

Working With Homeowners Associations on Poison-Free Alternatives



www.PoisonFreeConejoValley.com

<https://www.facebook.com/poisonfreeconejovalley>

Dear Poison-Free Advocate,

Thank you for reaching out to Poison Free Conejo Valley about your Home Owners Association (HOA) using rodent poisons.

It's important to understand that each situation can be very different depending on your HOA. In this packet we hope to provide you with the guidance and tools necessary to begin conversations with them to discuss and present the effects of rodenticides on children, pets and wildlife and to help them find alternative solutions to rodents.

There are many benefits to living in a community that has an HOA. The common areas are maintained by professionals and rules and regulations deter nuisance activity and promotes conformity. Amenities are well maintained such as pools, landscaping, sports courts, walking trails etc. Because HOA's want to take care of their property, they often hire professional pest control companies to control the rodents, often with no idea that there are far-reaching effects on children, pets and wildlife. Our goal is to educate people so they understand how the use of rodent poisons are harmful. We believe that by working together, as partners, providing successful alternatives to the rodent problems, everyone can meet their goals. Our goal is to make HOAs and homeowners aware of alternatives to poisons that are just as effective and that will protect children, pets and wildlife.

It's important for an HOA Board to understand how poisons impact the food chain. It is crucial in conversations with pest control operators. It is also important to know as a consumer what poisons are on the shelf of retail businesses. We suggest you share facts, information and solutions with your HOA. Educate them about the effects of rodenticides.

Thank you for caring about our children, pets and wildlife.

Sincerely,

The Poison Free Conejo Valley Team



What You Can Do

Here's how you get started:

Talk with Neighbors. In order to prepare to talk with your HOA Board of Directors, you will want to get a feel for how the other residents feel about the use of rodenticides. You will want to educate them about bait boxes in the community. Ask your HOA if they will allow you to create a survey or an informational flyer to distribute to homeowners.

Find a Champion for the Cause. It is important to have someone in your community who can speak to the HOA Board. Identify a person who has credibility and can speak to facts and solutions. It's important to listen and understand the problem.

Do your homework. Before contacting your HOA, find out the following information so that when you do approach them, you go in knowledgeable about your HOA's issues with rodents so that you can approach them with understanding and solutions.

- What is the current state of the poisons being used? Bait boxes? If so, what's on the labels? Look for the type of chemical on the label, the company, and the date it was last serviced. Also take a picture of the box and document how many.

Notify the Board if you see any of the below poisons listed because there is a temporary ban on the use of 2nd Generation Anticoagulant rodenticides. The bait boxes need to be reported and the bait boxes identified. Take a picture with your phone but DO NOT TOUCH THE BAIT BOXES.

- These poisons are as follows: **bromadiolone, brodifacoum, difethialone, or difenacoum.**
Please refer to page 11 here titled, *How to Report Illegal Use of 2nd Generation Anticoagulant Rat Poisons.*
- **What are people doing that attract rodents?** Examples: fruiting trees or bushes, open composting bins, bird food/feeders, pet food, access to gardens, thick ground cover (ivy) and hedges, debris piles and clutter.
- **It is important to find out *why* the HOA is using poisons.** What is the target species? Is there a current problem or situation (Rats, mice, ground squirrel or gopher?) What is the problem? Are there community complaints? Is the poisoning a preventative?
- **What are other residents saying?**

Compile the Facts. The more you educate yourself the better you will be to answer the questions that may be asked by your HOA. Explain that rodenticides go **UP** the food chain and are destroying all those that rely on mice and rats for food such as bobcats, mountain lions, hawks, owls, falcons, eagles, foxes, heron, egrets, opossums, snakes and more. For example, share that the City of Thousand Oaks has taken steps to protect people, pets, and animal predators by halting all City use of rodenticides. Please review this link for helpful information for Thousand Oaks: (<https://www.toaks.org/departments/public-works/sustainability/landscaping/rodent-control>). You want to talk about statistics and reveal the impact rodent poisons are having.

