

7 TIPS

ON HOUSE MOUSE CONTROL

PMPs have consistently rated the house mouse as a challenge to manage in residential and commercial accounts.

In a recent survey by VM Products, 41% of PMPs said that the house mouse was their biggest rodent issue, followed by roof rat (35.4%), Norway rat (16.9%) and other (6.7%)

This is no surprise because they are small, secretive and well adapted to the conditions humans provide for them. All living things need food, water, and shelter and people provide that in abundance for mice. Some other factors that make house mouse control difficult:

- **CHANGING CLIMATE** and many other factors have contributed to house mouse control becoming a larger part of PMP business.
- **HOUSE MICE** are found throughout North America, inside and outside, in residential and commercial spaces. Because they are just about everywhere, finding their entry points, food sources, and nesting sites can be challenging.
- **ABUNDANCE OF RESOURCES** mean mice don't have to work very hard to get what they need.

WITH THE RIGHT KNOWLEDGE, strategies and tools, PMPs can enjoy great success in eradicating these crafty house mouse populations and EARN MORE BUSINESS. This resource can help you save time and money by finding and treating the issues faster. Faster resolution means happier customers and more referrals.

TIP

01

Inspection

Inspecting for house mice means knowing their biology and their behaviors. House mice are small rodents with large ears and a long, semi-naked tail. They are most often light brown but can range in color to almost black. Their belly is a slightly lighter color than the fur on the back. Full grown adults are between 2.5-3.75 inches long. The tail is about the same length as the body. Their sense of touch and smell are highly developed.

House mice are very curious and will explore new areas, new items, and new food sources. In their travels, as they explore and move from nest to feeding sites, they leave trails of feces and urine that can be used to identify their pathways. This can be important when placing traps.

The house mouse is highly adapted to living around people: they take advantage of the food, water, and shelter that we provide. This means they will chew into food packaging in manufacturing sites, warehouses, grocery stores, and kitchens. Looking for damaged foods and packaging is important to identify and start managing house mouse issues.

These rodents are mostly nocturnal. While they will occasionally be found out during the day, they still stick to dark and shadowed areas that offer them a sense of protection.



Some areas are hard to get to and hard to inspect. Using the PestOptix system can give you a view of challenging, hard to reach areas where house mice like to hide. With real-time information, you know right when a mouse has been detected, so you don't wait until your next service visit to find out what's happening.



TIP

02

Sanitation

Cleaning up a house mouse food source is easier said than done. How can you possibly clean up all the food in a food processing site? Or in a warehouse or grocery store? It's not as if you can ask a homeowner to remove all the food from their house for a couple months. There are a few things that can be done:

- **CLEAN UP INFESTED ITEMS** – throw out anything that the mice have gotten into or chewed on. Clean up food items that have spilled (from packages being broken into). Vacuum all nearby areas.
- **CONTAIN ITEMS** – especially boxes, bags, and open items should be sealed in solid containers. Don't forget about pet food and bird seed, these types of items are often infested by house mice because they are left open and available.
- **FREEZE/REFRIGERATE** – at least short term. Any items that can be put into cold storage will lessen the amount of food available to the mice.
- **EMPTY THE TRASH** – and clean out the trash bins. There is often food debris that gets left in the bin, underneath the liner that mice will take advantage of. Have the trash taken out of the structure (commercial or residential) at least daily.



Sanitation can be looked at as limiting the amount and the access to food sources. It's impossible to remove everything, so making it more difficult and less available can make trapping and baiting programs much more effective.

In outside areas, especially dumpster and trash areas, use the EZ Secured Rodent Bait Station. This provides a locked and secured station for bait in areas that will likely have mouse activity because of the food resources.

