



Food safety advice

Controlling Rodents (rats and mice) in your Food Business



If a problem with mice or rats is identified at your food business, it is important that the infestation is controlled as quickly as possible.

Mice and rats carry most of the major food poisoning organisms in their gut and are likely to contaminate food, food packaging and surfaces with their urine and droppings. They chew into food packaging and damage the structure of the business. If Officers find an infestation that is uncontrolled, they may close your business until the problem is resolved.

How do I know if you have a problem with mice or rats?



Mouse droppings (left) and rat droppings (right)

You may notice:

- Droppings
- Nibbled food packaging or food
- Urine staining or a smell of urine
- Greasy marks or hair around pipes or holes in the structure of the building

What do I do next?

1. Throw away any nibbled food or food that may have become contaminated with droppings or urine
2. Thoroughly clean and disinfect the premises from top to bottom. All traces of grease and food debris must be removed as the mice will eat this.
3. Employ the services of a competent pest control contractor to provide a course of treatment (look in the telephone directory or on the internet under "Pest and Vermin Control Services").





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You should check if they are members of a nationally organised pest control association, such as:

- National Pest Technicians Association www.npta.org.uk or
- British Pest Control Association www.bpca.org.uk

What should I expect from a Pest Control Contractor?



Holes around pipes need sealing

The contract should include immediate treatment for the rodents and regular visits to look at bait stations and give advice.

The first visit should involve a thorough survey of the business. They should provide a plan showing where bait has been laid and written information on the type of poison they have used.

You must accompany the officer during the visit so that they can point out any proofing (holes or areas that rodents can use as access points) issues. Some companies may carry out proofing work for you.

They should leave a written report at each visit detailing what type of pests have been found and what treatment has been given. It should include which parts of the business have been inspected. The report should also include what pest proofing you need to do to stop the rodents getting into the business.

IT IS IMPORTANT NOT TO RELY COMPLETELY ON YOUR PEST CONTROL CONTRACTOR. You should carry out regular checks for rodents and ring your contractor if you see any signs of rats or mice in your premises. Remember, failure to control rodents in your food business can result in closure and further legal action.



Remember, legal action may be taken resulting in fines of up to £5,000 per offence and/or two years imprisonment.