

# **City of Newton**

## **Rodent Control Measures**

Programs & Services Committee

September 22, 2021

# Rats suddenly surge in Boston suburbs

By [Dugan Arnett](#) Globe Staff. Updated October 22, 2018, 12:00 a.m.



## City of Newton Rodent Control Program

### *Ongoing Efforts*

Our Health and Human Services Department (HHS) works with residents, business owners and other City departments to better understand rat behavior and teach us how to minimize their presence and impact on the community. They conduct site assessments/inspections based on reports of rodent activity and have been quite successful in working with homeowners and businesses to complete remedial actions. Click [here](#) for more information. (Some of the tips include picking up pet feces and cleaning up spilled birdseed, tightly closing trash containers, keeping grills clean, maintaining/covering compost piles, and covering openings greater than a ½ inch in diameter so they don't have a place to live.)

The Public Buildings and School Departments assess city owned buildings for pest issues, taking pest control steps when needed.

We use the special permit process by the City Council to require developers and owners of properties to have a rodent remediation plan when called for.





## HISTORY



Rats have been a part of the Massachusetts ecosystem since the area was originally settled in the early 17th century. They are commonly found in most urban areas, including Newton and other neighboring communities, due to readily available food sources.

Rats are a known public health issue and tend to move freely around neighborhoods. Therefore, preventing rats will not be successful unless everyone works together.



For professional advice and/or possible treatment options, contact a **licensed pest control company**.

**To report a rodent sighting, please visit:**  
**[www.newtonma.gov/rodentreport](http://www.newtonma.gov/rodentreport)**

This helps us track pest control issues and trends.

Newton Health & Human Services Department  
1000 Commonwealth Ave  
Newton, MA 02459

617-796-1420

[www.newtonma.gov/health](http://www.newtonma.gov/health)

City of Newton, MA



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

# Oh, Rats!

Let's work together to prevent rodents.



Discouraging rats from living in our city will be most successful as a community effort.

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR

**RAT BURROWS:** These are holes in the ground 4-6 inches in diameter where rats may be living. Look for burrows under fences, buildings, homes and cement slabs surrounding structures. You can test whether the burrow is active by filling in the hole with dirt and checking to see if it is cleared quickly.



**RAT TRACKS:** In the winter, you may be able to spot rodent tracks leading to or from a burrow.

**DROPPINGS:** Rats can leave 40 -50 droppings per day and are larger than mouse droppings (approx. ¾ inch in diameter)

**SMUDGE MARKS** (body oils) on walls

**SOUND** of movement in walls and attics

**FAMILY PETS** staring intently at a blank wall

## TIPS ON PREVENTION

### MAINTAIN YOUR PROPERTY

- Keep grills clean
- Store woodpiles neatly with a 12-inch ground clearance
- Remove dog and cat feces promptly
- Thin vegetation and keep grass and shrubbery cut short.
- Pick up fallen tree fruit.



### ELIMINATE FOOD SUPPLY

- Do not leave pet food out at night
- Remove birdfeeders that rodents can access
- Remove water sources
- Make sure your compost is maintained and covered.



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### RODENT-PROOF STRUCTURES

- Don't give rats a place to live. Cover openings that are greater than ½ inch in diameter with concrete, sheet metal or wire mesh.
- Keep trash containers and/or dumpsters closed at all times, tightly sealed and emptied frequently



**Share this information with your neighbors. Rodent problems are a community issue. Working together will help reduce this problem.**

# City of Newton Rodent Control Program

## *New Steps*

- Newton's Inspectional Services Department will implement immediately a new policy requiring rodent control inspections/services for *every* full property demolition permit, including “by-right” projects that do not move through the special permit process.
- Newton's Planning & Development Department will implement a new policy to recommend to the City Council routinely and consistently on all special permit projects involving excavation that rodent control services be provided as a condition of approval and embedded in the Construction Management Plan. (This has historically been required only on larger projects.)
- The City of Newton will implement an environmentally sensitive rodent control program on City properties in areas experiencing issues (see below for new details).

# City of Newton Rodent Control Program

## *New Steps*

- The City of Newton will be contacting the owners and contractors of all currently active demolition or construction sites involving excavation with information on rodent control best practices and resources.
- The Inspectional Services Department will provide rodent control advisory documents each time someone applies for a building permit.



