



PREP Quarterly

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BUILDING BEST PRACTICES IN SASKATCHEWAN

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Rat eradication is a group effort involving local governments, pest control officers, and the general public. PREP has recently rolled out a new Zero Tolerance Strategy called *P.A.I.R.* that invites everyone to get on board.

As the *Pest Control Act* indicates, controlling and destroying rats is the responsibility of every person who owns or operates land or buildings.

The four pillars of the strategy are **prevention**, **access**, **identification** and **reporting**. For local government, PREP encourages enacting bylaws focusing on prevention and enforcement of the *Pest Control Act* when necessary. If the municipality does not have a Pest Control Officer, get one. Make sure your residents know who they can call for assistance with baiting and infestations.

For Pest control officers, the strategy ensures safety, access, and

P.A.I.R. up with PREP on Zero Tolerance

reporting measures so they can get the job done. Educating and supporting local rat prevention and control measures are inherent in the strategy.

For ratepayers and residents, clean up and prevention baiting are key. If a problem arises, report any and all rat sightings to your local government or pest control officer, ensuring their safety and access while on your property.

With a little co-operation we can accomplish big things. Visit PREP's website at www.prep.sarm.ca for more information and resources.∞

Prevention, Access, Identification & Reporting gets everyone on board

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You've got to see it to believe it

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Title Photo Credit: Pat Filz, PCO for RMs 34, 35, & 36. Thanks, Pat!

The Pest Control Act

- Part 1 -

How well do you know Saskatchewan's *Pest Control Act*? This is the beginning of a series of articles highlighting important features of the Act. Part 1 will focus on the municipal perspective. Subsequent articles will look at the roles of pest control officers, landowners, and residents.

PEST CONTROL LEGISLATION IN SASK

Other important documents to be read concurrently with the *Pest Control Act* are the *Pest Control Products (Saskatchewan) Act, 2005* and the *Pest Control Product Regulations, 1995*. The *Wildlife Act, 1998* and *The Wildlife Regulations, 1981* are also recommended.

What is a 'Pest'? *The Pest Control Act* indicates that "every person shall take measures to *destroy, control, and prevent* the spread of all pests on any land or other premises owned, occupied, or controlled by him." "Pests" are defined as any "animal, insect, or disease that [the minister] deems likely to be destructive of or dangerous to any crop, grain, live stock or other property." Vertebrate pests in Saskatchewan include Norway rats and

PREP is dedicated to the bridging of information and support for rat eradication efforts. Our website is a great source of information on everything relating to rats in Saskatchewan, so if you haven't visited it yet, we hope you will today! Brochures we have available include **Zero Tolerance for Rats**, providing facts about rats and prevention

Richardson's ground squirrels. Other animals, such as beavers, foxes, muskrats, boars, etc., may be considered a nuisance; however, the *Pest Control Act* does not apply to them. Hunting, trapping and habitat removal of nuisance animals are different from the activities carried out under the *Pest Control Act*. *The Wildlife Regulations, 1981*, Section 6, discusses appropriate measures for dealing with wildlife damage to property and livestock.

Municipal responsibilities. The Act outlines activities a municipality is responsible and permitted to do when it comes to pests. While it is important to familiarize yourself with the entire Act, sections of the Act most pertinent to municipalities are: Sections 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16.

Section 8 refers to joint pest control efforts between municipalities: "Any municipality may enter into an agreement...with one or more municipalities for joint action in destroying or controlling pests." The municipality can designate one or more representatives to authorize expenses and implement the joint agreement. **Section 10** refers to implementing a general tax for covering pest control costs in certain situations. In **Section 12**, the Act discusses the power of municipalities to implement bylaws regarding a pest, also discussing the regulations prevailing over bylaws and the

practices; **Prevention Baiting**, providing information on the importance of prevention and baiting methods; and our **new P.A.I.R. Zero Tolerance StRATegy** brochure, focusing on best practices for local governments, PCOs, and the general public to help eradicate rats. [These are great resources for PCO visits, local government offices, and ratepayer](#)

requirements for filing such bylaws.



Section 15 outlines that the pest control officer for the rural municipality may have jurisdiction in the municipality it surrounds and the requirements for appointing that PCO to that municipality. Section 16 spells out municipal liability: "the municipality is responsible for the acts and negligence of its officers."

Stay tuned for Part 2 (November issue) which will focus on the rights and responsibilities of pest control officers.∞



[meetings](#). PREP also has available a new batch of **Rat Control in Saskatchewan Fact Sheet** booklets (originally printed by Sask Agriculture). All brochures and booklets are available to download and print from the PREP website www.prep.sarm.ca and through SARM's trading department. ∞

FOOD, WATER, AND SHELTER



There's no place like home

Rats thrive in places like this dumped grain near a dugout (above): food and water in close proximity; tall grass and room to burrow underground. It's the perfect place for rats to thrive.



Burn before you bury

Before you bury old grain, burn it. Otherwise, rats will burrow down and live happily in a great food supply.

