

ISSUES & ANSWERS

FROM THE MSPCA

NEWS & INFORMATION ON ANIMAL PROTECTION CONCERNS



RESOLVING MOUSE CONFLICTS WITHOUT GLUE TRAPS

The MSPCA believes that all animals should be treated humanely. In the interests of promoting the most humane methods of dealing with conflicts that can occur with mice and rats, the MSPCA offers the following information and suggestions.

One of the least humane means of catching animals is through traps which use trays or sheets of a strong adhesive substance. The traps, commonly referred to as glue traps, are used to catch mice, rats and other small animals. An animal that comes in contact with the adhesive is instantly stuck and suffers a slow agonizing death that can take up to several days.

The modes of death caused by sticky traps are always painful. Animals whose heads become stuck to the adhesive slowly die from suffocation. Studies have shown that the majority of animals caught in glue traps die trying to free themselves from the adhesive. The animal can struggle for days to tear their fur and skin from the adhesive, oftentimes gnawing through their own limbs. Animals that are not able to free themselves eventually die from starvation or dehydration.

Many consumers view glue traps as an easy option to catch mice or rats because they are inexpensive. However, glue traps not only cause inhumane deaths to the animals they catch, but they are also ineffective in solving a mouse conflict in your house or building.

A trapped animal simply leaves a vacant habitat for a new animal to fill.

The only effective means of keeping mice and rats out of your home or building is to deal with the source of the problem:

- Examine what may be attracting outside critters.

“The effects of glue traps are markedly inhumane and indiscriminant. A mouse I saw in such a trap was stuck to the surface on the side of its face and belly rendering it unable to move or even breathe effectively. It was weak, dehydrated, and obviously extremely frightened. A number of birds have also been brought into our hospital caught on these traps. These animals are usually very sick from weakness, injury, and ingestion of glue. In severe cases, they have to be euthanized.”

*Connie Orcutt, D.V.M., Dipl., ABVP (Avian)
Section Head, Avian and Exotic Animal Medicine
Angell Animal Medical Center*

- Be sure to carefully store food, including pet food in the refrigerator or in plastic, glass or metal containers.
- Clean up all crumbs and spills promptly and use a diluted bleach solution to get rid of any scent trails if necessary.
- Seal all entry points into your home with steel wool, copper wire mesh, or quick drying cement.
- Maintain any brush or debris within 18 inches of your house or building's foundations to expose any burrow holes or entry points.

- Use deterrents such as cat hair in entryways, or moist rags with peppermint oil.
- Live humane traps should be used as a last resort for existing rodent problems. The traps should be baited with appealing substances such as peanut butter, popcorn or sunflower seeds. Be sure to check traps at least twice a day. Once caught, the animal should be released back into the wild right outside the building — not far away.

Live traps are considered the most humane form of resolving an existing rodent infestation, yet they can result in the break up of family groups. Also, live traps serve as a short term solution- holes must be sealed and food sources must be removed or a new family of mice will be soon to follow.

What You Can Do to Help:

Help end the use of glue traps by urging local retailers to stop selling glue traps and educating family and friends on why these traps are inhumane.

Visit the MSPCA's website at www.mspca.org to find out more information. You can also purchase a humane trap at our website by visiting the MSPCA's e-store.