# Contrapest Rodent Fertility Control

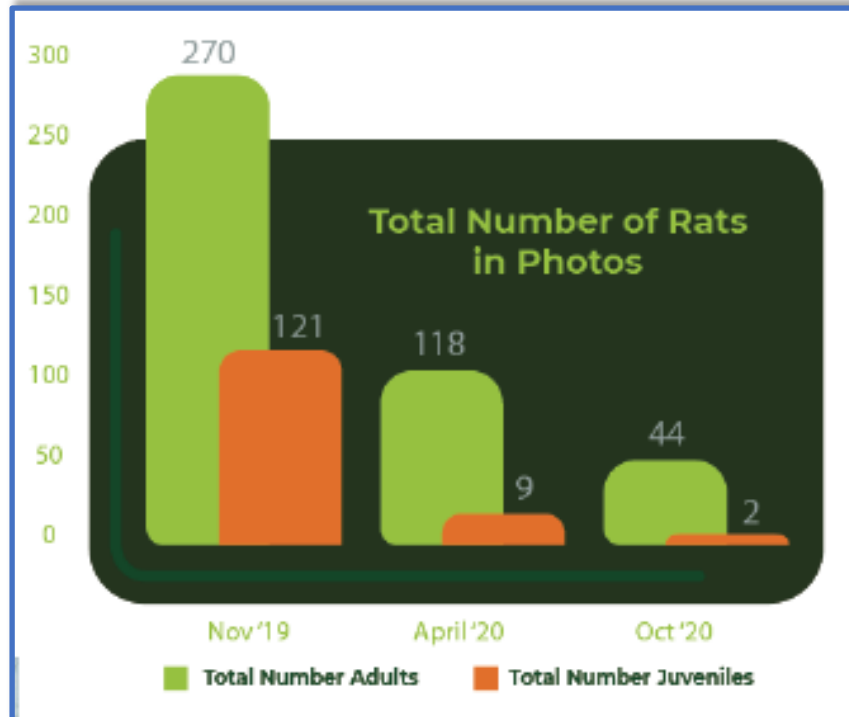
**contrapest**

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SENESTECH

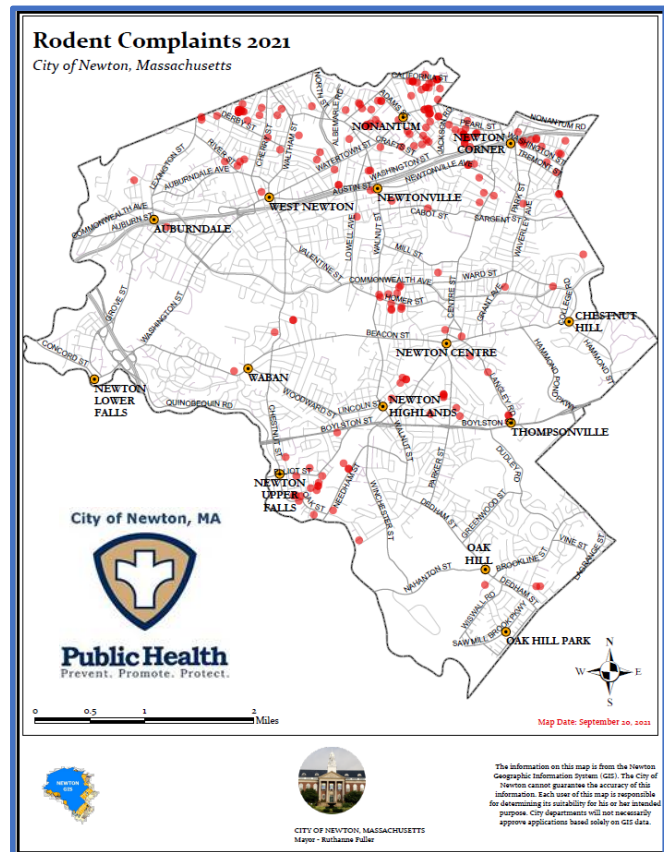
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Contrapest® is registered federally as a restricted use Product when used as directed. However, in some states, due to applicator registration it is a Restricted Use Product. Please check with your local state regulatory agency for determination regarding status. Read and follow all label instructions for target species Norway and roof rats.





