



# Rodent Complaint Inspections

<b>Original Effective Date:</b> August 3, 2017	<b>Review / Revision Date:</b>	<b>Environmental Health Procedure:</b> 2017.08.034
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**Maintenance Steward:** Environmental Health Supervisor in charge of Generalist Programs      History:  New    Revised    Archived

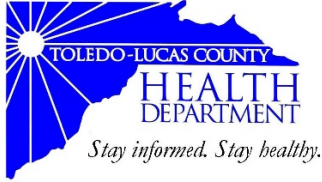
**Organizational Scope:**  
 Full Agency    Administration    Community Services    Environmental Health    Health Services

**Frequency of Review:**  
 Annually    Biennially    5 Years    As Needed    Other:

**Location:**  
*G-Drive:* G: → Users → Common → Policies & Procedures  
*Website:* [www.lucascountyhealth.com/employee-login/](http://www.lucascountyhealth.com/employee-login/)  
*Hardcopy:* Environmental Health Supervisor's Office  
*Archived Version(s):*

**Requisite Signatures**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _____ Health Commissioner 	08-03-17 Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _____ Director of Environmental Health & Community Services 	8/3/2017 Date



## Rodent Complaint Inspection

### I. Scope

This standard operating procedure applies to all rodent sanitarians who work under the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) and all generalist sanitarians who work in the Environmental Health Division of the Toledo Lucas County Health Department (TLCHD).

### II. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide the rodent sanitarians and any generalists with an understanding of the expectations and processes that are required to conduct a proper rodent inspection and in how to handle all rodent complaints that are received by this department.

### III. Background

Controlling rodent populations are an integral part of eliminating slum and blight in the City of Toledo. Rodents have caused more human suffering and economic damage than any other vertebrate pests. Rodents are known to carry and spread disease to people. Rodents can cause both structural and content property damage. Long term successful rodent control is not simple and it requires an integrated approach of lethal methods which include baiting, and non-lethal methods which includes inspections, education, and rat-proofing structures.

The rodent program has been in place here at this department since at least 1957 which is the year in which certain regulations concerning rodent and pest control were passed. These regulations are still in place today along with some newer regulations that all fall under Part Seventeen – Health Code of the Toledo Municipal Code. Rodent complaints within the county will fall under the Lucas County Minimum Sanitation Standards and Lucas County Board of Health Rodent, Insect and Pest Control regulations. Codes that this department can use to enforce rodent abatement include:

- A. Appendix B, Regulation No. 2-57, Toledo District Board of Health, Rodent, Insect and Pest Control, Title One – General Health Standards, Part Seventeen – Health Code, Toledo Municipal Code (TMC)
- B. Chapter 1725 – Nuisances Generally of the Toledo Municipal Code
- C. Chapter 1726 – Abatement of Nuisances of the Toledo Municipal Code
- D. ORC 3707.01 – Abatement of Nuisances
- E. Lucas County Minimum Sanitation Standards
- F. Lucas County Board of Health Rodent, Insect and Pest Control

## **IV. Procedure**

### **A. Complaint Received**

1. Complaints are entered into Healthspace and delivered to the appropriate sanitarian. We receive complaints from phone calls, emails, or from the City of Toledo and other municipalities within Lucas County.
2. All complaints are to be answered in the shortest amount of time possible and in order in which they were received.
3. Contact complainant if contact name and number is given to get more details about the complaint or to schedule an appointment with the complainant if needed.

### **B. Rodent Complaint Inspection**

1. The sanitarian shall conduct a proper rodent inspection at the complaint address to determine if rodents or any rodent harborage condition exists. Permission must be granted by the occupant/owner to do an inspection on the property unless violation/conditions can be confirmed in plain view or from a neighboring property if needed.
  - a. If permission is not granted, and an obvious violation exists, a Notice of Violation may be issued to the owner/tenant of said property to abate the nuisance.
  - b. If permission is not granted, and an obvious violation exists, a search warrant may be required in order to gain entrance or access to the property to further investigate the complaint.
2. Record all observations and concerns and take pictures as necessary.
3. An initial complaint inspection can include the following scenarios:
  - a. No Contact or no one home – leave door hanger with your contact name/number. If after three (3) failed attempts to conduct an inspection, the complaint may be closed out in Healthspace as unable to verify complaint due to No Contact.
  - b. No Cause – no signs of rats or rat harborage were observed at time of inspection. The complaint can be closed out in Healthspace as No Cause.
  - c. Rats or rat harborage conditions were observed at time of inspection.
    - i. Issue Verbal Orders/Consultation; If the Sanitarian feels that the owner/occupant will take care of the rats/violations independently, then

verbal instructions may be adequate with a follow up inspection to confirm that the conditions have been abated.

- ii. Issue Notice of Violation; If a violation exists, A Notice of Violation shall be issued to the owner or tenant of the property. All violations shall be given ten (10) days to abate the nuisance.

### **C. Field Complaints**

1. A field complaint is a complaint that the sanitarian finds out in the field in the course of handling their normal complaints and daily activities. There is no official complaint form attached with these complaints.
2. A field complaint is handled just like a regular complaint in regards to baiting, writing violations, or talking to people out in the field.
  - a. The sanitarian enters the field complaint into Healthspace just like a regular complaint with all notes and information about the complaint.
  - b. The sanitarian fills out the Rodent Field Complaint Form and turns it in with their daily report to their Supervisor.

