

Chapter 9.28 RAT CONTROL

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9.28.010 Definitions.

As used in this chapter the following terms shall mean:

- A. "Business building" means any structure, whether public or private, regardless of the type of material used in its construction, located within the boundaries of the city, that is adapted to the occupancy for transaction of business, whether occupied or vacant, for the rendering of professional services, for the display, sale or storage of goods, wares or merchandise, or for the performance of work or labor, including hotels, roominghouses, beer taverns, office buildings, public buildings, churches, stores, markets, restaurants, grain elevators, abattoirs, warehouses, workshops and factories.
- B. "Opening" means any opening in the foundation, sides or walls of any business building, including the roof, chimney, eaves, grills, windows, sidewalk grates and sidewalk elevators, through which a rat may enter.
- C. "Person" includes owner, occupant, agent, receiver, individual, partnership or corporation, or any other person in custody of any business building as defined in subsection A of this section.
- D. "Premises" includes all business buildings, outhouses, sheds, barns, garages, docks, grain elevators and abattoirs, whether public or private, and all other structures used in connection with the operation of any business buildings as defined in subsection A of this section.
- E. "Rat harborage" means any condition found to exist under which rats may find shelter or protection, and shall include any defective construction which would permit the entrance of rats into any business building.
- F. "Rat stoppage" means any feasible form of rat-proofing designed to prevent the ingress or egress of rats into or out of any business building. It is essentially the closing or protecting of all openings in the exterior walls and foundations or the grates

in any sidewalk or business buildings, with rat-proofing materials installed in such a manner as to prevent rats from gaining entrance.

(Prior code § 12-53)

9.28.020 Rat stoppage requirements—Business building construction.

No person shall construct within the city any business building unless such building is provided with rat stoppage in accordance with the regulations prescribed in this chapter.

(Prior code § 12-54)

9.28.030 Rat stoppage requirements—Minimum.

The following regulations shall constitute minimum requirements in equipping a business building with rat stoppage:

- A. The material shall be approved and the installation supervised by the director of the department of environmental services or his authorized representative.
- B. Solid sheet metal, expanded metal and wire cloth used in the installation shall have a rust-resisting protective coating of hot-dip zinc galvanizing or equal.
- C. All foundation wall ventilator openings shall be covered for their entire height and width with perforated sheet metal plates of a thickness not less than fourteen gauge, or with expanded sheet metal of a thickness of not less than eighteen gauge, or with cast iron grills or grates, with any other material of sufficient strength and equal rat-resisting properties. The openings therein shall be small enough to prevent the ingress or egress of rats, and in no instance shall be larger than one-half of an inch.
- D. All foundation, exterior wall and roof openings (excluding doors, windows and those openings used for the purpose of ventilation and light) such as those openings around pipes, electric cables, conduits, openings due to deterioration or damage, broken masonry or concrete or other openings which may allow the ingress or egress of rats, shall be protected by closing such openings with cement mortar, concrete or masonry, or close-fitting sheet metal, or suitable size pipe flanges, or other material with equal rat-resisting properties, which shall be securely fastened in place.
- E. All exposed edges of the lower eight inches or more, if necessary, of wooden doors and door jambs serving as front, rear or side entrances into business buildings from the ground, basement or cellar floors, and other doors accessible to rats, shall be protected against the gnawing of rats by covering such doors and jambs with solid sheet metal of not less than twenty-four gauge thickness. The same material shall be used on doorsills or thresholds, or such doorsills or thresholds may be constructed of cement, stone, steel or cast iron.

Doors, door jambs and sills of coal chutes and hatchways that are constructed of wood shall be covered with solid sheet metal of twenty-four gauge or heavier, or they may be replaced with metal chutes of twenty-four gauge or heavier, installed in such manner as will prevent the ingress or egress of rats.

All buildings with side and rear door entrances shall be provided with fly screen and hardware cloth doors. These doors shall be provided with suitable automatic self-closing devices.

All doors on which metal flashing has been applied shall be properly hinged to provide for free swinging. When closed, doors shall fit snugly so that the maximum clearance between any door, door jambs and sill shall not be greater than three-eighths of an inch.

Door jambs and sills constructed of metal, concrete, masonry, stone or cement mortar, or cast iron and steel, when fitting closely to exclude rats, are not required to comply with this provision of this chapter.

- F. All windows and other openings for the purpose of light or ventilation, located within thirty inches above the existing ground or roof level immediately below such openings, shall be covered for their entire height and width, including frames, with wire cloth of nineteen gauge or heavier, having a mesh of not larger than one-half of an inch.

