

Rat Control at Waste Disposal Grounds



Effective rat control is directly influenced by the proper maintenance and operation of waste disposal grounds. Rats require adequate food, shelter and water to sustain populations and by limiting access to these essentials, their population can be controlled. Modern landfill operation techniques form the basis for effectively discouraging rat infestations and controlling populations.

1. Minimize the food supply

Composting removes large quantities of food supply available to rats. Organic material such as peelings, garden trimmings, spoiled vegetables and stock pen cleanings can be processed into a useful product through composting. In terms of spoiled and treated grain, elevator cleanings and dead animals, they should all be buried immediately. Please refer to fact sheets entitled *Compaction and Covering at Waste Disposal Grounds EPB 168* (<http://www.saskh2o.ca/PDF/EPB168.pdf>) and *Management of Specified Risk Materials EPB 375* (<http://www.saskh2o.ca/PDF/EPB375.pdf>) for further information.

Waste unloaded at the working face or disposal area of the grounds should be spread, compacted and covered as frequently as possible. This practice removes access to remaining food supplies and discourages burrowing and minimizes locations where rats can find shelter at waste disposal grounds.

2. Prevent opportunities for shelter

Establishing storage areas for materials that are difficult to compact into the working face reduces underground voids rats will use for shelter. By designating certain areas of the site for storing certain waste like, metals (fridges, stove, etc.), trees and lumber, tires, concrete, rocks and rubble and demolition material, you can prevent the creation of voids during compaction and covering activities.

3. Burn only wood and trees

The burning of municipal waste at a waste disposal site, except for a limited number of specific materials, is prohibited under *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2002* and *The Clean Air Act*. The Ministry of Environment permits select burning of trees and clean lumber under controlled conditions at separate designated areas in the waste disposal ground. Garbage in the working face must not be burned since it has high moisture content and will not burn completely and will continue to provide a source of food for rats. Additionally, burning domestic refuse at a low temperature contributes to air pollution through the release of dangerous chemicals into the surrounding environment.

Burning forces rats into burrows in uncompacted waste during the fire event and creates additional shelter in burned out containers. They return to feed on unburned waste when conditions are safe. Results from past field inspections by the Ministry of Environment indicate that burning waste actually increases rat complaints.

4. Provide positive drainage away from grounds

Water should not be allowed to pond or pool. Without easy access to a water supply, rats will be discouraged from residing at waste disposal grounds.

5. Bait waste disposal grounds when necessary

A baiting program by a local Pest Control Officer may be required to overcome large infestations which have burrowed into a former uncompacted landfill operation. Occasionally, if evidence of rats becomes apparent, baiting may have to be conducted in the designated areas or buildings at the waste disposal grounds.

