

Minister's Order on Rodenticides

What is happening?

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy recently took action to reduce risks to wildlife from pesticides.

Under a Minister's Order, **effective July 21, 2021**, rodenticides containing the active ingredients **brodifacoum, bromadiolone, or difethialone** (known as second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides or SGARs) are banned for sale and use in B.C. Exemptions are being provided for "Essential Services" and Agricultural Operators.

This order will be in place for a period of 18-months while a scientific review is being performed on this issue to inform future recommendations. The ban is scheduled to end in January 2023.

What is the issue?

The Ministry is aware of an increased incidence of wildlife injuries or deaths linked to the use of rodenticides, or "rat poisons". This may include rodenticide uses around homes, businesses and farms.

Wildlife may become poisoned by eating rodenticides (primary poisoning) or through eating rodents that have consumed rodenticides (secondary poisoning).

Compared to other rodenticides, SGARs are highly toxic and are retained longer in the body tissues of rodents that consume them. Birds of prey (including owls, hawks and eagles) and other predators or scavengers of rodents are especially at risk of secondary poisoning from SGARs.

What are the New Requirements?

Restrictions for Use

- SGARs may only be accessed and used for limited essential uses by Agricultural Operators, Licenced pest control companies (licensees), and Essential Services.
 - Licensees may **only** use SGARs when providing pest control for Essential Services or Agricultural Operations
- **Essential Services** have been identified by the Ministry. See Schedule A of the Minister's Order at the end of this document for the complete list.

Key Points

- Wildlife can be poisoned by eating rodenticides and from eating prey which have consumed rodenticides.



Photo courtesy of D. Pfeifer

- The Minister has ordered a **ban** on the sale and use of second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) in B.C., with limited exemptions.
- Licenced pest control companies may **only** use SGARs for Agricultural Operations or identified Essential Services.
- Pesticide vendors will require documentation to verify licensees buying SGARs.
- Licensees using SGARs must keep additional records for each use and must dispose of unused bait and dead rodents properly.
- Licensees **cannot** use SGARs for non-essential services, but can still offer other IPM services to manage rodent pests.

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- Essential Services include businesses and services for:
 - public health and safety
 - critical infrastructure
 - food supply
 - transportation
 - sanitation
 - communications and information technology
 - mortuary related services
- Other uses of SGARs not identified as essential are banned. For example, SGARs cannot be used in or around most residential buildings, office buildings, parks, schools or non-food retail shops.

Restrictions for Purchase

- Pesticide vendors must now display SGARs in a manner that restricts customer access. A certified dispenser must assist purchasers and verify that the use is authorized under the Minister's Order.
- **At the point of purchase, licensees must provide:**
 - a valid pesticide licence (or copy), and
 - a valid pesticide applicator's certificate (or copy), in the Structural or Agriculture category
- An employee of the licensee may purchase SGARs if they provide the information noted above, **as well as** the following:
 - written verification that the purchaser is a current employee or agent and is authorized by the employer to buy SGARs,
 - written verification that the certified pesticide applicator is a current employee (if different from the purchaser), and
 - the name and contact information for the employer

Requirements when Using SGARs

- A person may only use SGARs after following the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM):
 - Implement measures to prevent rodents
 - Identify rodent species to be managed
 - Monitor rodent populations and locations
 - Determine the threshold to know when to take action
 - Select best treatment methods, considering rodenticide alternatives
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of the SGAR use
- In addition to the daily pesticide use records currently required for licensees, there is a new record-keeping requirement for each use of SGARs:
 - Users must include a **written description of the IPM measures** that have been taken to prevent rodents and manage them without SGARs
- An updated [record-keeping template](#) is available on the Ministry website for licensees using SGARs
- Records must be kept for **3 years**, and are not required to be submitted to the Ministry unless requested

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- Unused bait and dead rodents must be properly disposed of. Learn more about proper disposal by reading the pesticide label and the guidance document [Best Management Practices: Disposal of Rodenticides](#), available on the Ministry website

How do I manage rodents without SGARs?

An Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program with a focus on prevention is the only long-term solution to managing rodents.

- Effective rodent management programs should always focus on rodent prevention and deterrence.
 - Identify and eliminate rodent entry points, harbourage areas, and food and water sources first
 - If prevention methods are not enough, treatment methods can be considered
 - Alternatives to rodenticides (like traps) should be used first to reduce rodent populations
- Many treatment methods are still available for rodent management:
 - Snap traps or electronic traps. These are the best option, as they are effective, quick, and humane
 - Low-toxicity rodenticide products like corn cellulose
 - Other rodenticides, including first-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (chlorophacinone, diphacinone, or warfarin). These are less toxic than SGARs, but should still be used only as a last resort and only on a short-term basis
- Licensees may **not** use SGARs for residential customers or commercial clients that are not Essential Services.
 - You may continue to offer services such as rodent prevention, customized IPM approaches, trapping, and/or baiting with other (non-SGAR) rodenticides within an IPM context
- For information on developing an IPM program or ideas for improving your existing rodent IPM program, see guidance available on the Ministry website:
 - [Rodent IPM: Best Management Practices for Residents](#)
 - [Rodent IPM: Best Management Practices for Agricultural Operations](#)

How can I learn more?

Visit www.gov.bc.ca/RodentIPM for more information

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Schedule A: Essential Services

Businesses and services that provide:

1. Health and Health Services
 - a. Hospitals, emergency care services, primary care facilities.
2. Public Safety
 - a. The Department of National Defence (DND) facilities, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) facilities, and operations and services that support the Canadian Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary;
 - b. Emergency management facilities at local, regional, provincial, and federal levels.
3. Critical Infrastructure
 - a. Drilling and production, refineries, processing, treatment and completion facilities, storage, distribution network infrastructure and support operations critical in maintaining electricity, drinking water, waste water, oil and natural and propane gas, fuel, petroleum, crude oil and other fuel sources such as heating oil.
 - b. Gas stations, diesel, propane and heating fuel providers and providers of charging stations for electric vehicles.
4. Food and Agriculture Service Providers
 - a. Food processing, manufacturing, storage, transportation and distribution of foods, feed products and beverages;
 - b. Restaurants and other facilities that prepare and serve food;
 - c. Retail: Grocery stores, convenience stores, farmers' markets and other establishments engaged in the retail sale or provision of food;
 - i. Includes food banks
5. Transportation
 - a. Services and facilities that facilitate the interprovincial and intra-provincial transportation of essential supplies, personnel, and services, including port/waterfront operations, road, air and rail operations.
6. Sanitation
 - a. Waste (garbage and organics) and recycling collection, processing, and disposal.
7. Communications / Information Technology
 - a. Information technology, radio, cable providers, and telecommunications services, including phone, internet, wireless communications, data centres; satellite operations, undersea cable landing stations, Internet Exchange Points, and manufacturers and distributors of communications equipment.
8. Coroners and those Performing Mortuary and Related Services
 - a. Coroners and facilities performing mortuary services, including funeral homes, crematoriums, and cemeteries, as well as facilities supporting the appropriate handling, identification, storage, transportation, and certification of human remains.

This summary provides guidance and is not a legal document. In all cases the *Integrated Pest Management Act* and Regulation will prevail.