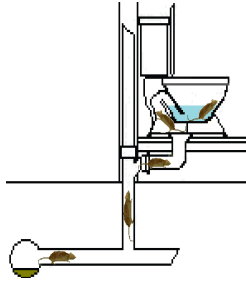


Rat in the toilet – It's not an urban myth!

Rat in the toilet

How does a rat get in your toilet?

Rats get up into toilets by following the scent of food washed down drains from your home to the sewer system. While searching for food they can climb your homes stand pipe (the pipe that connects your homes drainage to the sewer). Unable to reach the kitchen sink they can come up into the toilet bowl.



What do I do if I have a rat in my toilet?

STAY CALM!

Keep the lid down so that it is unable to jump out. Leave your toilet lid down when not in use.

Squirt some liquid dish soap in the toilet to help break the surface tension of the water. Soap decreases the oils on the rats so it can not stay afloat in the water.



Flush the toilet! The rat will usually go back down the drain the same way it came up.

Keep rats out of your sewer pipes

Rats have a great sense of smell. They are able to follow the scent of food washed down drains by garbage disposals and dish washing.

- Keep your kitchen sink rinsed clean and use garbage disposals as little as possible.
- Clean your drain! Use 1 cup of baking soda followed by 1 cup of vinegar and rinse with boiling water. You can also use 1 cup of bleach and rinse with boiling water. Do this once or twice a month.
- Never pour grease or oils down the drain.



Who do I call if I find a rat in my toilet?

If you find a rat in your toilet you can report it to Public Health online at www.kingcounty.gov/health/rats or call 206-205-4394.

If you live outside of the city of Seattle and you find a rat in your toilet you may want to contact your city's public utilities department or your local sewer district. You can locate their contact information in the government pages or blue pages of the phone book or on your utility bill.

How do rats get into the sewers

Rats get into sewer systems through broken or faulty side-sewers. The Seattle Sewer Baiting program can investigate a suspected faulty side-sewer connection when rats are a concern. A broken side-sewer can be identified by pouring a colored dye down a rat burrow. If the colored water shows up in a near by sewer then the side-sewer may have a break. When the dye test indicates a broken side-sewer, it is recommended that the homeowner hire a licensed contractor to make necessary repairs.



What about rats in storm drains?

Occasionally, rats are seen going into a storm drain. In most cases the rats are ducking into the storm drain just to avoid a predator or from being seen. In some parts of Seattle rats may get into the sewer if the sewer system is a combined drainage and sanitary sewer system.

Seattle Sewer Baiting Program

The goal of the Seattle Sewer Baiting program is to control rats in the sewer system of Seattle.

Our program:

- Responds to citizen complaints about rats in their toilet.
- Tracks neighborhoods that have are impacted by sewer rat activity.
- Performs routine inspections and baiting for rats in impacted neighborhoods.
- Investigates suspected side-sewer breaks.
- Educates communities about preventing and controlling rodent infestations when sewer rats are a concern.



Public Health
Seattle & King County



Environmental Health Services
401 5th Ave, Suite 1100 Seattle, WA 98104
206-263-9566

www.kingcounty.gov/health/rats

Available in Alternate Formats

June 2009