, there are a few things you can look out for to confirm whether they are present:

- Rat droppings which are dark, 12–18mm in length and are larger than mice droppings (3-4mm in length)
- Burrows in the ground or nests in areas such as house roofs, sheds, old soft furnishings or dense vegetation
- ‘Rat-runs’ where vermin run along walls or fences can be detected as their oily coats leave greasy rub marks.
- Gnaw marks on materials such as wood, soft metals, soap, food containers and electrical wiring
- Nibbled fruit, vegetables, food packaging, food scraps, and pet food
- You may hear squeaking, scratching and movement in walls, ceilings or under the floor



Preventing vermin attraction and harbourage

In order to deter rodent attraction and shelter at your property, there are a few simple tactics you can use:

- Remove all possible food sources:
 - Pick up fruit that has fallen from trees
 - Strip fruit and nuts from trees and vines at the end of the season
 - Store foods in the home in sealed packaging and containers
 - Only put out enough food for pets to eat in one sitting
 - Store pet food in sealed containers
- Stack building materials eg, wood, bricks and metal 30cm above the ground and away from fences
- Remove unwanted materials from your property
- Cut back vegetation such as long grass, vines and creepers
- Put all waste and recyclables in bins with tight fitting lid
- Treat the property for rodents by baiting, trapping or through a pest controller if necessary

Rats and mice reproduce at a rapid rate. Female rats become fertile from as young as five weeks and both rats and mice have approximately 10 young in their litter.

Therefore it is important to recognise and address rodent issues as soon as they arise to eliminate the chance for reproduction.



Baiting and treatment

Please be advised the City of Playford does not provide a vermin-baiting service. Baits and traps are available from hardware stores and supermarkets. Single dose baits, although more expensive, reduce chemical tolerance within a vermin populations which generally has a more effective result.

Baits or traps should be placed in areas where vermin activity is prominent and out-of-reach by pets and children, eg, in sheds, roof cavities or along rat-runs.

If you are concerned about pets or children accessing the baits, one suggested method involves fastening single-dose wax baits inside a segment of PVC pipe and placing it along a suspected rat-run. Ensure the pipe is small enough to restrict pet and child access but still allow enough space for rats to pass through.

Baiting and trapping will kill rodents, however if conditions are favorable, ie, there is an easily accessible food source, vermin may not consume the baits and vermin activity will continue.

If the above-listed methods cannot effectively control a vermin infestation, it is recommended that you contact a licensed pest controller.

CONTACT

Environmental Health Team
8256 0333
eho@playford.sa.gov.au

CALL

(08) 8256 0333

VISIT

Playford Civic Centre
10 Playford Boulevard
Elizabeth SA 5112

Stretton Centre
307 Peachey Road
Munno Para SA 5115

POST

12 Bishopstone Road
Davoren Park SA 5113

EMAIL

playford@playford.sa.gov.au