Here are a few facts:

- Rodents serve a very important purpose in the ecosystem as food chain sources for other wildlife.
- There are **NO SAFE POISONS**.
Dr. Laurel Serieys from UCLA, world's expert on rodent poisoning of bobcats tells us:

"Often people inquire, after learning the harmful impacts of anticoagulant poisons, what poisons may be used in substitution for anticoagulants. The truth is that NO POISON IS A GOOD POISON—in other words, no poison available on the market in the United States poses no risk to wildlife. If there is an absence of data regarding how some compounds affect wildlife (i.e., vitamin D3 cholecalciferol, zinc phosphide, or bromethelin), it does not mean it poses no risk to wildlife."
- As stated by the National Park Service (NPS), poisoned rodents do not die in the bait boxes. Instead, the poisoned rodents leave the box and move around the environment for several days before they die. These toxic rodents are easily caught and eaten by our wildlife.
- Results from tested bobcats, coyotes and mountain lions, and exposure to anticoagulant rodenticides during NPS study:
 - **Bobcats** - 92% of bobcats exposed to anticoagulant poisons.
 - **Coyotes** - 83% of coyotes were exposed to anticoagulants and it was the 2nd leading cause of death during study.
 - **Mountain Lions** - 96% (27 out of 28 tested) of mountain lions were exposed to anticoagulant poisons, including a 3 month old kitten. The current total of mountain lions that have died directly from rodenticide intoxication is six.
- Animals aren't the only species at risk to the dangerous effects of rodenticide poison. According to the [Center for Biological Diversity](#), 10,000 kids are poisoned by rodenticides each year in their own homes.
- Bill AB1788 did not ban all poisons. It placed a moratorium on second-generation anticoagulants only while they study the effects.
- Rodent poisons continue to be used by pest control companies and sold retail. They are replacing the second generation anticoagulants with non-anticoagulants such as cholecalciferol (vitamin D3), bromethalin, strychnine and zinc phosphide. These are all dangerous poisons with no antidote and should not be used.

Retail products on the market



Provide Solutions. Examples of solutions include avenues such as how to **repel**, **exclude** and **deter** rodents (www.PoisonFreeConejoValley.com/alternative-product-links).

To control rodents without poison, use traps and remove the resources that attract them such as food, water, and shelter.

- Use traps indoors only (to prevent injury or death to birds or other non-target animals)
- If you choose to hire a company to assist you, make sure they perform rodent exclusion techniques and provide alternatives to rodent poisons.

Prevent access into houses or buildings

- Seal all holes, gaps, and crevices that allow access into businesses, homes, garages, attics, and crawl spaces.
- Use 1/4 inch metal mesh or metal flashing to seal up entry points and steel wool for small holes.
- Keep hedges and bushes away from buildings.
- Remove tree limbs within three feet of roofs and buildings.

Remove rodent food sources

- Prevent access to fruiting trees and gardens.
 - Trim fruit tree branches two to three feet away from fences and wires.
 - Secure metal band (36" tall) around fruit trees trunks to prevent climbing.
- Prevent access to bird feeders and fallen bird seed.
- Feed pets inside and secure trash and compost bins.
- Keep trash and recycling areas clean and bins covered.
- Replace trash cans and dumpsters with holes.

Remove rodent shelter

- Remove ivy and trim thick vegetation.
- Remove wood and debris piles.
- Seal up under decks (use 1/4 metal wire or solid panels).

Craft a Letter or Ask to Attend a Board Meeting. Once you have all the information, you can then begin to craft a letter to your HOA or ask to attend an upcoming Board meeting and present. Help them to understand the role the HOA is playing in the ecosystem by using poisons. With this awareness they may begin to make changes in the way they handle their current rodent control method.

We can provide input on your letter if you like.

Information Examples You Can Use to Talk to Your HOA Regarding the Effects of Rodenticides on Local Wildlife

