

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 1, 2020

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HCPA Warns About Increased Rodent and Pest Activity Amid the Coronavirus Pandemic

Washington D.C. – The Household & Commercial Products Association (HCPA) released the following statement today, attributed to Dr. Steve Bennett, Senior Vice President, Scientific & Regulatory Affairs, HCPA, following recent reports that rodent and pest activity has increased as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

“Since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, environmental health and rodent control programs have seen an increase in rodent activity. Stay-at-home orders to help stop the spread of COVID-19 have caused restaurants to close or offer limited service. As a result, they are not producing as much trash and waste as usual, which means that rats – and other pests that rely on human waste, such as cockroaches – must find a new source of food, and they are becoming increasingly aggressive in their search.

According to pest control complaints, rats specifically are venturing out during daytime hours and entering homes and businesses that had never previously experienced rodent activity. While there is no evidence that rats can spread COVID-19, they are still a public health risk because they can carry fleas and other diseases, such as salmonella. Rodents can also cause significant property damage. For example, there has been an increase in reports of rodents inhabiting cars, especially the engine bays and chewing through wires.

Thankfully, there are preventive measures that home and business owners can take to deter rodents and pests. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued [guidance](#) about how to eliminate conditions that may attract rats, including covering garbage cans, storing bird and pet food out of reach, and sealing small holes, even as small as half an inch. Additionally, there are products specifically designed for rodent control, such as traps and baits. Rodenticide baits are registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and have been tested for safety and efficacy. When used according to the directions on the label, and following advice from the CDC, these products can protect against unwanted pests and rodents.”

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About HCPA

The Household & Commercial Products Association (HCPA) is the premier trade association representing companies that manufacture and sell \$180 billion annually of trusted and familiar products used for cleaning, protecting, maintaining, and disinfecting homes and commercial environments. HCPA member companies employ 200,000 people in the U.S. whose work helps consumers and workers to create cleaner, healthier and more productive lives.