exterior commercial rodent control
The Problem with Rodents

Perhaps more than any other pest, rodents generate concern that extends well beyond PMPs and facility owners. Food safety auditors, quality assurance managers, sanitarians, and many others up and down the supply chain all have a stake in rodent control in and around commercial buildings.

Consequently, PMPs are often expected to not only control rodent populations for commercial clients, but to help them meet reduced pesticide use standards and achieve high scores on internal and external audits as well.

Factor in clients looking to get more for their money in a weak economy and it becomes more important than ever for PMPs to manage labor costs, improve technician morale, and more effectively use technicians’ time.

The SmartSolution for Exterior Rodent Control

Around Commercial Buildings from BASF Pest Control Solutions is based on the latest research, the Prescription Treatment® IPM approach, and design innovations utilizing breakthrough materials with significant advantages over conventional rodent management approaches.

This guide was designed to explore the most effective ways to inspect for rodents and the smartest, most effective ways to control rats and mice on the exterior of commercial facilities.

The Limitations of Conventional Rodent Control

There’s significantly more to effective rodent management than replenishing bait in stations or checking traps. Nevertheless, broadly stated, running stations is the norm. Despite the obvious importance of rodent control to a facility, cost pressure shapes, and often limits, the actual service performed. Time is money, and when there is a money constraint, there is also a time constraint.

The conventional approach to rodent control involves setting up multiple lines of defense that often include bait stations along the perimeter (fence line) of the property, bait stations along exterior perimeter of the structures, and stations (usually traps) indoors.

Extensive BASF Pest Control Solutions research and field interviews revealed PMPs have several key concerns about conventional control equipment and the way it is used and serviced in exterior rodent management services:

1. The pressure of keeping things clean for inspectors.

   Rodent management programs are often used by auditors/inspectors to gauge how well PMPs are servicing an entire account. The condition of stations, station placements, and station maintenance are among the few readily observable components of a pest management service—and easy targets for criticism.

   Consequently, a disproportionate amount of time in rodent control is spent cleaning and servicing bait stations compared to time spent inspecting for conducive conditions, communicating with staff, performing exclusion, searching for and treating burrows, and other vital actions.

2. Wasted time. Wasted energy.

   For technicians, it can be demoralizing to repetitively service stations that are difficult to open and clean and compromised by melted bait and rain. Lots of energy is wasted on non-productive chores.

3. One size does not fit all.

   Rodent programs are often set up with little distinction between rat management and mouse management. By default, stations are set up for rats—thinking mice can be controlled by a rat bait station, but not vice versa. This is due to a lack of available tools that enable PMPs to easily customize programs to most effectively target the situational pests.

A need for change

Rodent management has shown very little innovation over the past decades. The industry, with few exceptions, has been in a holding pattern in terms of its approach to rodent control, limited by a lack of product ingenuity.

What’s needed is a smart rodent management system that overcomes service-limiting station shortcomings and enables better service adaptation to modern client needs and expectations.
The Roguard™ RMS (Rodent Management System), was created to improve the way rodent control is performed, and to make the technician’s role of servicing stations easier, less time consuming, and more efficient.

Getting a clean report on audits
The Roguard™ RMS was designed to be the easiest station to clean on the market. With no partition or side walls, wells, or troughs, no water will accumulate inside the station, and all that is required to keep it clean is to sweep its floor.

Bait blocks are suspended above the floor from bait holders mounted on the rear wall. The bait holders are designed with a solid platform on which the bait rests after being skewered by the bait rod. In situations where bait may melt due to high heat, this platform contains the melted blocks and reduces the mess associated with standard metal bait rods. Suspended off the floor, the bait is protected from any temporary exposure to water from strong rain, and is kept up out of the way for easy station cleaning. Technicians can easily maintain some of the cleanest stations auditors will ever inspect.

More time for better service
With the functionally-optimized features of the Roguard RMS, technicians save about 30 seconds servicing each station, giving them better ways to use their time to service the account. This could mean anything from spending more time inspecting, performing exclusion, communicating with the client, dealing with other pest issues at the account, or simply better managing the cost of service.

The key to easier operation
Just because stations need to be secure, doesn’t mean they have to be difficult to open by technicians. The single lock mechanism on the Roguard RMS is designed for one hand operation. The ergonomic, full-size key, slides easily into the lock housing, unlocking the station and allowing the station lid to be gently pried up and back toward the technician. This prevents the station lid from being wedged up against a building wall or fence, and it will not flap closed, so it doesn’t require a second hand to keep propped open. The full-size key makes opening the station easy even in cold weather when thermal gloves are worn.

Customize to meet the specific needs of the client
The Roguard RMS delivers unprecedented flexibility. An optional internal multi-catch mouse trap device, the Roguard IMT (Internal Mouse Trap), was designed to create a platform for multiple configurations depending upon the need at each account.

Bait mice and rats
The Roguard RMS can be used exclusively for bait placement, as you would with any other exterior bait station. It holds as few as one block or as many as eight blocks.

Trap mice outdoors
The Roguard RMS can be set up with only the IMT inside, creating a dedicated mouse trapping station for outdoor areas. Many accounts, especially in rural areas, have mice as the primary rodent pest. If keeping mice out of a facility is the goal, why rely strictly on exterior baits? Baits often require days to kill mice, allowing them plenty of time to enter structures. The multi-catch IMT captures up to 10 mice and is easy to inspect and service. It features a transparent design that allows technicians to determine whether any mice have been caught without opening the IMT. The floor in the capture area is on a hinge for fast and easy cleaning and disposal of mice.

Trap mice while baiting rats
When multiple rodent threats are present, the IMT and rodenticide blocks can be set up in the Roguard RMS simultaneously. This configuration may be used to quickly capture mice, preventing their entry into the structure, while at the same time baiting for rats and mice.