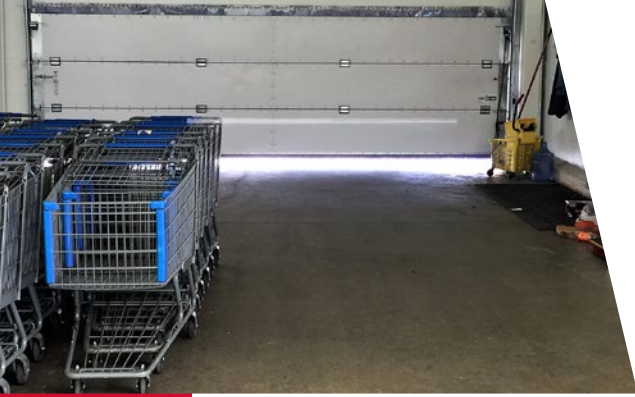


TIP

03

Exclusion

House mice don't just appear inside a site, they had to get into that site in some way. Maybe they were delivered on a truckload of goods, or entered through a door that was propped open. Often times, they will use an available entry point from the outside. These points should be sealed off with appropriate rodent-proof material. Here are some areas to check:



Door seals – a fully grown house mouse needs an opening about the size of a dime to squeeze in. Broken door seals on personnel doors and dock doors offer them this easy entry point from ground level.



HVAC systems – these usually have some type of pipes and wiring that connect the outside unit to the inside of the structure and those points may not be sealed well. Any other similar locations like wiring boxes, vents, and utility lines should be checked and sealed.



Roofs, attics, drop ceilings – mice will use the easiest route to get inside and in some cases will climb trees, trellises, and gutters to find entry points into these dark, protected areas.

Nearly any opening on the structure that leads from the inside to the outside, especially at ground level, can potentially let in a house mouse. Sealing off these areas leads to long term success.

Interceptor Mouse utilizes VM Products' Interceptor technology and incorporates it into VM Products' EZ Snap Mouse. This station has the science of force flow for speed of entry and encourages the mouse to engage with the two snap traps inside. Once the snap traps are deployed, it sends a signal to the IPM Square app and dashboard.



TIP

04

Trapping

Whether you plan on using single catch snap traps or multi-catch mouse traps, placement is key. At this point, you have identified their travel routes, what the mice are feeding on, potentially where they are nesting, and have limited their food. A few things to remember when you are placing traps:

- **LOOK TO THE EDGES** – house mice prefer to run along floor/wall junctions and other protected edges. Place traps along their pathways with the openings of the traps to the wall edge.
- **LOOK FOR SHADOWS** – especially where shadows may be at night. These are likely areas that the mice will be using.
- **BAIT WITH SOMETHING TASTY** – you may know what they have been feeding on and can use that to entice the mice to the traps. If you have been dealing with the issue for a while, try something different that they haven't been feeding on.
- **REMEMBER THE NON-TARGETS** – like fingers and toes and paws! Also consider forklifts, pallet movers, and any other “traffic” that may be nearby.
- **USE MULTIPLE TRAPS** – particularly in high infestations, the more traps, the better and faster rate of success clearing them out.



A great choice for trapping is the EZ Snap Mouse Trap. With indicator ties and a low profile to fit in tight spaces, this is an ideal solution for mouse issues. The indicator ties allow you to see from a distance which traps have been triggered and need checking, and which traps don't. This allows you to focus on just those traps and those areas that have activity, while leaving the rest to monitor.



TIP

05

Baiting

When dealing with persistent house mouse issues, rodenticide baits are often used. When using rodenticides ALWAYS read and follow all label instructions. Bait should be placed in a locking and secured bait station to prevent non-target organisms from reaching the bait. Secure the bait in the bait stations.

Place bait with the same thought process as placing traps: get them in the paths and near to where the house mice are. Ensure the openings of the station are up against a wall or other edge.

Bait stations should be checked, cleaned, and replenished on a regular basis. This ensures a constant supply of bait for the mice. It also prevents contamination of any loosened bait from escaping the bait station.



When baiting for house mice, use the MBS Mouse Bait Station, which fits nicely into tight spots and locks securely to prevent non-targets from gaining access. It's also easy to service and clean, saving you time.



TIP

06

Monitoring

As you are dealing with house mouse remediation, track how many and where you catch the mice. If using bait stations, record how much bait is consumed and from what stations. This can lead you to better device placement, refocusing on “hot spot” areas, and show when populations are beginning to decline. It may also indicate problem areas that need additional sanitation or exclusion work.

