



THE RAT...

A powerful weapon against your health and your property

HIS TEETH — The rat's front teeth grow up to 6 inches a year, so he must chew constantly to keep them filed to a length he can manage. He gnaws through walls, lead pipes, cement and concrete foundations, and electrical wiring. This destroys property and causes fires. Plastic trash bags are a pushover for a rat. Each year, rats destroy over one billion dollars worth of property and food in the United States.

HIS FEET — The rat can climb straight up horizontal walls, poles or wires and he can scamper across them too. He can jump as high as three feet off the ground, and as far as four or five feet from one place to another. His claws enable him to cling to any surface. He can fall as far as 50 feet without getting killed.

HIS FUR — The rat's fur carries filth, germs and fleas, and the diseases he causes have killed more people than all of the wars in history. He contaminates everything he touches. In addition, the rat has no bladder control, and therefore urinates everywhere he goes, spreading disease.

OTHER RAT FACTS — The rat can squeeze through holes as small as 1/2" square. His tail serves as a balance, so he can jump from perch to perch. A rat will attack when cornered. Sixty thousand people in the United States were bitten by rats last year. These victims were mainly very young infants and older adults.

HOW WE HELP THE RAT FILL HIS THREE BASIC NEEDS

FOOD — The rat's foods are garbage, dog food, bird food, animal manure, unpicked fruits and vegetables left to rot on the ground.

WATER — The rat will get water from dog dishes, discarded cans and containers, and rims of discarded tires. The rat will drink stagnant water if fresh water is not available. He is not a picky eater or drinker.

SHELTER — The rat will make his nest in large rubbish whenever possible. He prefers junk cars, or discarded stuffed furniture such as couches or chairs. He'll also nest in lumber piles or stacked firewood, littered sheds and basements.

THE RAT IS ALMOST ENTIRELY DEPENDENT UPON US FOR FOOD, WATER AND SHELTER

The best way to get rid of rats is to starve them out. When food is plentiful, a female rat may have as many as 150 babies a year. When there is little or no food, they reduce their litters, starve their young, and will even attack, kill and eat each other.

To remove rats from your property or neighborhood, remove his sources of food, water and shelter. This means cleaning the yard, and keeping your house and all outbuildings in good repair. Otherwise, the rat will come inside for his food and water and may nest in the house or in outbuildings.

For more information about
rat control, call the Marion
County Health Department at
(317) 221-7440



**MARION COUNTY
PUBLIC
HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Rodent Control Program
Marion County Public Health Department
4040 N. Rural St. • Indianapolis, IN 46205
(317) 221-7588 • www.mchd.com