All windows and other openings for the purpose of light or ventilation in the exterior walls, which may be accessible to rats by way of exposed pipes, wires, conduits and other appurtenances, shall be covered with guards of wire cloth of nineteen gauge or heavier, having a mesh of not larger than one-half of an inch, in metal frames of twenty-four-inch galvanized iron (called Sims frames), or, in lieu of wire cloth covering, such pipes, wires, conduits and other appurtenances shall be blocked from rat usage by installing sheet metal guards of twenty-four gauge or heavier. Such guards, when used on horizontal pipes, wires, conduits or other appurtenances, shall be placed in a vertical position and shall be snugly fitted around the pipe, wire, conduit or other appurtenance. Such guard shall measure not less than twelve inches beyond and on all sides of the pipe, wire, conduit or other appurtenance where the intervening space between the wall and pipe permits, and shall extend thirty inches in an upward direction and twelve inches in a downward direction, and shall be securely fastened to the pipe, wire, conduit or other appurtenance, and also to the adjacent wall wherever practicable, so that the guard will remain in a vertical position at all times.

Such guards, when used on vertical pipes, wires, conduits or other appurtenances, shall be fitted snugly around the pipe, wire, conduit or other appurtenances, shall be placed in a horizontal position (right angle to pipe) and shall extend horizontally from the pipe, wire, conduit or other appurtenance for a minimum distance of twelve inches beyond and on all sides of the pipe, wire, conduit or other appurtenance and also to the adjacent wall wherever practicable, in such manner that the guard will remain in a horizontal position at all times.

- G. Light wells with windows in exterior walls that are located below the outside ground level shall be protected from the ingress and egress of rats by one of the following methods:
1. Installing over light wells cast iron or steel grills or steel gratings or other material of equal strength and rat-resisting properties, with openings in grills or gratings not to exceed one-half of an inch in shortest dimension.
 2. Installing securely to and completely covering existing metal grills that are broken or have openings larger than one-half of an inch in shortest dimension, or otherwise defective, with expanded metal of eighteen gauge or heavier, having openings not greater than one-half inch in shortest dimension, or with sixteen gauge or heavier wire cloth with one-half of an inch mesh.

At the option of the person in custody of the business building, the opening in the wall of the building below the grate may be entirely closed with brick or concrete or partially closed and the remaining open space covered with nineteen gauge or heavier wire cloth with mesh not to exceed one-half of an inch.

- H. Business buildings constructed on piers having wooden floors with sills less than twelve inches above the surface of the ground shall have the intervening space between floor sill and ground protected against the ingress or egress of rats by installing a solid masonry or concrete wall not less than four inches thick, around the entire perimeter of the business building, extending the curtain wall to a depth of not less than eighteen inches below the surface of the ground level, with a twelve-inch shelf extending outward from the wall, and fastening securely to the exterior wall of the business building in such manner as will prevent rats from entering the building, except in instances in which the soil will allow rats to burrow more than twelve inches into the ground, in which instance the depth of the curtain wall shall not be less than thirty-six inches.

In lieu of the installation of curtain walls all ground floors of wood construction may be replaced with concrete of not less than three inches in thickness, with the exterior walls protected for a height of twenty-four inches above the concrete floor with masonry concrete or solid sheet metal of twenty-four gauge or heavier. Such exterior wall protection shall be securely tied into the concrete floor at all points.

Business buildings constructed on piers having the lower surface of wooden floor sills more than twelve inches above the ground level shall have the intervening spaces between floor sill and ground protected against the ingress or egress of rats by installing curtain walls in accordance with the preceding paragraph, or by protecting such business building against the ingress or egress of rats by installing solid sheet metal coverage of twenty-four gauge or heavier snugly around each pipe, cable, wire, conduit or other utility service passing through wooden ground floor. The diameter of such metal coverage shall not be less than eight inches larger than diameter of pipe, cable, wire, conduit or other utility service, and shall be securely fastened to the wooden floor. All other openings in wooden ground floors through which rats may gain entrance into double walls or the interior of business buildings, such as openings that may exist in floors and double walls above sills, shall be closed with twenty-four gauge or heavier solid sheet metal or sixteen gauge or heavier wire cloth of one-half-inch mesh, or with concrete or masonry. If the distance from the top of the floor sill to the under surface of a wooden floor is less than twelve inches, rat stoppage treatment as provided in other sections of this chapter shall be used. Wood frame constructed business buildings having concrete or masonry foundation wall shall have ventilators in foundation walls protected as herein provided in subsection D of this section. All miscellaneous wall openings, doors and windows shall be protected in accordance with this chapter.

(Ord. 16812 § 20 (part), 2007; prior code § 12-56)

9.28.040 Floors and racks for display of food products in the open.

Curb or farmers' markets in which fruit or vegetables or any other food products are exposed and offered for sale on racks, stands, platforms and in vehicles outside of business buildings shall have floors paved with concrete, asphalt, or other similar material for the entire surface area of the

market. Display racks, stands or platforms on which fruits or vegetables or any other food products are displayed or offered for sale shall be of sufficient height so that all such fruit, vegetables or other food products shall be kept at a distance of not less than twenty-four inches above the floor pavement, and shall be so constructed that rats cannot harbor therein or thereunder.

