

Exclude, Deter, Repel

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I. Exclude

- A. Seal all buildings. Do it yourself or hire a rodent exclusion company, not a pest control company. A rodent exclusion company's business model is based on solving your problem, not continuing it with monthly poison dispensing charges.
- B. Do not overfill trash cans or dumpsters and make sure the lids are tightly closed and no spillage on the ground.
- C. Maintain a tightly closed barbecue and clean after every use.
- D. Maintain garage doors with door sweeps. Seal all entry points.
- E. Avoid glue traps. They are cruel and inhumane.
- F. Never use traps outside your home!
- G. Underground Trench Barriers.
- H. For rats: A pea gravel barrier 6 inches deep in the ground and 2 feet wide.
- I. For ground squirrels and gophers: From 18 inches to 3 feet deep and 2 feet above the ground. Make an L-shaped bottom with 1/4 to 1/2 inch gauge stainless steel hardware cloth lining the trench. Use 1/4 to 1/2 inch gauge stainless steel hardware cloth to line your entire garden.

Beware! A pest control company will give you a fear story as to why you should have poison bait boxes outside of your home. Rats DO NOT die inside the poison bait boxes, they freely go out and poison other wildlife. Exclusion and sanitation is the SOLUTION for your home, not poisoning the environment outside.

II. Deter

- A. Encourage biodiversity. Animals that eat and frighten rats, mice, gophers and ground squirrels. Coyotes, domestic dogs and cats, foxes, and bobcats capture at rodent burrow entrances; badgers, long-tailed weasels, skunks, rattlesnakes, and gopher snakes corner rodents in

- their burrows. Owls and hawks capture above ground. Consider Owl Boxes (one owl eats 1000 rodents a year!), and raptor poles.
- B. Leave outside only enough pet food for one feeding, this includes bird seeds. Pick up fallen fruit, use tree cuffs metal, plastic on large trees.
 - C. Remove piles of debris, vegetation, and plants that feed and conceal rodents, such as ivy.
 - D. Water motion detectors, music, strobe lights.

III. Repel

- A. Mint varieties, lavender, sage, daffodils, narcissus, most irises, marigolds, snapdragons, geraniums
- B. Sour clover (*Melilotus indicus*). It is a nitrogen fixer and has 8 foot long roots that repel gophers and ground squirrels. This plant was used in orchards for rodent control before the advent of pesticides.
- C. Predator urine.
- D. New Products. New organic products are on the market which includes essential oil as ingredients such as balsam fir, peppermint, clove, and cinnamon. Castor bean granules, lavender dryer cloths also repel.