



BUILDING BEST PRACTICES IN SASKATCHEWAN

IN THIS ISSUE

A recent survey conducted by the Provincial Rat Eradication program asked rural municipalities where their rat control budgets were being spent. 66% of all rural municipalities in the province replied to the survey.

According to survey results, rural municipalities spent an average of \$10,660 annually on rat control. Rat control budgets in 2012-13 ranged from \$1,500 to \$76,570. RMs in total budgeted \$2.6 million for rat control and spent \$2.3 million. The PREP grant provided through the Ministry of Agriculture's Ag Fieldworkers Policy contributed 36% of total actual costs back to RMs in 2012-13.

The survey asked RMs to indicate only where their dollars were directed, not to provide actual cost distribution. The top three rat control expenses as reported by RMs are baits, PCO wages, and PCO mileage. Other costs, such as levies to ADD boards, PCO training and licensing fees, conferences and professional dues, employee benefits and municipal equipment operations contribute to rat control budgets.

How RMs are Spending their Annual Rat Control Budgets

Of all respondents, 89% are providing rat bait free of charge to their ratepayers. Those that do not are selling it at cost to ratepayers or subsidizing it at a significant rate (75/25). Providing free bait is one of PREP's recommended practices to RMs, as are paying for PCO training, ongoing professional development and licensing fees. In this regard, RMs are incorporating some of PREP's best practices into their annual rat control budgets. This makes PREP happy!

23% of respondents have accessed PREP's regional support services (Regional PCO Supervisors) for managing infestations.

94% of respondents indicated they intend to participate again in the 2013-14 Provincial Rat Eradication Program. \$1 million has been provided through the Ministry of Agriculture again in 2013. ∞

Grain Bag Recycling Sites



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High Infestations Get Attention



PREP takes a closer look Page 3

STICKS IN A BUNDLE ARE UNBREAKABLE.
~ A KENYAN PROVERB

Pest Control Tips for Grain Bag Recycling Sites

by Ryan Budd

When establishing a pest control program for your grain bag recycling site, the first thing for a PCO to do is collaborate with the RM to develop a site plan. The plan should outline where used grain bags will be dropped off and rolled, the placement of the rolled bags, and where bait stations should be located. Every site is unique so there is no one plan that will work in every situation.



PCOs need to develop a strong relationship with the

municipality to coordinate proper site planning and good communication practices. Everyone involved should be on the same page for the plan to work effectively. Individuals maintaining and working on the site should be well aware of the site plan and where baits are being placed. Site maintenance is hugely important to controlling rats at the collection site.

Rolling bags is key; grain bags should be rolled as smoothly and tightly as possible, not crumpled. Save yourself the headache and roll them right the first time! Grain bag bales should be stacked neatly in a line so rats have a hard time getting in between them.

Placement of baits is also important. Make sure your bait stations are well marked and out of the way to ensure they are not crushed or overlooked by site maintenance staff. If the site is fenced, place bait stations in between the fence posts; alternatively, in an unfenced area you can drill posts to mark bait placements. Baiting areas should be easily maintainable, accessible, and visible. Check your bait

stations regularly to ensure they continue to be visible and functional. A bait station that has been crushed by a truck tire is not effective!

I seem to have a lot of success using both grain-based baits and Ramik or Maki blocks. Take the site characteristics into consideration when deciding what will work best for you. Good luck! ∞

WHAT TO DO WITH OLD & UNUSED BAIT?

Refer to the *Pest Control Products Regulations, 1995*, for guidelines on storage and disposal of pesticides.

Hazardous chemicals must be properly contained and labeled and disposed of according to manufacturer specifications.

Improperly stored or disposed baits pose a threat to human and animals and can contaminate food and water sources.



If you have any further questions about baiting grain bags, contact PREP's PCO Supervisor in Moose Jaw, Ryan Budd at 306-631-7350.

GRAIN STORAGE



Clean up spilled grain. It's an invitation for an invasion.

What kind of foundation is your grain bin situated on?



Rats can chew through plywood - no problem!



89%

The percentage of RMs who provide rat bait free of charge to their ratepayers in 2012.

\$2.3 million

The total actual dollars RMs spent on rat control and prevention in 2012.

PREP Attentive to Areas Reporting High Infestation

At the end of each program year in the month of March, PREP takes a close look at where significant rat infestations are being reported in the province.

