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# SHELBY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
Shelby County Health Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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## **KEEP RODENTS AWAY FROM YOUR HOME AND YARD THIS FALL** *October 18-24, 2020 Is Rodent Awareness Week*

SHELBY COUNTY, TN – In observance of Rodent Awareness Week, **October 18-24, 2020**, the Shelby County Health Department wants to increase awareness about rodents, one of Shelby County's top pest concerns for residents.

In the fall, rodents, which include several species of rats and mice, can invade residential spaces in search of shelter and food. Rodents are a threat to human health and property. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, rats and mice carry more than 35 diseases, which they can spread to humans. Rodents also cause an estimated \$20 billion in damage to homes, businesses, and agricultural crops each year.

The Shelby County Health Department's Vector Control Program addresses outdoor rat infestations in Shelby County. Our Vector Control environmentalists often find that residents unknowingly create conditions that attract rodents. Eliminating those conditions is key to eliminating the infestation. Rodents are looking for places to live and sources of food. Make sure you're not inviting these vectors to set up housekeeping around your home.

- Keep yards free of rodent nesting sites:
  - Clean up trash and debris
  - Keep grass cut
  - Eliminate piles of wood or building supplies
  - Elevating stored items and woodpiles off the ground helps keep rodents out.
- Don't provide rodents with food:
  - Never leave pet food in your yard or garage.

- Keep garbage and food scraps in cans with tightly-fitting lids.
- Clean up spilled bird seed, fallen fruits, vegetables and nuts. Keep grills clean and wipe up spills under the grill.
- Pick up pet droppings regularly – rodents view them as a source of food.
- Inspect your property regularly for signs of rodent activity, including burrows, gnaw holes, and rodent droppings.

Shelby County Vector Control specifically responds to outdoor rodent infestations. For more information about Rodent Control, visit our website: [www.shelbytnhealth.com](http://www.shelbytnhealth.com). To report rodent activity, email [vector.control@shelbycountyttn.gov](mailto:vector.control@shelbycountyttn.gov) or call (901) 222-9725, Monday – Friday, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

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