Once the mice have been cleared out of a structure, you may want to continue monitoring with traps and/or bait stations, especially on the outside of the structure. This serves two purposes. The first is to keep outside populations reduced directly around the structure. The second is to serve as an early warning system. When an increase in trapped mice or consumed bait is observed, additional outside measures can be taken to ensure house mice don't enter.

The EZ Force station is perfect for long-term monitoring. It allows the mouse to feel secure and comfortable by having the openings cut out on the bottom: the mouse does not even realize it is halfway into the station before its feet contact the plastic.



TIP

07

Follow up

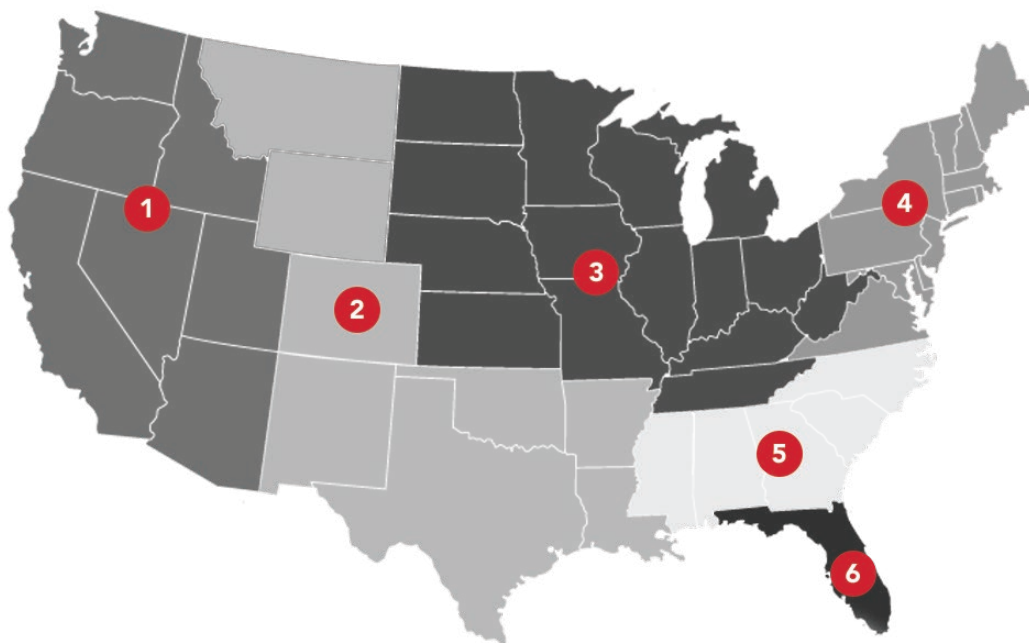
Communicating with the customer is key to setting reasonable expectations and ensure their partnership in managing the problem. A few things to ensure are communicated:

- The problem is not going to be resolved overnight. This may sound obvious, but it often isn't to the customer.
- The customer needs to minimize access to food. This means they need to clean up, seal up, and contain all possible food sources.
- If the customer is responsible for exclusion, make sure they know what types of material to use and how small an opening mice need to enter.
- Don't move traps and bait stations. You have spent time and effort placing these based on your knowledge of house mice, you don't want the customer to just move them because they "thought it would be better over there".
- What you have caught. Also where and if those numbers are increasing or decreasing.
- For long term monitoring programs, let them know what those populations are doing, and what you are doing in response as well as what you would like them to do.

Keeping the customer informed and involved makes the program much more effective as they will be working with you and your efforts.

Ideally, the customer will not see the traps and stations because they will be hidden from view. The EZ Snap Mouse Traps can work like this, or they can be a great way to get the customer to help you. With the easy to see indicator ties (yellow if set, black if triggered), you can have the customer working with you and letting you know as soon as they see the traps triggered.

House mouse issues are rarely easy and require a combined effort of rodent control and prevention tools. It takes collaboration between you and the customer to effectively eliminate, as quickly as possible, inside issues and continue to respond to outside issues. If you have questions on controlling house mice, want more information on products, or need any other information, reach out to us at:



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