

Mice and Insects Pests

Does Nassau County regulate mice or insects outdoors?

No. Mice and Insects outdoors are part of the natural wildlife in your area, and are not regulated under the Nassau County Public Health Ordinance. If your property is being adversely impacted by a condition involving mice or insects from a neighboring property, you should take steps to eliminate the problem from your own property, or hire an exterminator. If this does not solve the situation, you will need to seek private legal counsel for advice on how to proceed.

Why is it important to keep my apartment or home free of mouse and insect populations?

Mice, other rodents, and many insects including fleas and roaches can carry and transmit diseases. Mouse saliva, urine and feces can cause several health problems. Roaches can carry bacteria, which can make you and your family sick. The material that the outside of a roach is made from can make asthma worse. After the roach dies, it becomes dust and gets into the air. The bites of other insects like fleas can spread disease and cause discomfort. While the symptoms may vary, any of these organisms can cause serious health problems and should be eliminated as soon as possible.

What should be done to clean up after rodent droppings?

One of the diseases rodents can transmit to people are hantavirus infections. The virus is carried by rodents such as mice which are found throughout North America. Infected rodents shed the live virus in saliva, droppings and urine. Humans are infected when they inhale microscopic particles that contain viruses from rodent urine or droppings. To reduce exposure to hantavirus around the home, prevent or eliminate rodent infestations. If rodents are in the home, consult an exterminator or your local health department for additional information on rodent removal and control. Dwellings with large amounts of rodent droppings should first be aired before re-occupying the building. It is important to keep rodent dropping particles from getting into the air where they can be inhaled. The debris should be thoroughly wet down with a household disinfectant solution (consisting of detergent plus 1 and 1/2 cups of bleach for each gallon of water) to reduce airborne dust. An old spray bottle with a fine mist is ideal for applying the solution. Debris should then be wiped up while wearing gloves and placed in double plastic bags for disposal, together with any cleanup materials such as paper towels, etc. Do not use vacuum cleaners or sweep with brooms, which will create dust in the air. Use of gloves, dust mist masks, long-sleeved clothing and protective eyewear may help prevent personal exposure. Wash hands with soap and water after completing the cleanup. Additional information on hantavirus infections is available at the New York State Department of Health site at www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/communicable_diseases/en/hanta.htm

Does Nassau County regulate mice or insects in owner occupied dwellings?

No. The Nassau County Health Department does not regulate owner occupied dwellings like owner occupied homes, or condominiums and co-op apartments (problems need to be addressed

with the building managers, owners boards, or through legal counsel). Who is responsible for extermination in rental dwellings?

In one and two family dwellings, the owner/landlord and the occupants are both responsible for the extermination of pests like mice, roaches and other insects, and both will be required to do their part. In multi-unit buildings, the owner/landlord is responsible for extermination and cleanliness in all common areas, and the owner/landlord and occupants are both responsible for extermination of the apartments. In all cases, occupants are responsible for keeping their dwelling free of attractants like food and accumulated trash. The owner/landlord is responsible for pest-proofing the dwelling. What can I do to keep pest populations out of my dwelling?

The most important thing you can do is to maintain proper sanitation and hygiene inside your dwelling. This means eliminating places where pests can live and hide, and keeping your dwelling, and everything in it, clean, dry and in repair. Keep food in pest-proof metal containers, and put waste-food garbage out daily. Throw out all garbage, trash, rubbish, and refuse, including old magazines and newspapers, regularly. Put garbage out in metal cans with tight fitting lids. Get rid of unused furniture, appliances, clothes, and other unwanted household items. Wash, launder, and clean all items that are kept, including laundry and all used linens, at least weekly. Seal cracks and openings around your dwelling and around pipes and vents. Screen openings that need to stay open, and be sure window screens are in place and in good condition. Wash cabinets, counters, floors, tables, food preparation surfaces, and dishes daily. Do not let these items sit dirty overnight. Fix water drips and leaks, and keep all areas inside the dwelling clean and dry.

Is more information available?

You can visit the following web site(s) for more information:

Mice - New York State Department of Health
(www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/pest/mouse.htm)

Roaches - Cornell Cooperative Extension
<http://counties.cce.cornell.edu/suffolk/HortFactSheets/factsheets/Cockroaches.pdf>

Fleas - Cornell Cooperative Extension
<http://counties.cce.cornell.edu/suffolk/HortFactSheets/factsheets/Fleas.pdf>

Bed Bugs - Cornell Cooperative Extension
<http://counties.cce.cornell.edu/suffolk/HortFactSheets/factsheets/Bed%20Bugs.pdf>

If Nassau County residents have additional questions or concerns regarding Pests in their area, they can call the Nassau County Department of Health - Community Sanitation Program at 516-227-9715.