# Contrapest Rodent Fertility Control

## City Property Deployment



### Deployment Locations Based on Sightings

- Forte Park
- Pelligrini Park
- Sterns Park
- Boyd Park
- Coletti Magni Park
- Upper Falls Greenway
- Homer Street
- River Street Playground

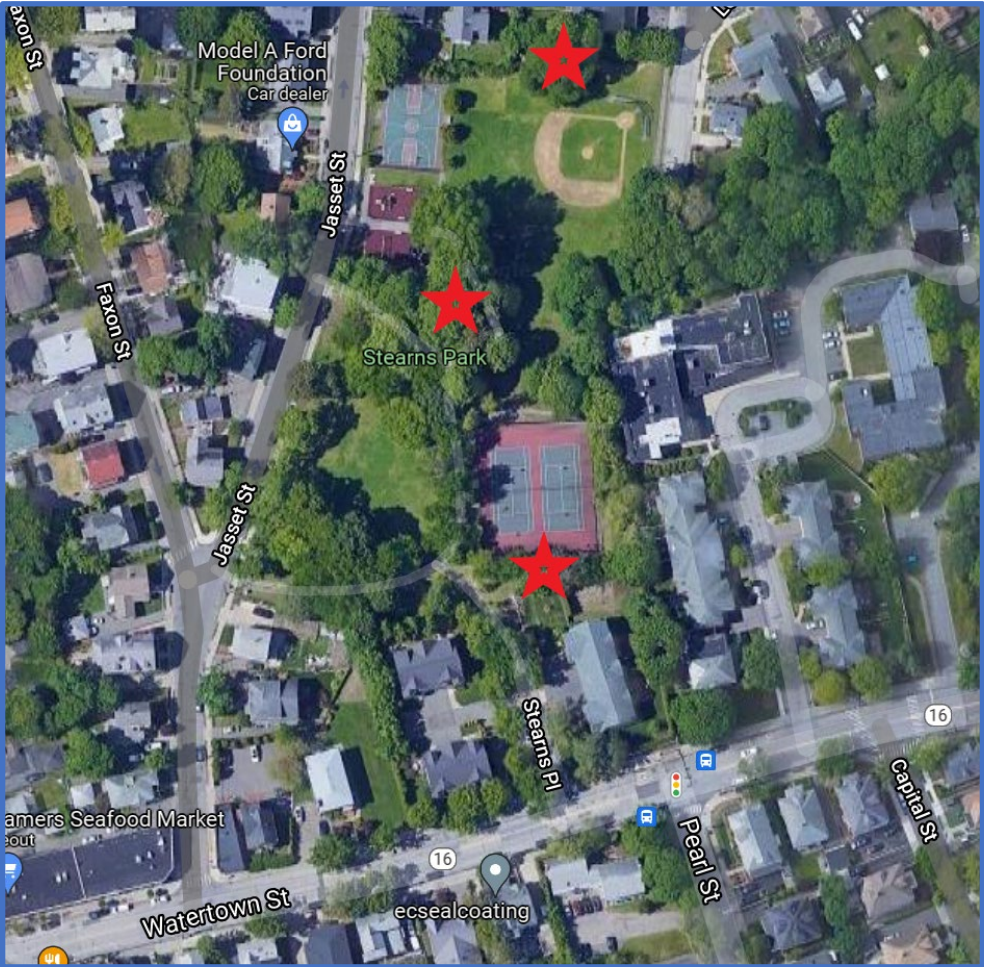


# Contrapest Rodent Fertility Control

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## City Property Deployment

Stearns Park Bait Station Locations



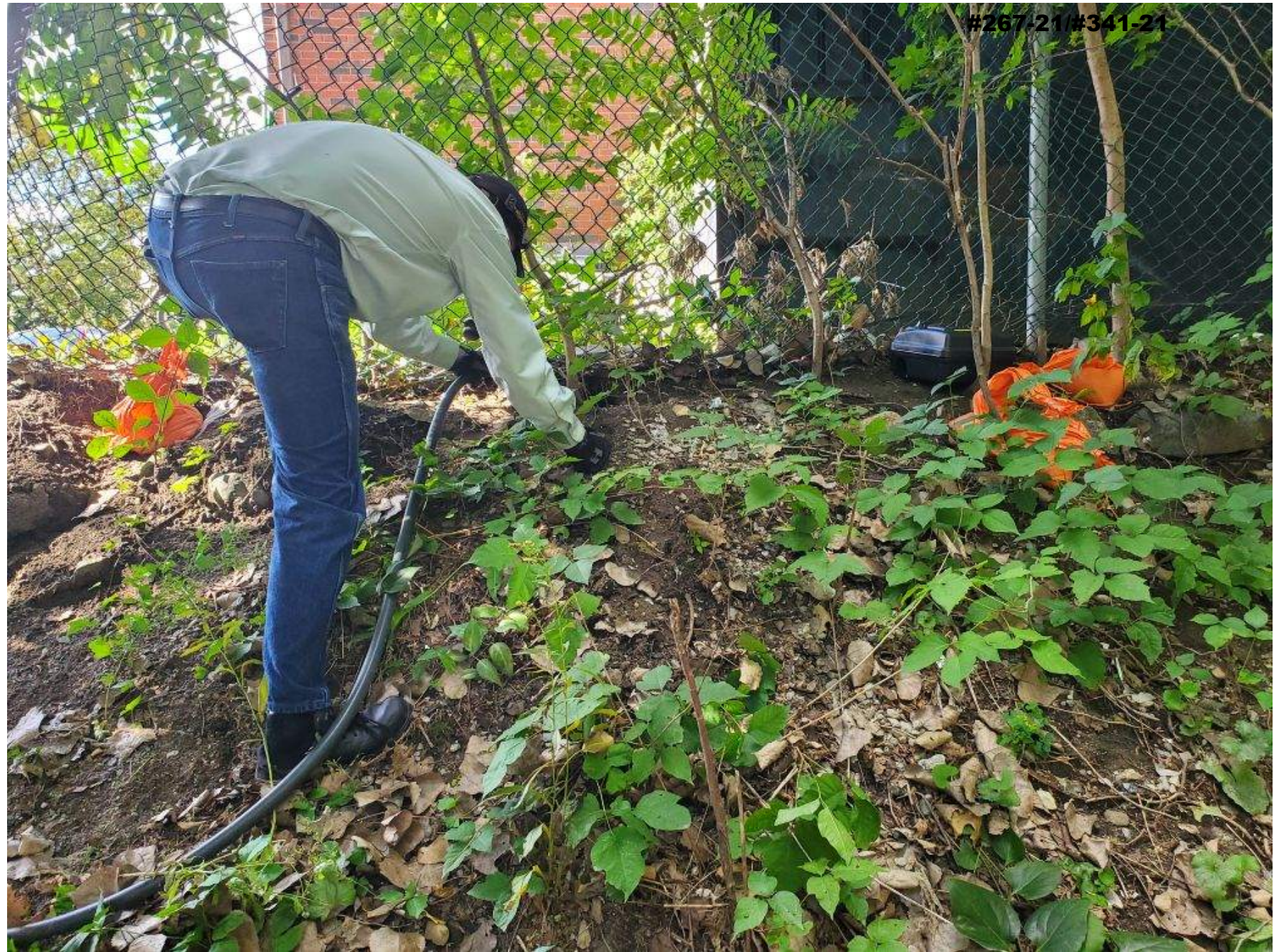
First Deployment – September 21





Targeted extermination  
measures at burrows with no  
secondary impacts

Photo from 9/21/21





## *Next Steps*

- Financial Assistance: The City will explore a rodent control financial assistance program/service for residents with lower resources
- Strengthen Enforcement: The City will collaborate with the City Council on analyzing additional ways to strengthen and expand actions allowed under state laws to better enforce rodent control actions

## City Coordinating Team

- Jonathan Yeo, Chief Operating Officer
- Linda Walsh, Deputy Director – Health & Human Services
- John Lojek, Commissioner – Inspectional Services
- Josh Morse, Commissioner – Public Buildings
- Marie Lawlor, Law
- Moses Barmonyallah and Brianne Gray, HHS Environmental Health Specialists
- Assistance from Planning and Parks, Recreation & Culture