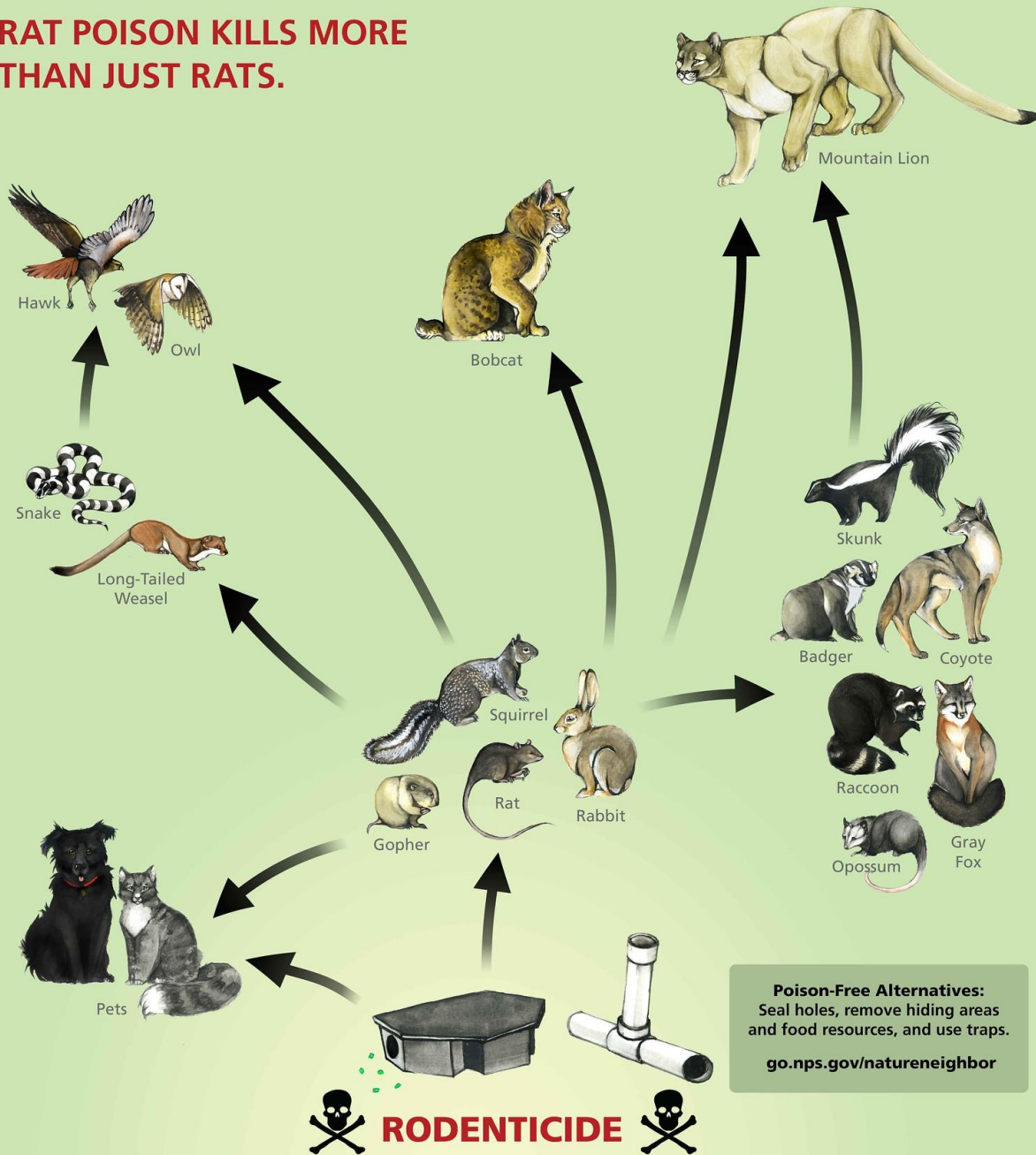
Rat Poisons & the Food Chain

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Santa Monica Mountains
National Recreation Area



RAT POISON KILLS MORE THAN JUST RATS.



Poison detected in local wildlife includes:
BROMADIOLONE, BRODIFACOUM, CHLOROPHACINONE, DIFENACOUM, DIPHACINONE, & DIFETHIALONE

Short Life of Santa Monica Mountains Mountain Lion P-34

December 2014
14 months old



September 2015
23 months old



KILLED BY FIVE DIFFERENT RODENT POISONS

"The compounds found in P-34's system were brodifacoum, bromadiolone, chlorophacinone, difethialone and diphacinone." – National Park Service
www.nps.gov/samo/learn/news/p-34-test-results-confirmed.htm

Most Recent Casualty in Santa Monica Mountains Mountain Lion P-47, March 2019



"Testing on a sample of his liver showed that the three-year-old male had been exposed to six different anticoagulant compounds, and a necropsy conducted by the California Animal Health and Food Safety Lab found internal hemorrhaging in his head and lungs."

– National Park Service



B-372 died as a result of rodent poisons.