(Prior code § 12-57)

9.28.050 Protection from climbing or roof rats.

In order to protect business buildings from what is commonly called the climbing or roof rat, the following provisions shall apply:

- A. No person in custody of a business building shall permit any fishing poles, ladders or other objects to lean against the side or wall of such business building in such manner that rats could climb on and reach any part of the structure or roof.
- B. The persons in custody of business buildings shall also protect elevator shafts, fire escapes and guy wires in such manner that rats will not be able to gain ingress or egress into or out of such business building.
- C. It shall be the duty of any person in custody of a business building to trim the branches of all trees extending over, against or near any business building, and same shall be cut and trimmed and kept cut and trimmed so that no part of any branch or any part of such tree shall be closer than ten feet to any business building, and the tops of all trees shall be cut back ten feet from the line extending perpendicularly from any exterior wall of a business building.

(Prior code § 12-59)

9.28.060 Prohibitions.

- A. No person shall permit any premises, improved or unimproved on which evidence of rat infestation is found, or any lots or alleys adjacent to such property, to accumulate lumber, boxes, barrels, bricks, stones or any other character of materials that may be used as a harborage for rats unless same shall be placed on open racks and elevated not less than eighteen inches above the ground, with a clear intervening space underneath.
- B. It is unlawful for any person to use or maintain any business building or premises in such manner that a rat harborage is brought into existence or maintained.
- C. It is unlawful for any person to dump or place on any land or on any water or waterways within the city any dead animals, butchers' offal, seafood or any waste vegetables, animal matter or any food products whatsoever.
- D. No garbage, rubbish, waste or manure shall be placed, left, dumped or permitted to accumulate or remain in any building or premises in the city so that same shall or may afford food for or harborage or breeding place for rats. Rat burrows and other exterior harborage shall be treated as directed by the director of the department of environmental services, in accordance with accepted sanitation practice.

(Ord. 16812 § 20 (part), 2007; prior code § 12-60)

9.28.070 Trapping and poisoning rats.

- A. For purposes of eliminating all rats that may remain in or gain access to any business building after rat stoppage shall have been carried into effect, all storerooms, warehouses or other business buildings shall be provided with rat traps, which shall be properly set and

maintained in good working order at all times by persons in custody of such business buildings, and shall be inspected daily; any rats caught therein shall be killed, removed daily and disposed of in a manner acceptable to the director of the department of environmental services.

- B. Rats shall also be destroyed by poisoning or other such means, in addition to trapping as may be deemed necessary by the director of the department of environmental services or his authorized representative.

(Ord. 16812 § 20 (part), 2007; prior code § 12-58)

9.28.080 Inspections and notices to take remedial action.

The director of the department of environmental services, or his representative, is authorized and directed to inspect at frequent intervals, and to maintain strict surveillance over, all existing business buildings for the purpose of determining any rat infestation, and in the event any rat infested business building is found to exist, to notify immediately, in writing, the person in custody of such building to protect such building by rat stoppage as herein provided, regardless of the need of the building for remodeling or repairs, and to take such measures as will make the building free from rats. The written notice shall specify the time, and in no event less than thirty days, for completion of such work and improvements.

Failure to comply with such written notices within the time specified shall constitute a violation of this chapter.

Whenever necessary to make an inspection to enforce any of the provisions of this chapter, the director of the department of environmental services or his authorized representative may enter any building or premises at all reasonable times to inspect the same or to perform any duty imposed upon the director of the department of environmental services by this chapter; provided, that if such building or premises is occupied, he shall first present proper credentials and request entry; and if such building or premises is unoccupied, he shall first make a reasonable effort to locate the owner or other person having charge or control of the building or premises and request entry. If such entry is refused, the director of the department of environmental services or his authorized representative shall have recourse to every remedy provided by law to secure entry.

When the director of the department of environmental services or his authorized representative shall have first obtained a proper inspection warrant or other remedy provided by law to secure entry, no owner or occupant or any other persons having charge, care or control of any building or premises shall fail or neglect, after proper request is made as herein provided, to promptly permit entry therein by the director of the department of environmental services or his authorized representative for the purpose of inspection and examination pursuant to this chapter.

(Ord. 16812 § 20 (part), 2007; prior code § 12-55)

9.28.090 Authority to close heavily infested buildings.

When the director of the department of environmental services shall find any building, structure or premises so heavily infested with rats as to constitute a present menace to public health, he shall have authority to close the same to any occupancy or use until rats have been eradicated.

(Ord. 16812 § 20 (part), 2007; prior code § 12-61)