While the majority of infestations are within acceptable range of less than 10%, some are still reporting very high. To address this concern, this spring, PREP isolated municipalities in the program who consistently reported infestations greater than 20% and increasing since 2010. Provincial Coordinator Grant Peeling and all six Division PCO Supervisors coordinated efforts to meet with PCOs in their division reporting high infestation rates. The goal was to learn more about how PCOs were documenting rat sightings on their inspection forms and determine whether or not there were actually pockets of major rat activity to be targeted

Interestingly enough, this follow-up exercise led PREP to discover that perhaps the overall provincial infestation rate is lower than what the numbers were telling us. Some explanations for high infestation numbers were not actually a high presence of rats. Two significant explanations were:

Old rat signs were still being documented. Long after rats have been eliminated, signs of their presence remain. These are no longer areas of activity and therefore should not be recorded on the inspection sheet as infested. Reporting only currently active rat signs is suggested.

Interpretation of PCO inspections sheets by administrators filling in the Statement of Compliance form. The Statement of Compliance is essentially a translation of the field reports from the PCO. This stresses the importance of the PCO to clearly and accurately fill in their inspection reports so that the administrator can correctly fill in the Statement of Compliance. The Statement of Compliance requires the following

information: (1) the number of occupied agriculture sites inspected, and (2) the number of vacant agriculture sites inspected. This adds up to (3) the total number of inspections. The total number of infested sites is then divided by the total number of sites inspected to calculate the RM's infestation rate. Administrators can do this calculation prior to submitting the form to SARM to double check the numbers. For instance, if you calculate an infestation rate of 60%, chances are you need to go back and check the numbers are recorded correctly.

The importance of establishing consistent reporting measures is not lost on PREP. That is why the program offers PCO supervision in each SARM division - to provide support and mentorship to fieldmen and fieldwomen. It is also recommended that PCOs and administrators continue to practice open communication so that everyone stays on the same page.

2013 STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE FORM

New information PREP is asking for this year is your actual expenses for bait and whether or not you supply bait free of charge to your rate payers. As well, the deadline to submit forms has been moved to December 31, 2013.

Download your Compliance form at

www.prep.sarm.ca

While there are some RMs that choose not to participate in the program, PREP still offers its support to them. The program encourages all RMs, regardless of participation to submit a Statement of Compliance form. This helps PREP better determine the provincial infestation rate and to focus efforts in areas with break-out populations or areas with no pest control. As a provincial program focused on rat eradication, the more data we have, the more the program can support further initiatives towards rat eradication. This program is working - and it's working well! Thank you to all RMs who continue to participate.∞

SELF EMPLOYED PEST CONTROL CONTRACTOR VERSUS MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEE: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

You're a PCO. You work for a municipality. Are you a municipal employee or are you hired on contract? This is an important distinction that affects your licensing requirements.

As a self-employed pest control officer, you must carry two licenses: a pest control applicator's license and a service license. The applicator's license pertains to your training background and ongoing education. The service license qualifies you to provide commercial pesticide application

services in and around your customers' buildings.

To acquire a service license, you must be a certified and licensed pesticide applicator and the type of services you offer are limited to your training and expertise. For example, being licensed to conduct rat control cannot transfer over into weed or insect control – you must take the necessary courses.

Training for rat control is different if you intend to become self-employed and contract your services. Municipal employees becoming licensed applicators should take the Rat Control Pesticide Applicator course through SIAST. For commercial pesticide work, the Structural Pesticide Applicator course will provide the training recommended for managing pest control in around homes, businesses, public

buildings and storage facilities. Other courses, such as aquatic vegetation, fumigation, industrial vegetation, landscapes, mosquito and biting fly, etc.



NEED MORE INFORMATION ABOUT LICENSING & TRAINING?

Ministry of Agriculture – Pesticide Licensing Program:
<http://www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/Pesticide-Service>

SIAST Pesticide Applicator training:
<http://gosiastr.com/programs-and-courses/continuing-education/programs.aspx?p=27&c=89>

Or, contact Jude Kachaluba at the Ministry of Agriculture's Pesticide Licensing - (306) 787-4662

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Qs & As



Q: Where can I get PCO supplies such as forms, warning posters and door hangers?

A: SARM has all of your PREP needs - free of charge and the shipping is on us. Contact Annette Ellert in SARM's Trading department at 1-800-667-3604.

- Warning posters (stickable & regular)
- Bait stickers
- Inspection sheets, Rat Infestation forms, Notice to destroy forms
- Your PCO Called doorknob hangers
- Brochures on *Prevention Baiting*, *Zero Tolerance for Rats*, *PAIR Zero Tolerance StRATegy*
- *Rats in Saskatchewan* information booklet

PCO magnetic door signs are available at \$30 a pair.

PCO JOB BOARD

Does your municipality need a PCO?
 Contact PREP to put your info here.