Mountain Lion with Mange (before and after)

Photo Credit: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/santamonicamtms/albums/with/72157670897770258>

Pet Poisoning Due to Rodenticides:

<https://vcahospitals.com/know-your-pet/rodenticide-warfarin-poisoning-in-dogs>

<https://www.petpoisonhelpline.com/uncategorized/rodenticide-reminder/>

<https://www.aspcapro.org/resource/treating-unknown-rodenticide>

https://www.hsvc.org/the_dangers_of_rat_poison

Press Examples - Incidents of Wildlife Deaths Due to Rodenticide Poisoning:

Below is a small sampling of the types of articles you can present or begin to do your own research on showing the effects of rodenticides on local wildlife in the community:

National Park Service – Links to numerous incidents of rodenticides killing wildlife

<https://www.nps.gov/search/?affiliate=nps&query=rodenticides>

2021 – Cougar Found Dead Behind Home

<https://www.toacorn.com/articles/cougar-found-dead-behind-home/>



2020 - Park service says poison killed both mountain lion and bobcat

<https://www.toacorn.com/articles/park-service-says-poison-killed-both-bobcat-and-mountain-lion/>

2020 - Red-tailed hawk saved by blood transfusion

<https://www.toacorn.com/articles/red-tailed-hawk-saved-by-blood-transfusion/>

2019 - Don't take the bait, kill rodents safely

<https://www.toacorn.com/articles/dont-take-the-bait-kill-rodents-safely/>

2019 - Two mountain lions found dead in the Santa Monica Mountains; rat poison likely to blame

<https://www.vcstar.com/story/news/special-reports/outdoors/2019/10/08/two-mountain-lions-found-dead-santa-monica-mountains/3910073002/>

2016 - Suffering bobcats, coyotes, owls spur Thousand Oaks neighborhood to rethink war on rats <https://www.latimes.com/science/la-me-0206-rats-20160208-story.html>

2016 - Sick bobcats in Santa Monica Mountains raise concerns about pesticide

<https://abc7.com/mountain-lions-santa-monica-mountains-bobcats-rat-poison/1193523/>

2015 - Newbury Park community in hot pursuit of sick-looking bobcat

<https://www.toacorn.com/articles/newbury-park-community-in-hot-pursuit-of-sick-looking-bobcat/>

How to Report Illegal Use of 2nd Generation Anticoagulant Rat Poisons

First, verify that the poison in the bait box is one of the four illegal ones. The four are **bromadiolone, brodifacoum, difethialone, and difenacoum.**

ALL bait boxes MUST have labels (click for the law wording, page 3.5) with the product inside indicated.

In the photo below, “Bromadiolone” is the active poison, one of the four illegal ones. Next, please report the 2nd generation anticoagulants. Also report if there is no label or if it is illegible. The Agency in charge is the County Agricultural Commission for your county:

Los Angeles County:

Website: acwm.lacounty.gov/environmental-protection-bureau/

Phone: **626.575.5466**

Email: envprot@acwm.lacounty.gov

Ventura County:

Website: www.ventura.org/agricultural-commissioner/pesticide-use-enforcement/

Phone: **805.388.4222** or **805.933.2926**

Email: ag.inspector@ventura.org or venturacountyag.commissioner@ventura.org

Throughout California:

Phone: **877.378.5463**

Website: www.cdfa.ca.gov/exec/county/countymap

The Main Source: Poison Bait Boxes from Pest Control Companies



CAUTION: DO NOT TOUCH THE BAIT BOX. You can write down the label or take a picture of it with your phone and contact your HOA.

Credit: Poison Free Malibu

Alternative Options for HOA's

<https://poisonfreeconejovalley.com/professional-pest-control>

PROFESSIONAL PEST CONTROL

There are companies out there that can help you with your unwanted guests. There are alternatives to using poisons. An alternative to poisons that we **DO NOT RECOMMEND** is the use of **GLUE BOARDS. THESE TRAPS ARE INHUMANE AND TRAP MORE THAN RATS.**

Tree of Life Rodent Control

310-817-1040

<https://treeofliferodentcontrol.com/>

The Tree of Life Rodent Control company's mission is to offer a poison-free alternative to rodent poison, which is devastating our eco-system and can cause harm to our children.

Rodent Masters

818-855-9136

<https://www.rodentmasters.com/html/service.html>

Rodent Masters provides rat-proofing of structures, mice control, and attic cleaning/decontamination.

Green Rodent Restoration

800-989-8905

<https://www.greenrodentrestoration.com/>

Green Rodent Restoration offers rodent control and attic cleaning services. The company is committed to environmentally-safe practices. contact@greenrodentrestoration.com

Green Rat Control

855-856-8585

Green Rat Control offers rodent control and attic cleaning services. The company is committed to environmentally-safe practices.

Smart Gopher Trapping

818-699-8592

<https://smartgophertrapping.wixsite.com/gophers>

Smart Gopher Trapping is a small business located in the Los Angeles area. They have a strict NO POISON policy, and all their methods are 100% organic. They specialize in gopher, mole, vole, and rat control.