



Residential Building Owner/Operator Guidelines for Vector Control

Excerpted from the **Director's Rules and Regulations for Prevention and Control of Rodents and other Vectors, and to promote Housing Habitability**

- 1. Training.** It shall be the responsibility of property owners / management companies, to provide training to site staff. Training shall emphasize sanitation and shall include:
 - How to inspect for / signs of infestation
 - Maintaining proper sanitation / Basic principles of vector exclusion and prevention
 - Procedures for handling reports, making referrals and record keeping
 - Safe handling / removal /disposal of infested materials
- 2. Owner or manager shall investigate** reports of pest activity within 72 hours. All reports of rodents, fleas, flies, bedbugs, spiders, cockroaches, wasps, and mosquitoes will be recorded in a logbook made available to the pest control professional.
- 3. Licensed Pest Control Operator (PCO):** Owner will hire a PCO with an appropriate current license. Companies or operators shall provide proof of valid license on request, or anyone may call the California Structural Pest Control Board at (916) 561-8704 for status. The company must also be licensed to do business in San Francisco. Call 415-252-3862.
- 4. Proper refuse/garbage storage and collection:** Owner and/or Manager shall provide an adequate number of refuse containers and frequent enough collections per week to prevent the over-filling of containers, and keep area sanitary. (Health Code Article 6 sect. 290)

Such containers shall be rodent-proof, insect disease vector-proof and watertight with tight fitting lids. Plastic bags may be used as garbage and refuse container liners, but shall not be used without the container for on-site storage of garbage or refuse.
- 5. Owners and managers shall ensure** that **advance notification** of tenants of any pesticide treatment complies with all State requirements. Tenants must be given the name of the product to be applied and the contact number for the Poison Control center.
- 6. The Health Department** may require managers and owners or any responsible parties of a property with a history of violations of Section 581 of the San Francisco Health Code, to attend DPH-approved training in recognizing signs of infestation, good sanitation and maintenance, and vector exclusion and prevention.
- 7. Tenants** are responsible for performing routine housekeeping tasks to keep living areas reasonably clean and orderly, and keep garbage, pet food and other attractive items properly stored. Do not put food out for wildlife or pigeons.

8. **Food Operations permitted by SFDPH** are required to protect food from contamination by rodents, flies and filth. Food operations must properly store and remove all food waste and other refuse, eliminate rodents and insects from their premises, and practice good sanitation indoors and out as a condition of the Permit to Operate, which may be suspended or revoked for repeated violations.

9. **Proper storage practices:** Accumulated materials such as crates, pallets, lumber, tires, firewood, or scrap metal shall be stored in a manner that facilitates monitoring for pest activity and prevents harborage of noxious insects, rodents, and wildlife.

Stored items shall be stacked neatly in piles and elevated at least 6" from the ground, with at least 6" of space between the piles and exterior walls of any structure or fence.

10 **Standing water. To prevent the breeding of mosquitoes that can carry the West Nile virus**, property owners/managers are required to eliminate all standing water sources. Water will also attract wildlife, rodents and other unwanted pests.

11. **Landscape management. When rodent activity is identified, Owners shall:**

- Thin out dense trees, vines and shrubs that can hide nests and shelter mosquitoes.
- Remove or thin out dense groundcover that can hide burrows, runways and drains.

12. **Vector Exclusion: Residential and commercial buildings shall be constructed and maintained to prevent the entry of vectors or pests** by means of effective exclusion. Vector exclusion includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Gaps greater than ¼ ' around exterior doors and windows shall be repaired;
- Openings in exterior walls, particularly around pipes or conduits shall be sealed with hardware cloth, copper mesh, caulk, sheet metal, concrete or mortar;

13. **Pigeon roosting and pigeon-proofing:** Pigeon waste, pigeon feathers and nesting materials are a source of mites, lice, allergens, bacteria, fungal spores and other organisms that can cause human disease. Accumulation of these dangerous materials constitutes a health nuisance. Pigeon waste damages paint and building materials. In San Francisco it is not legal to poison, trap, or shoot pigeons.

Pigeon-proofing means pigeons are discouraged and prevented from roosting and creating a health nuisance, by means of design, such as sloping sills, or by means of a net or screen or other deterrent such as a timed sprinkler.

14. **Animal waste** from pets attracts flies and rodents and other disease vectors, is a source of nuisance odors and any accumulation is a violation of the Health Code.

To access the full text of the Director's Rules and Regulations for Prevention and Control of Rodents and other Vectors, and to promote Housing Habitability and for fact sheets on some of the topics outlined in this guide, please go to www.sfdph.org/eh or call 415-252-3805 to request a copy by mail and ask any questions you may have.