1 metre

How high a rat can jump

0.8 km

How far a rat can swim

PCO Toolbelt

- ✓ Field notebook
- ✓ Digital camera
- ✓ PREP's Regional map with Supervisor contacts
- ✓ Rat Control in Saskatchewan Booklets
- ✓ PREP brochures
- ✓ Rat bait stickers & posters
- ✓ Door Hangers ("Your PCO Called")

My How Rats Have Changed

A Commentary by Grant Peeling, Provincial Coordinator for PREP

I took my PCO training many years ago from Oscar Mossing. For those of you who remember him, he was one of the people who got the rat patrol as we know it going in District 8. He always told me, "Check farm yards around grain bins and livestock pens; if there are rats anywhere, they will be there. If there's no signs there then you're done."

Then one day I had a person come up to me in a coffee shop and say he had seen rats at his dugout. My first thought was: How much has this guy been drinking? But after going out there and checking it out for myself, sure enough, there were rats! The dugout was in the middle of the field with no buildings or anything else around it, just surrounded by brome grass. This was at a time when I had been a PCO long enough to think I was getting to know rats pretty well – and then they threw me this curve ball! Even the guys who had been PCOs for years did not believe me so I had to show them. I wish I'd had my digital camera back then!

One of the worst outbreaks I had to deal with was an old grain elevator site. Back in the 70's they would dig a hole, demolish and bury an old elevator. Rat proofed, right? Wrong. Rats kept showing up in the area for no apparent reason.

The old elevator site was crawling with rats. I spent days trying to figure out where they were coming from. Now I keep it baited all the time and make sure to inspect all abandoned sites, even if reason tells me different.

I could write a book on the many rat stories I have gathered from talking to people. Most are only stories but every once in a while the rodents have done something completely unheard of and after checking into it I've found the story to be true. So now when I get a call about an unusual rat sighting, even if it seems way out of line, I check it out to see if it is really true or not. Many times you've got to see it to believe it.

I highly recommend to PCOs that they carry a digital camera on your rounds to document unusual rat behavior. In addition to a field journal, a small digital camera can be an important piece of equipment for a PCO. And of course if you are willing to send me your pictures, I would be more than happy to see them myself.

Keep up the good work!
Until next time,

Grant

Bridging Boundaries: Rural PCO Partnering with Urbans & Reserves



Developing co-operative pest control working relationships between rural and urban municipalities and First Nations reserves is essential to rat eradication. While PREP grants only pertain to inspection of agricultural sites; rats know no boundaries. Prevention baiting, clean-up programs and inspections belong in rural, urban, and reserve communities alike.

Many pest control officers who work in rural areas are also contracted to handle rat issues within the urban municipalities and/or reserves it surrounds. Indeed, the *Pest Control Act* suggests it.

Under the *Pest Control Act*, Section 15, subsection 1, it states: "If a municipality other than a rural municipality has not appointed a pest control officer, an officer designated by the rural municipality surrounding that municipality may exercise in that municipality all the powers conferred on officers by [the Pest Control Act]." The municipality, however, must notify the ministry within 14 days of the officer's appointment in order for the municipality to have an appointed officer. ∞

ANNUAL REGISTRATION

For RMs: Each year your PCO's name, address, and contact information must be submitted to: Director, Crops Branch, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, Room 125, 3085 Albert St. Regina, S4S 0B1; Fax: (306) 787-0428 (fax of original, signed letter); or email crops@gov.sk.ca (scan of original, signed letter in PDF format). Questions? Contact Scott Hartley, Provincial Specialist, Insect and Vertebrate Pests at (306) 787-4669 or Rich Wilkins, Provincial Specialist, Pesticide Regulatory at (306) 787-5207.

Laws are like sausages; it is better not to see them being made.

Otto von Bismarck

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Qs & As



Q: *What are the signs of a rat infestation?*

A: To identify a rat infestation, look for:

- ✓ Burrows found under foundations, scrap piles or feed stacks, which are kept free of loose dirt, cobwebs, and dust, located within 100 feet of food and water sources.
- ✓ Well-beaten trails or 'rat runs' between nests and food and water sources.
- ✓ Oily smudge marks along walls and uprights such as the main joists of roofing beams or the sides of grain bags.
- ✓ Rat droppings or 'scats' are capsule shaped (with blunted ends) approx. 20 mm in diameter.
- ✓ Signs of gnawing around doors, windows, cracks, knot holes, exposed edges of boards, and concrete.
- ✓ Rat tracks, which are unique from other rodents. The front imprint is four-toed while the back print is five-toed.

Visit the PREP website www.prep.sarm.ca for the *P.A.I.R. Zero Tolerance StRATegy* brochure, which outlines these identification tools and other practical information for producers and ratepayers.

PCO JOB BOARD

Rene Dubreuil is a trained PCO in the Ituna area looking for pest control work. Willing to travel. Excellent character references. Contact Rene at (306) 795-3418.



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