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A Product of the Integrated Pest Management Working Group

## SNAP TRAPS FOR RODENTS TIP SHEET

An Integrated Pest Management program's emphasis is on prevention and avoidance of infestations, so the information that follows should not be interpreted as a permanent and/or ongoing response to rodent infestations.

Always check your local laws and regulations before proceeding with any trapping.

Trapping is an effective method for controlling a rodent infestation. A simple, inexpensive wood based snap trap is available in most hardware stores. The advantages of these traps over poisoning are that:

1. It allows you to determine if the rodent was killed.
2. Assuming the rodent is killed, the carcass to be disposed of. When using poisons, the rodents may die inside walls or other inaccessible areas and become the source of another infestation.

If you decide to use a wire cage trap, for live trapping, you will need to determine what to do with the rodent once it is caught. Releasing live rodents in an area far from their habitat may or may not be a more humane option.

Rodents are very wary and cautious of anything new in their environment. You may want to try leaving an un-triggered, but baited trap out for several days in order to get them used to the traps. Leaving traps unset until the bait has been taken at least once reduces the chances of rodents becoming trap-shy.

For bait, try using peanut butter with graham crackers, bacon, gum drops or fish. Hickory smoked bacon, cooked until chewy also makes an effective bait. If one bait does not work, try another.

Place traps where you have seen signs of rodents (along runways, at the site of droppings, along the wall where markings are seen). This will usually be close to walls, behind objects and in dark corners. Traps should also be placed wherever runways exist, including overhead if pipes and rafters are being used.

Place the traps so that rodents, following their natural course of travel (usually close to a wall), will pass directly over the trigger. When placing traps against a wall, place them with the long axis of the trap perpendicular to the wall. Do not place the traps parallel to the wall, as this will only be effective for rodents approaching the trap from one direction. Place the traps with the trigger side against the wall.

Using an expanded trigger snap trap with a large, plastic, yellow, tray type trigger can increase the chances of trap capture, even if the rodent does not go after the bait.

The trigger should be set lightly so that it will spring easily. Be careful not to accidentally snap your finger! Place signs at eye level to alert staff to where the traps are located so they don't accidentally set off the traps and get injured.

Place newspaper or plastic under the trap to avoid any "mess".

Use enough traps to make the campaign short and decisive. One snap trap will only catch one rodent, so try to estimate your rodent population and place enough.

Continue trapping for about two weeks. Check the traps everyday!

If trapping outdoors, cover the trap to protect the trigger from being set off by the elements.

If you find that insects are stealing the bait, try treating the area with a residual insecticide in cracks and crevices prior to placing the baited traps (this will need to be done by a licensed pest control professional). This will kill insects in the general vicinity that may be attracted to the scent of the bait. This

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method will work for ants, which are the main culprits in stealing bait. After the residual dries to the touch, it should not deter rodents from approaching the snap traps.

Placing sticky traps around a snap trap will not increase efficacy because of the extreme trap-shy nature of rodents. The presence of sticky traps would likely deter rodents from approaching the snap traps.