

# LAUSD PEST OF THE MONTH PROGRAM

Attached is the first in a series of on-going training programs addressing issues pertaining to LAUSD Integrated Pest Management program. The goal is to issue one training program per month which will address current pest control problems and what you can do to help.

Please obtain a 2 ½ inch 3-ring binder and label it LAUSD Pest of the Month Program. When you are finished using a program, please put it in the binder for future use and reference. Please feel free to give copies of these programs to anyone who may need them.

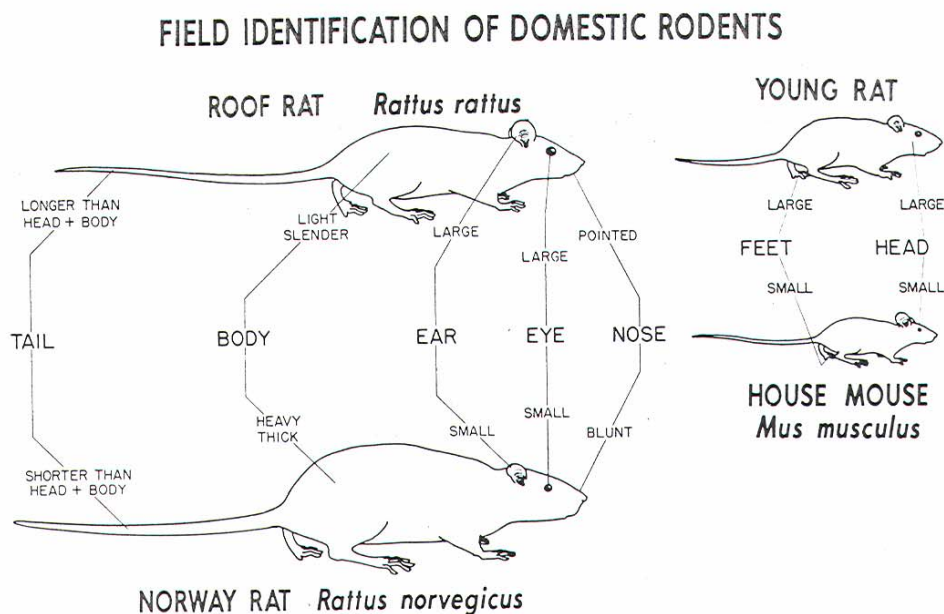
We all have to do our part to sustain and improve the physical learning environment for the students and staff.

Thank you for your help and cooperation on this important matter.

Prepared by Dr. Hanif Gulmahamad, LAUSD IPM Coordinator.

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**Figure 15-A.** This key should be of value to help identify the most common pest rodents which the professional is likely to encounter. The relative length of the tail and body should be considered first when attempting to identify the adults. The relative size of the ears compared to the size of the body is a rather distinctive characteristic which can usually be observed without much difficulty. The other characteristics tend to be somewhat more subtle, and should be used with caution. To distinguish between young rats and adult mice, the relative size of the feet and the rest of the body is generally a distinct and easily recognizable characteristic (Courtesy of U.S. Public Health Service, Atlanta, Georgia).

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## **COMMENSAL RODENTS**

The word “commensal” means living in close association with humans and sharing their food. Three rodent species fall in this category. They are Norway rat, roof rat, and house mouse. The Norway rat is the largest of the three and it is basically identified by having a tail which is shorter than its head and body combined. The roof rat is more of an aerodynamic animal, well adapted for climbing, with a tail which is longer than its head and body combined. The roof rat uses its tail for balancing when it travels on wires and branches. The house mouse is a small rodent weighing about ½ to 1 ounce and measuring about 5 to 8 inches long including its tail. The tail of the house mouse is about as long as its head and body combined.

Occasionally, depending in what geographical area your school is located, you may see other rodents such as ground squirrels, gophers, deer mice, wood rats (pack rats), and voles (meadow mice), on the exterior of structures, running across parking lots, in fields, on fences, in shrubs and trees, etc. These rodents seldom enter structures and they do not cause the kinds of problems associated with the commensal rodents.

The Los Angeles Unified School District has an integrated pest management program which emphasizes a low risk/reduced risk approach to pest problems. This approach has been adopted in order to protect the health, safety, and welfare of students, staff, and volunteers, and to help protect and conserve the environment. The District utilizes a non-chemical approach to commensal rodent control.

## **WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP WITH RODENT PROBLEMS.**

- Commensal rodents basically need three things to survive. They are food, water, and harborage (a place to hide). Anything you can do to deny them one or more of these resources will force them to go somewhere else.
- Normally, commensal rodents in southern California prefer to live outdoors. Rain and cold weather in the fall usually cause them to come indoors. Caulk, seal, screen, and patch all holes in exterior walls to prevent them from coming indoors.
- Arrange to have door sweeps installed on all exterior doors which need them to keep rodents out. Remember, if you can slip a pencil under a door, a mouse can squeeze through that opening. Be reminded that a mouse can get through a hole the size of a dime, and a rat can get through a hole the size of a quarter.
- Keep all exterior doors closed when not in use.
- Discourage the consumption/storage of foods in classrooms. If foods must be kept, they should be stored in tight-fitting glass or metal containers.
- Remove all unnecessary clutter and tidy up storage areas (this is harborage reduction/elimination).
- Maintain tight-fitting lids on all trash cans and dumpsters.

- Empty trash receptacles frequently.
- Report and work to get all plumbing leaks fixed.
- Pay attention to materials held for recycling. Do not allow these materials to be stored for long periods of time.
- Encourage students to dispose of food, food debris, food wrappers, etc. in trash cans.
- Clean up any food or beverage spillage immediately. After classroom parties, promptly dispose of food debris outdoors.
- Lock all dumpsters to prevent scavengers and recyclers from gaining access to them.
- Refer to Office of Environmental Health and Safety, (213) 743-5086, Safety Gram No. 02-06 dated November 2002 entitled: Dumpster Sanitation, to make sure that your dumpsters are properly cleaned and maintained on a regular basis.

**Thank you** for your help and cooperation on this important issue. We all have to do our part to sustain and improve the physical learning environment for the students and staff.