### **D. Emergency Procedure**

1. In the event that an immediate threat or hazard to human health is observed by the sanitarian, the Environmental Health Supervisor or Environmental Health Director shall be contacted as soon as possible.

### **E. Re-inspection of Properties**

1. After the initial date of The Notice of Violation is due, a re-inspection is then necessary to see if compliance has been met.
  - a. If compliance has been met, then the NOV is in compliance and this information is entered into Healthspace as complied and this complaint is now finished.
  - b. If compliance has not been met, then a Second and Final Notice of Violation is issued with a 10 day notice to abate the nuisance.
  - c. If some progress is being made but property is not in full compliance, an extension may be granted to give more time to bring property into compliance.
2. If poison has been applied, a re-inspection is needed to determine if another application of poison is needed.

3. After the Second and Final NOV is due, a re-inspection is needed to determine compliance.
  - a. If compliance has been met, then this information is entered into Healthspace as complied and this complaint is now finished.
  - b. If compliance has not been met, the sanitarian may:
    - i. Type an affidavit to file the property owner or tenant in court.
    - ii. Issue a summons to the property owner or tenant to appear before the Supervisor.
    - iii. Grant an extension if sanitarian believes more time is needed to bring property into compliance.

#### **F. Court Procedures- City of Toledo**

1. If property is not in compliance and the sanitarian deems the property is ready to be filed in court, an affidavit with the listed owner, tenant, or third party must be typed in the NORUS system.
  - a. An affidavit is used to take legal action through the Toledo Municipal Court.
  - b. In order to file a property in court, an identifier (SS#, birthdate, or RID #) of the person being taken to court is necessary.
  - c. If a third party (company, bank, mortgage company) is being taken to court, an identifier is not necessary.
2. Once the affidavit is typed up, the property is now ready to be filed in Toledo Municipal Court. This needs to be done at the Toledo Clerk of Courts office and the affidavit needs to be signed in front of the clerk who then files the paperwork.
3. Once the affidavit has been filed by the Toledo Clerk of Courts, this department receives a court docket with all the names and court dates and times of properties filed.
4. When this department receives the court docket with the list of court cases coming up, those properties need to be re-inspected to determine compliance with pictures and a report needs to be written for the judge regarding the status of the complaint. All reports and documents are forwarded to the prosecutor on the day of the court session.
5. If a defendant pleads not guilty and a pre-trial hearing or trial date has been set, the sanitarian needs to be present in court to provide any testimony that the prosecutor may

need to present their case in front of the judge. A report with pictures of the property is also needed in these instances.

6. Any information about court cases and proceedings should be entered into Healthspace under the original complaint.

#### **G. Court Procedure- County**

1. If property is not in compliance and the sanitarian deems the property is ready to be filed in court, the Sanitarian must contact the Lucas County Prosecutor's office.
2. Provide the Prosecutor's office with the details regarding the inspection along with a name of the person being taken to court.
3. When this Prosecutor's office notifies the sanitarian when case will be in court, the property will need to be re-inspected to determine compliance with pictures and a report needs to be written for the judge regarding the status of the complaint. All reports and documents are forwarded to the prosecutor on the day of the court session.
4. If a defendant pleads not guilty and a pre-trial hearing or trial date has been set, the sanitarian needs to be present in court to provide any testimony that the prosecutor may need to present their case in front of the judge. A report with pictures of the property is also needed in these instances.
5. Any information about court cases and proceedings should be entered into Healthspace under the original complaint.

#### **H. Baiting/Poisoning Procedures**

1. In order to apply poison/rodenticides, the sanitarian must be licensed by the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) in the state of Ohio.
2. If poison bait is applied, this information with address, type of poison, quantity, and name and form of poison needs to be entered and updated into the appropriate Excel tracking sheet on the G drive.
3. If evidence of rats is observed by the sanitarian while in the process of conducting a rodent complaint inspection, the sanitarian may apply rat poison as deemed necessary according to the directions on the label.
  - a. Some scenarios where the sanitarian may apply rodenticides include:
    - i. Sewers in the direct vicinity of the complaint where rats were observed.

- ii. Alleyways with burrows in the alley for direct baiting of the burrow on city right of ways.
- iii. City owned property.
- iv. Vacant property if deemed necessary by the sanitarian.

b. Sanitarians cannot apply bait to private property.

#### **I. Paperwork/End of Complaint**

1. All complaints are to be entered onto the daily report with the appropriate programs, activities, and times. Refer to the Daily standard operating procedure (SOP).
2. All inspection dates, notes, reports, pictures, notice of violations issued, and any other pertinent information regarding the complaint must be entered into Healthspace.
3. The original complaint form is turned in with your daily report to the Supervisor when the sanitarian is finished with it.

#### **V. Maintenance**

##### **A. Review**

1. The *Rodent Complaint Inspections* standard operating procedure is to be reviewed every five years and as needed to ensure compliance with both agency and accreditation standards.

##### **B. Revision**

1. All changes made to this SOP are to be noted on the **Record of Change**. Substantial changes will require renewed signatures from all applicable parties. This includes changes to the intent, scope, procedures, or policy statement.
2. Changes in style, format, grammar or minor error correction will not require renewed signatures but must be indicated on the Record of Change.