Trap mice while monitoring rats
Another option is to use the IMT along with inert bait blocks to monitor rat activity in the stations. This is particularly useful where there is a restriction on bait use, but still an important need for monitoring and controlling rats and mice.

Once rats are detected, more focused investigation into conducive conditions, treatment of burrows, trapping or other appropriate steps can be taken. The use of this configuration may also be useful in accounts where there is a need to minimize the use of pesticide. In these cases, for example, technicians could start by placing only inert bait blocks in the station. Then, when rat activity is observed, active bait or even snap traps can be placed in the appropriate areas for as long as it takes to control the rat population. Then, revert back to monitoring.

Sorexa™ Blocks
An attractive rodent bait block featuring a proven active ingredient new for the U.S. Prescription Treatment® brand Sorexa™ Block, a new rodenticide with a wax block formulation that ensures longevity under extreme climate conditions. Designed for use in the Roguard stations, Sorexa Block contains the proven active ingredient difenacoum, a second-generation anticoagulant that is fast-acting, highly palatable to mice and rats, and ideal for residential and commercial markets. Sorexa Block effectively controls warfarin-resistant rodents yet has lower toxicity to key non-target mammals like dogs than brodifacoum, bromadiolone, or difethialone.
Inspection provides the foundation needed to make informed rodent control decisions and conduct quality service. It is important to understand the client’s needs, the target rodent pest, rodent activity level, and local conditions in, on, and around the structure.

1. Inspect Property:
   - Determine property boundaries.
   - Identify resource sites (food, water, and shelter) conducive to rodent infestation, including but not limited to:
     - drainage creeks
     - dumpsters
     - sewers
     - outdoor storage
     - trailers and train cars
   - vegetation overgrowth
   - Identify burrows, runways, rub marks, droppings, or other evidence of exterior rodent activity.

2. Inspect structure:
   - Determine likely entry points, including but not limited to:
     - doors
     - roof (roof rats)
     - utility openings
     - structural defects
   - Interview customer:
     - Determine rodent history at account, if available.
     - Identify customer’s role in structural, sanitation, or cultural practices.
     - Identify issues that may restrict use of rodenticides or other control measures.

Service Guidelines

Rodent control programs should be customized to meet the specific needs of each customer, based on inspection results. The following service guidelines illustrate typical preparation of a quality rodent control program.

1. Diagram the building exterior perimeter, indicating station locations, key points of service, and notes on rodent activity. Maintain the diagram as part of the service log.
2. Implement exclusion measures to seal off rodent access points.
3. Take action, and work with customer, to limit resources available to sustain a rodent population (i.e. sanitation and harborage reduction).
4. Install rodent control stations, based on inspection results, rodent activity level, rodent history and the target species. General placement guidelines are:
   - Property Perimeter: Place RMS every 50 ft (heavy rodent pressure) to 100 ft (low rodent pressure) along fence lines or property boundaries.
   - Exterior Building Perimeter: Place RMS every 25 ft (heavy rodent pressure) to 75 ft (low rodent pressure). For roof rats, be sure to include elevated harborage or access points such as roofs.
   - RMS stations equipped with IMT traps should be used in all places adjacent to doors, docks, ramps, and any exterior openings for additional mouse protection.
   - For other configuration ideas, see chart below.
5. Institute an ongoing inspection and service plan for exterior areas, including the structure, stations, and surrounding grounds, with special attention to rodent-conducive areas. Typical service interval is a minimum of every 2 weeks for heavy pressure or sensitive accounts, or a minimum of monthly for low pressure, less sensitive accounts.
6. Service verification should be marked inside stations on service cards or recorded by scanning barcode. Make sure station is clean, bait is fresh, and traps are in good working condition each visit.
7. Record observations of activity in stations and elsewhere. Use this information as a part of the ongoing inspection process to help determine additional actions.

RMS Station Configuration Suggestions for Common Locations and Circumstances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Station Options</th>
<th>Station Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fence Line</td>
<td>Bait Blocks, IMT, Bait Blocks + IMT</td>
<td>Bait Blocks, Rat Trap, Monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumpster</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjacent to Doors and other Entries</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Mouse Condition - Clean Out</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Rat Condition - Clean Out</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Activity-Level Maintenance</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring (Restriction on Rodenticides)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Always follow the label directions.
Smart Support

As always, BASF Pest Control Solutions is committed to giving you everything you need to tackle your toughest pest control challenges—not just in terms of products, but in terms of expertise and support as well.

You can always find helpful information, training, marketing support, and more at PestControl.basf.us. Log on and download brochures, customer cooperation aids, and treatment scenarios to help you better understand and prepare for this challenging pest.

Get Smarter

This SmartSolution for rodents is just one of many planned BASF SmartSolutions to address the pest control challenges and issues that have the greatest impact on our industry and the success of your business. To inquire about additional SmartSolutions for termites, ants, perimeter pests, cockroaches, bed bugs, or flies, contact your BASF Pest Control Solutions sales representative.

The Prescription Treatment® Approach

BASF Pest Control Solutions believes a sound Integrated Pest Management strategy is the cornerstone of successful pest control and good stewardship. Our five-step Prescription Treatment® approach includes the core IPM practices you should always employ in conjunction with any BASF SmartSolution.

1. **Inspect** to gather the information that leads to good decisions.
2. **Prescribe** a treatment strategy to achieve specific goals in the account.
3. **Communicate** with the client to promote cooperation, establish expectations, and convey value.
4. **Treat** using effective techniques and materials that support the strategy.
5. **Follow up** to assess results.

Always read and follow label directions.

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